

Summary of RCA's Position on Authority Over Imported Natural Gas from Jan 28, 2025 Meeting

- **Statutory jurisdiction over public utilities:**

The RCA explains that its regulatory authority extends to public utilities operating in Alaska, regardless of whether the natural gas they distribute is produced in-state or imported. If imported gas is sold or transported by a regulated utility to Alaska consumers, that activity falls within RCA jurisdiction.

- **Focus on service and rates, not the physical act of importation:**

The RCA emphasizes that it does not regulate the *act of importing* natural gas itself. Instead, its authority applies to the **rates, terms, conditions, and reliability of utility service** once that gas is offered for sale or distribution by a regulated utility in Alaska.

- **Oversight of contracts involving imported gas:**

When a regulated utility enters into contracts for the supply of imported natural gas, the RCA asserts authority to review those contracts to ensure they are **just, reasonable, and in the public interest**, particularly as they affect customer rates and service obligations.

- **Consumer protection role:**

The RCA frames its authority as necessary to protect Alaska consumers from unreasonable costs, supply risks, or unfair practices that could arise from reliance on imported natural gas, especially where utilities seek cost recovery through regulated rates.

- **No expansion of authority claimed:**

The Commission states that oversight of imported gas does not represent an expansion of its powers; rather, it is a **continuation of existing regulatory responsibilities** applied to a changing supply source.

- **Jurisdiction triggered by utility status, not fuel origin:**

The RCA underscores that whether gas is imported is legally irrelevant to its authority. What matters is whether the entity selling or distributing the gas qualifies as a public utility under Alaska law.