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Sen. Ted Steven's History of Ethics Violations and Antipathy Toward the Environment

1950s

By his own admission, Stevens illegally lobbied Congress to approve statehood for Alaska when he was an employee of the Interior Department. (Source: "Seeking Statehood Stevens Bent Rules to Bring Alaska into the Union," David Whitney, Anchorage Daily News, 8/10/94)

1960

As the top attorney at the Interior Department, Stevens drafted the order that created the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This was done to prevent the federal government from having authority over a much larger area of the North Slope, which might preclude any extractive activity from occurring. (Source: ADN 8/10/94)

1998

Stevens sponsors the American Fisheries Act in the Senate. The initial purpose of the act was to eliminate the industrial-sized factory trawlers, based in Seattle, that were competing with Alaska fishermen for Bering Sea pollock.

The same year, the largest Seattle-based factory trawler company, American Seafoods, hired Steven's brother-in-law, William Bittner, to lobby on behalf of the trawler industry. By the time the bill is passed, instead of limiting the access of factory trawlers to Alaskan waters, it provided \$97 million in federal funds to buy out fishing boats, thereby reducing the size of fleet and allowing the Seattle factory trawlers to continue to dominate the fishery.

Shortly after the bill is enacted, Steven's top aide on the issue—Trevor McCabe —was hired to be the executive director of a factory trawler trade association, the At-Sea Processors Association. (Source: Blue Frontier: Saving America's Living Seas, David Helvarg, W.H. Freeman and Co., 2001, pp.195-196)

Early 2000's

Stevens hosts the Kenai River Classic every summer (since at least 1997, through 2007), a fundraiser for the Kenai River Sportfishing Association, raising about \$1 million each year. In return, the KRSA gave Stevens an \$850 Marlin Guide gun in 2002, a

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\$1,400 rifle in 2003, a \$1,800 pistol in 2004 and a \$800 revolver in 2005. (Source: The Hill)

2003

Using a 2003 appropriations bill (PL 108–199) Stevens creates the Alaska Fisheries Marketing Board. His son Ben serves as chairman of the board from 2003–06. The board provided marketing grants to seafood companies at the same time Stevens' son, Ben Stevens, served as paid consultant to the same companies. (Sources: "Stevens' Earmark Funds Airport Project That Benefits One Company," Kathryn A. Wolfe, Congressional Quarterly, 8/1/07, http://www.nytimes.com/cq/2007/08/01/cq_3199.html) The amount of the appropriation for the AFMB was \$30 million. ("Alaska's Sen. Ted Stevens indicted," NBC News and news services, 7/29/08, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25916299/>)

Stevens inserts emergency funds into a \$79 billion spending bill for the Iraq invasion a provision that directed the Department of Agriculture to classify wild-caught Alaskan salmon as "organic," which the Alaskan fishing industry hoped would boost sales and increase prices. "Why can't we, for once, bring forward a bill—especially when we are at war, especially when we have young men and women fighting and dying—that is free of these unnecessary provisions?" Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) asked. "Can't we do that just once?" (Source: "The Senators' Sons: A Washington Bouquet: Hire A Lawmaker's Kid," Chuck Neubauer, Judy Pasternak and Richard T. Cooper, Los Angeles Times, 6/22/03 p. 1)

Stevens creates an exclusive \$10 million pollock allocation for the Aleut Corporation, of which his son Ben is a director. Ben Stevens votes to direct that allocation to Adak Fisheries, a company in which he has an option to purchase 25 percent. His son Ben Stevens describes the value of his option as being less than \$5,000. (Sources: "Ben Stevens fined \$150; 'consulting' won't be probed," Richard Mauer, Anchorage Daily News, 12/2/05, p. A1) also ("AP Interview: Stevens defends his fish deal," Matt Volz, Associated Press, 11/4/05, http://dwb.adn.com/news/alaska/ap_alaska/story/7169346p-7078773c.html)

Fishing Special Interests

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The interest: At-Sea Processors Assn., the trade group of the 19 large factory trawlers that catch and process groundfish in the Bering Sea. The group's executive director is Trevor McCabe, a former Stevens aide

How Sen. Ted Stevens helped: He sits on the subcommittee of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, which has jurisdiction over the fisheries. Co-sponsored American Fisheries Act in 1998 that gave 40% of the pollock harvest to the 19 trawlers in the association, which are listed by name in the legislation. In 2001, put through a rider that eliminated the sunset provisions of the act, making it permanent.

How much Ben Stevens was paid in consulting fees*: \$54,000

The interest: North Pacific Crab Assn., a trade group of nine onshore processors

How Sen. Ted Stevens helped: Pushed legislation to have federal fishing regulators come up with a plan for crab quotas. Congress is expected to vote this year on the plan, which gives processors, vessel owners and skippers shares that can be bought and sold. Has held hearings on the plan.

