

NANA

REGIONAL CORPORATION, INC.



The Honorable Reggie Joule
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

February 14, 2012

NANA Regional Corporation, Inc. (NANA) writes in support of HCR 23, which would establish the Alaska Arctic Policy Commission. As you know, NANA was established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971. Our region is comprised of 38,000 square miles of land (roughly the size of Indiana) mostly above the Arctic Circle. Our land encompasses eleven villages of primarily Inupiat residents. Our mission is:

“We improve the quality of life for our people by maximizing economic growth, protecting and enhancing our lands, and promoting healthy communities with decisions, actions, and behaviors inspired by our Inupiat Ilitqusiak values consistent with our core principles.”

Our core principles are, “Honesty and integrity will govern our activities. Commitments made will be fulfilled. Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect.”

NANA appreciates the work you did in 2010 to create the Alaska Northern Waters Task Force (NWTF). The work of the NWTF has been of vital importance to the State of Alaska and to Alaskan communities. The NWTF recognized that the rapid changing of the Arctic is profoundly impacting our communities, which rely on the fruits of the land, sea and air to meet cultural and nutritional needs. The influx of increased activities from outside parties, including new shipping routes, oil and gas exploration, commercial fisheries and tourism, creates new challenges, but also new opportunities. NANA believes that these challenges and opportunities must be met head-on by Alaskans. Through this Commission, the State of Alaska would continue to take a leadership role on Arctic policy issues, which is especially important as the United States prepares for its 2015-2017 chairmanship of the Arctic Council.

The Arctic Policy Commission as proposed would include a variety of stakeholders. We encourage you to consider adding a representative of an ANCSA corporation to the Commission, as such a representative would contribute a unique perspective to the dialog. Again, quyaanaqpak for your work on the NWTF and for working toward passage of HCR 23.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Saagulik Hensley
Corporate & Public Policy Liaison