

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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February 29, 2012

The Honorable Lesil McGuire  
State Senate  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 125  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator McGuire:

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation supports Senate Joint Resolution No. 17 welcoming the Arctic Council Task Force for Arctic Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response to Alaska. This will be the Third meeting of the Task Force since it was established at the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting held in Nuuk, Greenland on May 12, 2011. The Arctic Council, recognizing there is no marine oil pollution response instrument specific to the Arctic, established the Task Force to develop an Instrument on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response to which the eight Arctic nations are party.

The instrument will establish a process for providing mutual aide between the eight Arctic nations in the event of an Arctic marine oil spill and will also address broader ongoing cooperation and collaboration to identify, promote and resolve spill preparedness and response issues. The first meeting of the Task Force was held in Oslo, Norway and the second meeting was held in Saint Petersburg, Russia. The Task Force is co-chaired by the United, States, Russia and Norway. A final draft of the instrument is scheduled for completion by December, 2012.

Alaska is the Arctic of the United States and is also the gateway to Arctic shipping and resource development. Development of this instrument is an important milestone in preparing for development and use of Arctic resources.

Senate Joint Resolution No. 17 appropriately recognizes the Task Force and the opportunity to showcase the interest, dedication and care Alaskans have for responsible stewardship of Arctic resources. We appreciate the efforts of the Alaska Legislature to endorse international cooperation which will serve the best interests of all Arctic countries while acknowledging the significant role played by Alaska.

Sincerely,



Larry Hartig  
Commissioner