

Authority to end the AGIA project in AS 43.90

AS 43.90.230: The licensee violates the license agreement.

AS 43.90.240: The licensed project is found to be uneconomic.

AS 43.90.440: The State violates the assurances to the licensee by extending to another person preferential royalty or tax treatment or grant of state money for the purpose of facilitating the construction of a competing natural gas pipeline project in this state.

Sec. 43.90.230. License violations; damages. (a) A licensee is in violation of the license if the commissioners determine that the licensee has

(1) requested and received money from the state under this chapter for an expenditure that is not a qualified expenditure under AS 43.90.110;

(2) except as required to conform with a requirement of a regulatory agency with jurisdiction over the project, substantially departed from the specifications set out in the application without state approval of a project plan amendment or modification under AS 43.90.210;

(3) violated any provision of this chapter or any other provision of state or federal law material to the license;

(4) failed to accept a certificate as required under AS 43.90.200(a) or failed to sanction the project as required under AS 43.90.200(b); or

(5) otherwise violated a material term of the license.

(b) The commissioners shall provide written notice to the licensee identifying a license violation. The commissioners and the licensee have 90 days after the date the notice is issued to resolve the violation informally.

(c) The commissioners may suspend disbursement of state reimbursements to the licensee beginning on the date that the notice of violation issued under (b) of this section is sent to the licensee. The commissioners may resume disbursement on the date that the commissioners determine that the violation is cured.

(d) If the commissioners and the licensee are unable to resolve the violation within the period described in (b) of this section, the commissioners shall notify the licensee that the violation has not been cured and provide the licensee with an opportunity to be heard. If, after notice and hearing, the commissioners determine that the violation has not been cured, the commissioners shall issue a written decision that is a final administrative action for purposes of appeal to the superior court in the state.

(e) If the determination issued under (d) of this section finds an unresolved violation, the commissioners may impose one or more of the following remedies:

- (1) discontinuation of state reimbursements under this chapter;
- (2) recoupment of state money that the licensee has received under this chapter to date, with interest, regardless of whether the licensee has expended or committed that money;
- (3) license revocation;
- (4) assignment to the state or the state's designee of all engineering designs, contracts, permits, and other data related to the project that are acquired by the licensee during the term of the license; and
- (5) any other remedies provided by law or in equity.

Sec. 43.90.240. Abandonment of project. (a) If the commissioners and the licensee agree that the project is uneconomic, the project shall be abandoned, the inducement provided for in AS 43.90.110 shall be terminated, and, except for requirements imposed on the licensee under (e) of this section and AS 43.90.220, the state and the licensee no longer have an obligation under this chapter with respect to the license.

(b) If the commissioners or the licensee determines that the project is uneconomic and the other party disagrees, the disagreement shall be settled by arbitration administered by the American Arbitration Association under the substantive and procedural laws of this state, and judgment on the award rendered by the arbitrators may be entered in superior court in the state. In the event of arbitration, each party shall select an arbitrator from the American Arbitration Association's National Roster, and the two arbitrators shall appoint a third arbitrator from the American Arbitration Association's National Roster who shall serve as the chair of the three-member arbitration panel. If the arbitration panel determines that the project is

(1) uneconomic, the state and the licensee no longer have an obligation under this chapter with respect to the license, except for requirements imposed on the licensee under (e) of this section and AS 43.90.220; or

(2) not uneconomic, the obligations of the licensee and the state continue as provided under this chapter and the license.

(c) The arbitration panel in (b) of this section shall make a determination that the project is uneconomic only if the panel finds that the party claiming the project is uneconomic has proven by a preponderance of the evidence that the

(1) project does not have credit support sufficient to finance construction of the project through firm transportation commitments, government assistance, or other external sources of financing; and

(2) predicted costs of transportation at a 100 percent load factor, when deducted from predicted gas sales revenue using publicly available predictions of future gas prices, would result in a producer rate of return that is below the rate typically accepted by a prudent oil and gas exploration and production company for incremental upstream investment that is required to produce and deliver gas to the project.

(d) If the state makes a payment to the licensee under AS 43.90.440, the license is considered abandoned, and the state and the licensee no longer have any obligations under this chapter with respect to the license, except that the licensee must comply with the

(1) requirements imposed on the licensee under AS 43.90.220 regarding state money received by the licensee before the license was considered abandoned; and

(2) requirements of AS 43.90.440.

(e) If the commissioners and the licensee agree that the project is uneconomic or an arbitration panel makes a final determination that the project is uneconomic, the licensee shall, upon the state's request, transfer to the state or the state's designee all engineering designs, contracts, permits, and other data related to the project that are acquired by the licensee during the term of the license upon reimbursement by the state of the net amount of expenditures incurred and paid by the licensee that are qualified expenditures for the purposes of AS 43.90.110.

Sec. 43.90.440. Licensed project assurances. (a) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the state grants a licensee assurances that the licensee has exclusive enjoyment of the inducements provided under this chapter before the commencement of commercial operations. If, before the commencement of commercial operations, the state extends to another person preferential royalty or tax treatment or grant of state money for the purpose of facilitating the construction of a competing natural gas pipeline project in this state, and if the licensee is in compliance with the requirements of the license and with the requirements of state and federal statutes and regulations relevant to the project, the licensee is entitled to payment from the state of an amount equal to three times the total amount of the expenditures incurred and paid by the licensee that are qualified expenditures for the purposes of AS 43.90.110 that the licensee incurred in developing the licensee's project before the date that the state first extended preferential treatment to another person. The payment under this subsection is subject to appropriation. Upon payment by the state of the amount owed under this section, the licensee shall, at no additional cost to the state, assign to the state or the state's designee all engineering designs, contracts, permits, and other data related to the project that were acquired by the licensee during the term of the license. The payment under this subsection is in full satisfaction of all claims the licensee may bring in contract, tort, or other law related to the events that gave rise to the payment.

(b) The review, processing, or facilitation of a permit, right-of-way, or authorization by a state agency in connection with a competing natural gas pipeline project does not create an obligation on the part of the state under this section.

(c) In this section,

(1) "competing natural gas pipeline project" means a project designed to accommodate throughput of more than 500,000,000 cubic feet a day of North Slope gas to market;

(2) "preferential royalty or tax treatment" does not include

(A) the state's exercise of its right to resolve disputes involving royalties and taxes; or

(B) the state's exercise of its right to modify royalties as authorized by law in effect on June 8, 2007.