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Kara Moriarty, President & CEO

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The Honorable Senator Jesse Bjorkman
Chair, Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: AOGA Support for SB 196 – Employer Drug and Alcohol Testing

Dear Chairman Bjorkman,

I'm writing to express the support of the Alaska Oil & Gas Association (AOGA) for Senate Bill 196 (SB 196), "An Act relating to drug and alcohol testing by employers."

SB196 seeks to include oral fluid testing within Alaska's drug and alcohol testing "safe harbor" law. The current safe harbor law has played an important role in protecting employers from legal challenges related to drug and alcohol testing. The statute currently covers urine testing for drugs and breath testing for alcohol. However, since the policy was originally designed, significant advancements have been made in drug and alcohol testing, including the availability and refinement of oral fluid testing.

AOGA believes adding oral fluid testing is a necessary step to update and enhance Alaska's safe harbor laws. Oral fluid testing has been approved at the federal level and is widely used in other states. The simple addition to the Alaska Statute, proposed by SB 196 provides needed consistency across jurisdiction.

Furthermore, as the trade association representing the majority of oil and gas companies exploring, developing, producing, transporting, marketing, and refining in our state, many of our members operate in very remote areas of Alaska. Thus, access to nearby drug and alcohol testing facilities can be limited. Both employers and employees can benefit from the simplified collection process of saliva, as compared to blood and urine. The inclusion of oral fluid testing under the safe harbor law will allow employers more flexibility in their drug and alcohol testing programs.

In conclusion, AOGA supports SB 196 and appreciates the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee's commitment to adapting legislation to the evolving needs of employers and employees alike.

Sincerely,

Kara Moriarty – AOGA President/CEO