



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

Founded 1975

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March 25, 2010

Senator Donny Olson

Alaska State Legislature

Alaska State Capitol, Room 508

Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Olson:

The Resource Development Council is writing to you about SB4 regarding the Alaska Coastal Management Program. As you know, our membership is extremely diverse and includes local communities and boroughs, including the North Slope and Northwest Arctic Boroughs, all of Alaska's Regional Native Corporations, as well as all of Alaska's major oil and gas, mining, seafood processing, and cruiseship companies. We are proud of this diversity and together, we try to grow Alaska through responsible resource development

RDC recognizes the importance of local input as development projects navigate the permitting system. However, we understand that under the current system, many of those providing that input feel their concerns are being left unheard. Clearly, the perception amongst many is that the current Alaska Coastal Management Program is broken.

At the same time, RDC industry members need clear, timely, and streamlined permitting systems. Prior to the changes that occurred to the program in 2003, the program had open-ended timelines for decision making, contained requirements that were duplicative or overlapping of those of state and federal requirements, resulting in significant conflicts and misinterpretations, and extensive geographic reach of the coastal zone boundaries, oftentimes extending significantly inland. This lack of predictability and clarity clearly frustrated many, from districts to permittees, and likely precipitated the changes that occurred.

For each of the last three years, the RDC Board has met with the Bush Caucus and offered to try to facilitate an improved program that would be a win-win for all involved. We have extended the same offer to the North Slope Borough, Senator Begich, and others. We believe a compromise can be reached.

There is near unanimous agreement in the RDC membership that local input is imperative, but that it should not be allowed to trump state or federal processes, effectively giving veto power to the districts. There is a way to solve this problem. However, we do not believe that SB4 is the solution. We commit to working with you, key RDC stakeholders, and other legislators, now or during the interim, to develop a system that is a win-win for all entities.

Sincerely,

Jason Brune

Executive Director