



THE CITY OF WHITTIER

Gateway to Western Prince William Sound

P.O. Box 608 • Whittier, Alaska 99693 • (907) 472-2327 • Fax (907) 472-2404

Honorable Bill Stoltze, Chairman
House Finance Committee
State Capitol, 5th Floor
Juneau, AK 99801

April 2, 2010

Re: House Bill 357

Dear Representative Stoltze,

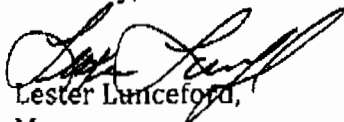
On behalf of the City of Whittier, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 357 which would allow the Alaska Railroad to dispose of land that they own which is not essential to the operations of the railroad. From our perspective, we believe that private ownership over public ownership is best for economic development within the City of Whittier and throughout Alaska.

As you are probably aware, the Alaska Railroad is a major landholder within the City of Whittier and we are familiar with the complaints associated with the railroad's leasing practices. Likewise, we are aware of the constraints that businesses and individuals find in obtaining loans on leased property.

Given that HB 357 is permissive and does not require the railroad to dispose of land, we find it difficult to understand how or why anyone could oppose this measure. In closing, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the legislature in recognizing the need to get more public lands into private ownership and urge the passage of this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Lester Luceford,
Mayor

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www.whittieralaska.gov