

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE DAN SADDLER

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 99 – “An Act extending the termination date of the Alaska Minerals Commission”

House Bill 99 extends the Alaska Minerals Commission until February 1, 2024 and provides for terms and term limits for those who serve on the Commission. The Commission is currently set to expire on February 1, 2014, and commissioners are not currently subject to terms or term limits.

The Commission was created in 1986 and charged with making recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature on ways to mitigate constraints on the development of minerals in Alaska.

The Commission consists of 11 members: five appointed by the Governor, three by the Speaker of the House, and three by the President of the Senate. Each member must have at least five years of experience in the minerals industry. At least one member must reside in a rural community. Current commissioners represent the placer, hard rock, and coal mining industries across the state.

The Commission annually reports its recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature during the first ten days of the legislative session.

Key recommendations made by the Commission and implemented by the Legislature since the Commission’s last reauthorization in 2003 include:

- Funding infrastructure development under the Roads to Resources program
- Reforming state permitting processes to make them timelier and more efficient
- Gathering and publishing geological and geophysical data on Alaska’s mineral potential
- Assuming state primacy of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
- Accelerating state land entitlement conveyances in accordance with the Statehood Act
- Reestablishing the Citizens Advisory Commission on Federal Areas
- Asserting and defending public access to roads, trails, and navigable waterways
- Funding University of Alaska mineral engineering and geology programs

I urge you to allow the Commission to continue its important work and to help ensure the growth and sustainability of a vital sector of the Alaskan economy by supporting HB 99.