How much Ben Stevens has been paid in consulting fees*: \$56,000

The interest: Bering Sea Crab Effort Reduction Fund, an ad hoc group of Bering Sea vessel owners

How Sen. Ted Stevens helped: He pushed through legislation for a \$100-million buy-back program for crabbing vessels as the crab population shrinks.

How much Ben Stevens has been paid in consulting fees*: \$42,500

*Unless otherwise noted

Sources: Financial disclosure forms filed by Ben Stevens with the Alaska Public Offices Commission, covering 2000 through 2002; congressional bills, news releases and documents; interviews with Ben Stevens' clients and others.

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“The Senators’ Sons: A Washington Bouquet: Hire A Lawmaker’s Kid,” Chuck Neubauer, Judy Pasternak and Richard T. Cooper, Los Angeles Times, 6/22/03 p. 1)

2004

Stevens, through the Senate Appropriations Committee, secures \$4.5 million between 2004-06 for the Kenai River Sportfishing Association to conduct and oversee research on salmon populations in the Kenai area. The funds were not specifically earmarked for KRSA, but were awarded to the group by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at the direction of his office.

Bob Penney, who helped Stevens turn a \$15,000 investment into a \$150,000 investment, sits on the board of the KRSA. Penney has donated over \$3,000 to Steven’s campaigns and PAC between 1997–2007. (Source: “Catching fish, netting earmarks up in Alaska,” Manu Raju, The Hill, 9/6/07, <http://thehill.com/leading-the-news/catching-fish-netting-earmarks-up-in-alaska-2007-09-06.html>)

2005

Stevens refuses to order oil company CEOs to swear to tell the truth prior to testifying before a joint hearing of the Senate Energy and Commerce Committees. He chaired the hearing. While most witnesses before Congress take an oath to tell the truth, it is within a chair’s prerogative to exempt witnesses from the oath, as Stevens did in this instance, despite protests from other senators. The hearing addressed the price of gas and oil company profits. (Source: “Big oil CEOs under fire in Congress,” Chris Isidore, CNN/Money senior writer, Nov 9, 2005, http://money.cnn.com/2005/11/09/news/economy/oil_hearing/index.htm)

2007

Justice Department officials investigate whether federal funds Stevens steered to an Alaska wildlife research center may have enriched a former aide, say officials familiar with the probe. The Alaska SeaLife Center received \$700,000 of \$4 million earmarked for the National Park Service. Of that money, \$500,000 went to purchase land adjacent to the SeaLife Center in Seward, AK from a company owned by former Stevens aide Trevor McCabe. The SeaLife Center paid \$200,000 to another company (in which McCabe is a managing partner) to demolish a building on the site. Thirty-seven million of the SeaLife Center’s initial \$50 million in funding came from settlement money paid to AK by ExxonMobil for the Exxon Valdez spill. The Exxon Valdez money—partly administered by the Interior Department—was intended to assist the SeaLife Center in

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restoring the damaged natural resources in the areas affected by the spill. But between 2002-07, the center has done little new research in oil spill restoration. Stevens also has steered at least \$30 million toward the center's operations through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, part of the Commerce Department. McCabe also was a business partner with Ben Stevens in a consulting firm that federal investigators are interested in. (Source: "Probe eyes money Stevens steered to research center," Associated Press 8/1/07, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/08/01/stevens.investigation.ap/>)

Stevens earmarks \$3.5 million for an airport for Akutan Island. Akutan has 100 year-round residents, but 1,000 workers come to the island each summer to work in a Trident Seafoods processing plant. The total cost of the airport is expected to be \$40 million, with the bulk expected to come from the federal government. Trident's CEO Charles Bundrant and his family gave Stevens' campaigns \$17,300 between 1995-2007, \$10,800 to TS's leadership PAC and \$55,000 to the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee. (CQ 8/1/07)

Stevens tells citizens in Shishmaref, an Alaskan village being washed away by storms, that global warming is coming to an end. "We're at the end of a long, long term of warming. 700 to 900 years of increased temperature, a very slow increase. We think we're close to the end of that. If we're close to the end of that, that means that we'll starting getting cooler gradually, not very rapidly, but cooler once again and stability might come to this region for a period of another 900 years," Stevens said. Although Stevens has recently admitted that human activity contributes to global warming, he believes the trend will soon reverse itself. (Source: "Shishmaref feels heat of global warming," John Tracy, KTUU-TV, Anchorage, AK, <http://www.ktuu.com/Global/story.asp?S=7020437>)