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To: [Miller, Shannon D \(DEC\)](#)
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Subject: Animal Health (18 AAC 36): Proposed Revisions to Animal Care, Animal Importation, and Disease Control
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19 October 2020

To the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation,

We are writing in support of the proposed regulation changes in Title 18, Chapter 36 AAC, Animal Health. As a long-time resident hunting family and small business owners in Dall sheep country, we recognize the importance of protecting our wild sheep and goat populations from introduced diseases. Alaska is unlike any other American state with its spectacular wild animals and their sizable contiguous habitats--a legacy we must ensure exists for generations.

We appreciate that ADFG has increased financial resources to test and quantify the extent of Movi occurrence in native Alaskan wild sheep. It is our understanding that a single strain of Movi has been identified in some of Alaska's Dall sheep and caribou, most likely as a result of historic contact with domestic animals. Although biologists do not yet know the full effect of this strain, it may have weakened our wild sheep populations within the central and eastern Alaska Range. We also understand 10 strains of Movi have already been identified in domestic sheep and goats in Alaska, and it would be irresponsible not to implement an effective disease mitigation policy for domestics to actively prevent destruction of our unique and intrinsically valuable wild populations.

As we've learned from the rest of the U.S., it's essential we remain diligent and take action now to keep new strains of Movi from infecting and devastating our wild sheep and goat populations. It is with these points in mind we **strongly support testing ALL domestic sheep and goats, regardless of age, prior to import to Alaska for the *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* bacteria (Movi), through accredited diagnostic laboratories.** We also **support adding Movi to the Reportable Disease List**, requiring same-day reporting. We believe these measures are a reasonable and cost-effective way to help mitigate this significant threat to wild populations, which inhabit some of the most beautiful and far-flung places on earth. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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