



ALASKA MINERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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February 5, 2013

Speaker of the House Mike Chenault
Representative Mike Hawker
Capitol Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Speaker Chenault and Representative Hawker:

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) writes to express its support for HB4, an Act to advance an in-state natural gas pipeline.

AMA is a non-profit membership organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. We are composed of more than 1,500 individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, vendors, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies. Our members look for and produce gold, silver, platinum, molybdenum, lead, zinc, copper, coal, limestone, sand and gravel, crushed stone, armor rock, and other materials.

It is without question that Alaskans across the state are struggling with substantial energy costs. Our large mines and development projects are no exception. Hardrock mines with milling processes are extremely energy-intensive operations, and our mines pay millions of dollars each year for power. Alaska's operating mines consume power from coal, hydro, and limited natural gas sources, with all using at least some diesel generation. Only four of seven large mines are connected to power grids in the state. The mines currently in operation require anywhere from 20 to 50 megawatts of power, and development projects on the horizon estimate needing hundreds of megawatts of power. At least two development projects in the state are pursuing gas pipelines connecting directly to their projects - infrastructure that could benefit surrounding communities, provided a stable supply of gas is available. Many more projects are in locations that would directly benefit from an in-state line and consistent supply of gas.

Today mining is Alaska's second largest industry, and our mines employ over 5,000 people directly, paying \$650 million in payroll each year. Mining pays millions in revenues to local governments, the state government through rents, royalties, and taxes, and Alaska Native Corporations. It is important to keep operation costs manageable and ensure mining is feasible; energy is by far the highest cost factor. Actions that reduce costs will help to ensure the industry stays strong and new projects come on board.

AMA believes HB4 allows the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC) to pursue a large diameter line, which would improve the commercial viability of Alaska's natural gas resources and help move the resources to market outside of Alaska. It also allows AGDC to pursue the needed infrastructure that will meet our in-state residential and industrial energy needs. This is a win-win situation for all Alaskans, and we applaud your leadership in the introduction of this legislation.

Thank you,

Deantha Crockett
Executive Director