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February 25, 2013

The Honorable Lesil McGuire, Chair
Senate Rules Committee
State Capitol Room 103
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support of SJR 8, a resolution supporting the mining/processing of rare earth elements

Dear Senator McGuire:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska (RDC) is writing to support SJR 8, a resolution supporting the mining/processing of rare earth elements (REE).

RDC is a statewide, non-profit, membership-funded organization founded in 1975. The RDC membership is comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries, as well as Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to link these diverse interests together to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

It is a policy of RDC to encourage the expansion and increased production from existing deposits as well as new exploration and responsible development of Alaska's mineral and coal resources. Encouraging the passage of SJR 8, which *supports the continued and increased exploration, extraction, processing, and production of rare earth elements in the state; and urging the United States Congress to support efforts of the state to develop rare earth elements in the state for the benefit of the economic and national security of the United States*, corresponds with RDC's policy.

Alaska contains some of the highest-grade REE prospects in world. These prospects will not only provide an economic benefit to Alaska, but will also benefit our nation.

Additionally, the mining industry, consisting of exploration, development, and production, in Alaska provides for 9,000 direct and indirect jobs with a payroll of \$620 million. These are some of Alaska's highest paying jobs with an average annual wage of \$100,000, significantly higher than the state average for all sectors of the economy.

RDC urges you to move SJR 8 out of Senate Rules in a timely manner. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Marleanna Hall
Projects Coordinator