



# RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

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April 3, 2015

Louise Stutes, Chair  
House Fisheries Committee,  
State Capitol Room 416  
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: HB 119 An Act relating to the Bristol Bay Fisheries Reserve; and providing for an effective date

Dear Representative Stutes,

The Resource Development Council for Alaska (RDC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on HB119, a bill requiring legislative approval of any sulfide mine within the Bristol Bay region.

RDC is a statewide, non-profit, membership-funded organization founded in 1975. The RDC membership is comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries, as well as Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to link these diverse interests together to encourage a strong, prosperous economy for Alaskans.

RDC is strongly opposed to this bill. HB 119 simply compounds the serious problems with ballot measure 4. Ballot measure 4 undermines constitutional separations of powers and requires the Alaska Legislature to second-guess the teams of permitting specialists and scientists hired by the executive branch to implement rigorous permit standards established by statute by the legislature.

HB 119 makes ballot measure 4 worse by clarifying that the legislature will be micromanaging virtually every decision related to a large sulfide mine in Bristol Bay watershed including essentially all decisions, renewals, extensions, etc. This process is duplicative of the permitting process and we note adds considerable expense to the state with fiscal notes on record totaling over a half million dollars.

In these times of fiscal and economic uncertainty we encourage the Alaska Legislature to improve efficiencies and seek means of diversifying Alaska's economy. HB 119 creates uncertainty for companies that are both investing and contemplating investment

in Alaska. This bill sends a message that the Alaska Legislature does not trust the rigorous, science-based permitting process that is in place. Alaska has a proud record of balancing the important protections needed for our renewable fisheries resources while creating jobs and economic benefits from our below ground resources. Unfortunately even hearing a bill such as this could discourage needed investment to grow our private sector economy.

We urge all members of this committee to send a message that Alaska has a serious rigorous permitting process, and that we are open for business to those that can meet or exceed our rigorous standards – standards that will be fairly and consistently applied to all projects. Please convey this message by not passing this bill out of committee.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rick Rogers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Rogers  
Executive Director