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Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

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February 7, 2014

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair  
Senate Resources Committee  
Alaska State Senate  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for SJR 16: Urging the federal government to stop providing funding, through federal agencies, to nongovernmental organizations that oppose the development of Alaska's resources.

Dear Chairwoman Giessel and members of the Senate Resources Committee:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. (RDC) is writing in support of SJR 16, a resolution urging the federal government to stop providing funding, through federal agencies, to nongovernmental organizations that oppose the development of Alaska's resources.

RDC is an Alaskan business association comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, forest products, tourism, and fisheries industries. Our membership includes all of the Alaska Native regional corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

RDC is concerned the federal government is discouraging investment in Alaska by donating funding, through federal agencies, to nongovernment organizations (NGOs) who oppose development of Alaska's natural resources. The funding of these groups contradicts the mission of RDC to *Grow Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development*.

In recent years, lawsuits by NGOs have caused delays and other issues for projects in Alaska, often with little or no added benefit to the environment. These frivolous lawsuits have threatened Alaska jobs, businesses, and communities. An example would be Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) exploration and development. OCS activity has been hindered by NGO lawsuits, which can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to the State and project proponents. Even when projects are not ultimately stopped, the uncertainty of litigation can effectively stop progress on projects.

The NGOs involved in that type of litigation often collect large attorney fees from the federal government in lawsuits aimed at systematically stopping development in oil, mining, timber, and other industries.

Alaska's constitution states in Article XIII, section 2, "the legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the State,

including land and waters, for the maximum benefit of its people.” As most of the State’s funding comes from resource development, it is important Alaska be able to achieve fiscal certainty.

RDC believes the federal and state governments should strive to achieve comprehensive, responsible, and long-range fiscal plans, and the transfer of federal dollars to NGOs that oppose the development of Alaska's resources should be stopped. It is in the State’s best interest to urge the federal government to stop funding these groups.

RDC thanks Senator Giessel for introducing this resolution, and urges the Alaska Legislature to pass SJR 16.

Sincerely,



Marleanna Hall  
Projects Coordinator