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Leadership to enhance, foster and promote economic development

Greeting Chair Olsen and committee members, thank you for your time of service during this year of financial turmoil. My name is Rick Roeske, Executive Director of KPEDD, Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District for the past two and one half years. I will make a brief statement and answer any questions I am able to.

ARDORS are unique to each region of Alaska that they represent, which is good since they are flexible and adaptable to each region. Staff works with a variety of issues to each area and no one approach works best for all areas. For over 25 years ARDORS have developed programs and techniques to expedite the necessary processes needed to encourage and foster growth in their individual areas of the state. We work cooperatively as a group, sharing information and contacts to assist each other.

ARDORS use their State of Alaska funding to leverage Federal EDA monies and other local monies and or grant opportunities. This seed money from SOA ARDORS often exceeds four or five times the initial base amount of state monies. EDA money is an important source of federal revenues to the SOA, extending state dollars with federal match dollars. ARDORS work with private, public sector, local and state government to provide many bridge services. ARDORS act as an additional resource for people that need information but are not always sure where to get it.

KPEDD has pivoted with new initiatives to support the Kenai Peninsula with projects like the Situation and Prospects report produced in 2015. This was a borough project that was dropped in 2009. KPEDD restored five years of data, interpreting the nine key areas that presented SWOT, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The PDF of this report is available at our website at KPEDD.ORG.

BR&E is a program that KPEDD is using with DCCED to connect with individual businesses to identify impediments to business with the goal of retaining and increasing employment. Adding one additional employee increases payroll and circulation of monies in the local economies and has been used very effectively outside for two decades. KPEDD has used its onsite interviews to identify nearly six months ago the rapid reduction in private oil and gas work force in the Cook Inlet. We communicated this to local policy makers in an effort to show a slowing local economy.

I have worked with two nonprofits that were developed and housed in the BIC in 2007-2008 and 2009 so I know the supports needed by businesses in the initial phase are sustained locally and receive support needed from staff. Several private industry businesses that still exist in the central Kenai Peninsula staff employees that are very successful due to their start with KPEDD and its BIC system. Two past Executive Directors have written initial grant applications that have been very effective models in their respective areas of expertise, providing dental and medical care and overseeing the preservation of the Cook Inlet for transit of gas and oil shipping.



Alaska Regional Development Organization (ARDOR)
The State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development certified KPEDD as an ARDOR in 1989.



Economic Development District (EDD)
The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) recognized KPEDD as an Economic Development District in 1988.