

Testimony of Carol Smith  
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House Community and Regional Affairs Committee  
House Bill 74 Alaska Coastal Management Program

Good Morning. My name is Carol Smith, and I am the coastal coordinator for the City of Valdez. I appreciate this opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 74 on the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP).

Before the regulation changes in 2003, the Valdez Coastal Management Plan had 41 enforceable policies and now has 14. The Valdez Coastal Management Plan was approved because we felt it was important to be a part of the Alaska Coastal Management Program even though we lost most of our policies. It was our hope that new regulations would be introduced to give the districts back more local input through meaningful policies.

My testimony will address four issues, the "DEC Carve-out," the renewal requirement for district plans, the proposed coastal policy board, and district enforceable policies.

DEC CARVE-OUT: The City of Valdez supports Section 37 of the bill which eliminates the "DEC Carve-out." At the November Workshop, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies indicated their support for bringing DEC back into the ACMP review process. Doing reviews on DEC projects has been very confusing and hard to coordinate for the state agencies as well as the coastal districts. It worked much better with the "one-stop shop" approach. We believe this change is very positive.

RENEWAL: Section 37 would also eliminate the requirement for coastal districts to update their plans every 10 years. If a plan is still current, there is no reason to update it. It is very costly and time consuming to update the plans.

PROPOSED CPB: Section 1 of the bill would establish the Coastal Policy Board. We agree that the old Coastal Policy Council of 17 members did not always work well as it was too large and made it very hard to setup meetings. Also, it was made up of political representatives who were not always aware of everything that was happening with the ACMP. This proposed board is much smaller, and unlike the former council, it would not be responsible for project consistency reviews. The new board would be made up of representatives of coastal districts and state agencies. This board would only address ACMP issues, so it would not be able to overrule an agency's authority. The new board would be made up of representatives of coastal districts and state agencies. This would be a fairer representation for the appeals process.

**ENFORCEABLE POLICIES:** Sections 9 and 14 of the bill would make the criteria for district enforceable policies much clear. Districts need to be able to write meaningful enforceable policies that address local concerns. The bill would allow coastal districts to establish policies as long as they do not duplicate an existing law and do not address a matter preempted by a state or federal agency. The Alaska coastline is very vast and different so one shoe does not fit all situations.

“Example: The Valdez Planning Commission wanted to address a gap in the clean air act between the different regulations. This request was denied as district plans cannot have policies on Air Quality.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 74. This concludes my testimony.