

**Testimony of Gregory E. Conrad, Executive Director,
Interstate Mining Compact Commission before the House
Resource Committee re HB 360 – March 19, 2012**

Good afternoon. My name is Gregory Conrad and I serve as Executive Director of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in support of H.B. 360, a bill to authorize the state of Alaska to join the Compact as a full member state. As you know, Alaska has been an associate member of the Compact since 2006, during which time the state has had an opportunity to learn more about the benefits and services that IMCC provides to its member states. I believe you will hear directly from a representative of the Department of Natural Resources about Alaska's experience to date, which I understand has been very positive. It is based on this experience that the state has chosen to move forward with the legislation that is necessary to bring the state into the Compact as a full member. In this regard, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have today about the work of the Compact and how it will directly benefit Alaska.

The specific matter I have been asked to address with you today is why Alaska should become a full member. As with other state government organizations, it is the active participation and commitment of the full member states that carries the organization forward in terms of both support and leadership. Upon becoming a full member through the enactment of legislation, the state of Alaska will have a formal vote in guiding the direction of the Compact. Alaska will also be in a position to chair the various standing committees of the Compact and to thereby help lead the Compact in directions that are favorable to both Alaska and the member states. Alaska will continue to enjoy the many other benefits to which it has been exposed over the past six years, including access to all IMCC communications, meetings, programs, and initiatives. Alaska's participation as a full member

will also be recognized and understood by those who work with the Compact on a regular basis, including both the Congress and the federal agencies, and this brings a greater degree of recognition and influence regarding Alaska's participation in our work. IMCC's presence in Washington, DC allows us to monitor federal agency and congressional initiatives that might impact states' rights as well as development constraints on mineral issues. I believe that Alaska's participation in the organization opens avenues for the state to be heard in unique and valuable ways not otherwise available to it and to be supported with the clout that comes from 24 states speaking together as one voice. And since IMCC is focused solely on mining and related environmental protection issues with the federal government, we are able to delve deeper into the concerns that matter most to Alaska in this critical area of resource use and protection.

I know I speak for all of the member states of the Compact in encouraging the Committee to seriously consider and hopefully approve this legislation to bring Alaska in as our newest full member state. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional information. Thanks for the opportunity to participate in today's hearing.