

Senate Resources Committee on SB 26, Feb. 6, 2013
Testimony of Rick Rogers, Executive Director,
Resource Development Council

Good evening, Madam Chair Giessel and members of the committee. My name is Rick Rogers, Executive Director of the Resource Development Council. RDC is a statewide business association representing forestry, oil and gas, mining, tourism, and fishing industries. Our mission is to grow Alaska through responsible resource development.

A top legislative priority of RDC is to encourage the state to promote and defend the integrity of Alaska's permitting process and advocate for predictable, timely, and efficient state and federal permitting processes based on sound science and economic feasibility.

RDC is in support of SB26. The Alaska Legislature, to its credit, provided DNR with additional resources to address what had become an untenable backlog of permits and authorizations. Such backlogs negatively affect our resource industries as well as individual Alaskans seeking required state authorizations. We understand that while a backlog still exists, DNR has made real progress in catching up on that work.

Ramping up staff to adjudicate the backlog is addressing the symptom, however systemic improvements to what has become a very complex set of statutes authorizing DNR's work is also needed to help prevent future backlog and delays.

The Governor, with support from DNR Commissioner Sullivan and his staff, has identified specific means of improving the efficiency of our complex permitting system. The administration should be applauded for proposing numerous changes to the DNR enabling statutes in order to make their processes more timely and efficient. Adapting our key DNR statutes to ensure we are adjudicating our land and resource authorizations in a more timely and efficient manner is overdue.

We encourage this committee to support the administration's efforts to more efficiently manage DNR's tremendous workload as the reach of the department affects a broad cross section of Alaska businesses, resource industries and individuals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Council of
Alaska Producers

SB26: Land Disposals/Exchanges; Water Rights
February 7, 2013

Senator Giessel
Chair - Senate Resources Committee
Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99811

Chair Giessel,

The Council of Alaska Producers (CAP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on SB26: Land Disposals/Exchanges; Water Rights. CAP is a non-profit trade association formed in 1992 and serves as a spokesperson for the large producing metal mines and major metal developmental projects in the state.

Recently the State of Alaska has begun implementation of a strategy of statewide permitting reform in order to accomplish their stated objective of *"Improve the State of Alaska's permitting processes in order to advance the public interest by ensuring projects are permitted in a timely predictable and efficient manner while safeguarding the environment."*

One method of accomplishing this reform was to have the Division of Mining, Land and Water identify statutory changes that help reduce applicant costs, create efficiencies, reduce redundancies, and reduce opportunities for legal challenges in order to ensure the public can use and enjoy Alaska's lands and resources.

SB26 accomplishes this through a variety of mechanisms including allowing general permits, clarifying the appeals process, and simplifying leases and water permits. While the resource development industry is certain to be affected by this legislation, it is important to keep in mind that these provisions benefit everyone in Alaska including cabin owners, aquatic farmers, home developers and any individual who seeks to do business on state land or water.

From a CAP perspective, the State's permitting reform efforts and this legislation fits our position that permitting in Alaska must be rigorous, science based, transparent and predictable. We urge the committee members to support this bill and move it out of committee in an efficient fashion.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Michael Satre, Executive Director
Council of Alaska Producers
PO Box 33499
Juneau, Alaska 99803
907-957-2149