

# North Slope Borough

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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*Edward S. Itta, Mayor*



February 3, 2009

Senator Donny Olson  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 514  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Sent by fax: \_\_\_\_\_

**RE: SB 4 Alaska Coastal Management Program**

Dear Senator Olson:

Thank you for pre-filing SB 4 about the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP). I understand the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee will be considering adopting a committee substitute similar to the version of this bill in the House. The North Slope Borough (Borough) supports the committee substitute because it will restore meaningful local involvement in the ACMP, implement checks and balances and streamline project reviews.

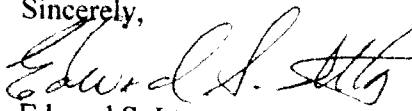
The Borough appreciates the sections of the proposed committee substitute that clarify the ability of coastal districts to establish enforceable policies, especially the provisions in AS 46.40.030 and 070. While the 2003 legislative changes to the ACMP allowed coastal districts to establish policies for matters not adequately addressed by state or federal law, many of our proposed enforceable policies were denied on the basis that they addressed an agency's authority. We made an extra effort to focus our proposed policies on matters that were not addressed by existing laws, but still they were denied.

The committee substitute for SB 4 would restore checks and balances to the ACMP by establishing the Coastal Policy Board. This body would represent coastal districts and state agencies. It would be responsible for approving changes to ACMP regulations, amendments to coastal district programs and overall grant programs. This body is similar to the former Coastal Policy Council except that it has fewer members and it is not responsible for project consistency reviews. Restoring the responsibility for project elevations to the three state resource agencies will ensure these agencies have a seat at the table.

The Borough also supports the sections of the proposed committee substitute that streamline project reviews. The ACMP used to be an effective program that resolved issues among local, state and federal agencies, but changes to the program statutes and regulations reduced its effectiveness. Bringing the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation back into the consistency review process will bring air and water quality issues back into ACMP project reviews. Likewise, allowing coastal districts to have meaningful policies will encourage their participation in the coordinated consistency review process. These changes will streamline project reviews because issues can be resolved early in the process by all parties. The changes will also encourage permitting agencies to ensure their permit stipulations are compatible and reasonable.

Again, the North Slope Borough thanks you for introducing SB 4, and I look forward to testifying on this bill as it moves through the committee process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward S. Itta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and a stylized "Itta" at the end.

Edward S. Itta  
Mayor

cc Johnny Aiken, NSB Director Planning & Community Services  
Karla Kolash, NSB Mayor's Office  
Andy Mack, NSB Mayor's Office