



ALASKA MINERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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February 15, 2010

Honorable Bryce Edgmon
Alaska State House
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Concurrent Resolution 15, Bristol Bay Assessment by National Research Council

Dear Representative Edgmon,

House Concurrent Resolution 15 would require an independent review of the environmental and socioeconomic consequences of large-scale mineral extraction in the Bristol Bay area and directs the Alaska Legislative Council to contract for that review with the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.

We previously commented (April 13, 2009) on HCR-15 and will not repeat the points made at that time. The basic observation made then was that the evaluation proposed by HCR-15 is effectively the same as the exploration and design work now being completed by the Pebble Partnership, plus the EIS that will follow once they file an application. The cost for HCR-15 to complete such an EIS would be many millions of dollars and to do less would result in a sham and would be a waste of whatever monies were spent.

HCR-15 has the potential of having a tremendous adverse impact on mineral exploration throughout the state. These impacts would affect exploration on state, federal and private lands, including Native-owned lands.

Within the mining industry there is no question in anyone's mind that HCR-15 is intended to find some way to harass or derail the Pebble Project. It is also well-known throughout the world that Alaska has an extremely comprehensive and robust permitting system. If a Resolution of this type is passed it will have a chilling effect on anyone contemplating investing in mineral exploration in Alaska. If HCR-15 passes even this one committee, the negative impacts will be felt in this summer's exploration levels.

Due to the economic meltdown that occurred in late 2008 and early 2009, exploration investments in 2009 were down significantly. Mineral exploration investments are now beginning to return and a resolution like HCR-15 would send a very wrong message to potential investors and to companies contemplating prospects in Alaska.

HCR-15 should be rejected. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this resolution.

Sincerely,

Steven C. Borell, P.E.
Executive Director

Cc: Committee Members