

Remarks by Curtis Thayer, Deputy Commissioner, DCCED
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Good morning & thank you for this opportunity. Today, I want to share how Governor Parnell and the Department of CCED are working to change the direction of state government and positioning Alaska for economic growth.

Governor Parnell believes the role of state government is to create an environment that is conducive for private sector investment and sustainability. He understands the state plays a critical role in developing Alaska's economic foundations. Our focus, as mentioned by Commissier Notti, will be:

- Enhancing transportation systems
- Improving workforce development and training at all levels
- Developing Alaska's energy and other resources
- Removing barriers that inhibit opportunity and growth.

To assist in this important effort, the Governor has added several new advisors tasked with resource and economic development. Gene Therriault is focused exclusively on development of Alaska's energy resources. Susan Bell joined the Governor's Office in October, bringing a private-sector perspective and experience in economic and community development.

And I was hired as Deputy Commissioner of DCCED. Building on my own private-sector experience, I am responsible for the economic

development aspects of the department and for increasing coordination with other economic development organizations inside and outside of state government. I directly supervise:

- Office of Economic Development.
- Division of Investments and the many small business loan programs they administer.
- Divisions concerning banking, licensing, and insurance.

Facilitating economic development requires aggressive outreach and a steady commitment to forging meaningful, productive public-private partnerships. The Office of Economic Development will foster economic development by administering programs and providing data and services that encourage private-sector investment in Alaska.

This is about growing our economy. By aggressively reasserting the state's role in creating a business-friendly climate conducive to responsible, sustainable development, we can raise real income and improve the quality of life for all Alaskans. Economic development is neither a destination, nor a checklist of activities. It is an ongoing process requiring constant adjustment and quick responses in an environment that is never static. DCCED's mission statement highlights two key objectives – building a healthy economy and strong communities. However, the resources dedicated in pursuit of the first half of the mission consist of 16 employees with a budget of \$3,271,200, of which \$338,000 is from the General Fund.

The Office of Economic Development will work with each industry sector to create short-term action plans that will be tied to DCCED and Administration objectives. It is imperative that OED develops these business plans in order to make decisions about priorities, allocating and managing limited funding and human resources, and measuring results

from year to year. A business plan will help communicate a realistic role for OED to the public and set practical expectations about what government can do to facilitate economic development and create the conditions for meaningful growth.

At present, there is insufficient coordination among key organizations. As a result, unnecessary competition for resources ensues, often along with duplication of services and/or underutilization of staff skills. The Office of Economic Development should enable the state to act as a facilitator and clearinghouse for information and economic development services. Even if we could just coordinate the resources within state government, we could claim a measure of success where previous Administrations have tried, but fallen short. I want to send a strong message of the Administration's intent to work closely with the Legislature and private sector toward common goals.

While I am in here today and during the session, I hope to hear from you about ideas, concerns, and suggestions for how the Governor and DCCED can help you achieve our goals.