



## AUSTIN POWDER WEST LLC

April 4, 2014

Honorable Legislators,

Thank you for accepting my written comments in support of Senate Bill 99 specifically as it relates to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) issuing bonds to finance infrastructure and construction for the Niblack Project and the Bokan-Dotson Ridge project.

I don't need to remind the legislature that Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island were dramatically impacted with the downturn in the timber industry in the 1990s. We were hit hard with the loss of year round living wage jobs and many families were not able to continue residing in Southeast Alaska. Southeast has struggled to diversify our economy after experiencing the economic fallout of the timber industry. The mining opportunities presented on Price of Wales Island are promising and would provide a positive impact to our economy while helping us ensure diversification and strength through responsible mining practices

AIDEA has a very successful history in this region partnering with industry to create a business climate that allows for a stable economy. The head-of-household wages that were previously lost in the timber industry would be replaced with mining jobs. A stable economy with living wage jobs is paramount to maintain a positive socio-economic population base. Additionally, investments in large infrastructure projects can allow the Southeast Region an opportunity to grow. One of our government's roles is to provide an environment in which business can thrive. SB 99 is quality legislation that provides just that.

It is with the above information in mind that I urge you to support and pass SB 99.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration in this matter.

Regards,

Tony Barajas  
Alaska Manager