

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Jason Brune. It is an honor to be here before you today as Governor Dunleavy's Commissioner-designee for the Department of Environmental Conservation.

I'd like to provide you with a little background outlining my qualifications for this role. I received my undergraduate degree in biology from Carleton College. While I was at Carleton, I completed an internship with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage working on oiled sea otters from the Exxon Valdez oil spill. That experience helped shape who I am today. While our economy depends on resource extraction, we must ensure it is done responsibly, and ethically, and I for one will do all in my power to ensure something like the Valdez oil spill never happens again in Alaska.

After graduating from Carleton, I moved up to Anchorage for the Masters in Science in Environmental Science program at Alaska Pacific University. I completed my course work and comprehensive exam in the program but never ultimately completed my thesis, so I'm what they call an ABT, All But Thesis. During graduate school, I worked for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, was transferred to the National Biological Survey which soon thereafter became the Biological Resources Division of the United States Geological Survey. Eventually, I started working at the University of Alaska Anchorage, helping develop undergraduate and graduate curriculum as well as serving as an adjunct professor.

In 2000, I started working as the projects coordinator for the Resource Development Council or RDC. RDC's mission is growing Alaska through responsible resource development, a motto I've incorporated into my personal environmental ethic, which is Think Globally, Develop Locally. As Alaskans, we need to hold companies to the highest of environmental standards. DEC's mission to protect human health and the environment is one I take very seriously.

At RDC, I worked on diverse projects throughout the state, including in the oil and gas, mining, fishing, timber, and tourism sectors. I developed strong relationships with ANCSA corporations, labor unions, local communities, and the support sector. In my early days at RDC, I also served as executive director of the Alaska Mineral and Energy Resource Education Fund (known formerly as AMEREF, but today as Alaska Resource Education). ARE is a partnership with the State of Alaska that teaches K-12 students and teachers about our state's natural resources incorporating science and math standards and presenting career opportunities. At the end of my tenure, I was honored with the distinction of executive director emeritus.

In 2006, I became the Executive Director of RDC. One of the things I am most proud of in my time there was working with the Alaska Conservation Alliance on the formation of the Tileston Award, a distinction given to projects that are good for both the economy and the environment. As you will often hear me say, economic development and protection of the environment are not mutually exclusive. We recognized fishing, mining, and timber projects that were doing it right in Alaska. While at RDC, I continued my involvement with the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Public Advisory committee for nearly a decade helping oversee cleanup and ongoing scientific studies. I started and sponsored the Stewardship and Sustainability award in conjunction with my position on the Board of the Alaska Sealife Center, recognizing entities that are doing things right in our oceans.

I led RDC until 2011, when I left to become the Government and Public Affairs manager for Anglo American, a partner in the Pebble project. I worked for Anglo for approximately three years while the company invested over \$700 million in Alaska. Ultimately, Anglo American pulled out of the project and took my job with them. That position taught me a lot about the mining industry and gave me a deep and profound understanding about what it takes to permit a mine in Alaska. It also taught me a lot about the need to have a predictable permitting regime that doesn't scare off investment. Currently, Alaska ranks behind the Congo on predictability of our permitting regime by the Fraser Institute. That is not a place where we want to be. We can have the highest environmental standards in the world, AND SHOULD, but the ground rules must not be constantly changing. We must work collaboratively with those seeking to make investments in Alaska to provide timely, science-based, and legally defensible permits that ensure their operations will co-exist with the environment we all love as Alaskans.

Following my tenure at Anglo, I went to work for CIRI as their senior director of land and resources. While working to provide value and opportunities for CIRI's shareholders, I fostered strong relationships with CIRI's village corporations, tribes, and shareholders. Among the many projects I worked on, I'm proudest of the development of CIRI's universal gravel agreement with its villages which set the highest of standards for gravel mining on CIRI subsurface/village corporation surface with an emphasis on post-development use. I also worked to develop a carbon offset program as well as oversaw the plugging, abandoning, and surface reclamation of oil and gas wells developed by a now bankrupt company.

I have extensive relationships throughout Alaska. I have served on the boards of the Tyonek Tribal Conservation District, Alaska Sealife Center, State Chamber, and as past president of both the Alaska Miners Association and Consumer Energy Alliance Alaska. I served on the Cook Inlet Beluga whale Recovery Team and I was an honorary commander for the Civil Engineering Squadron on Elmendorf.

Since I started at DEC, I made it a priority to meet with and hear from folks of different perspectives. In fact, my first meeting here in Juneau was with SEACC, the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. I have met with industry, tribal and ANCSA entities, environmental organizations, and many others. I will continue to do so. I have also had the opportunity to meet many of the amazing staff who are the backbone of DEC.

On a personal front, I have been married to my wife Robyn for 20 years. She was born in Fairbanks, raised in Peters Creek, but whose family is from Southeast. Robyn's family is Tlingit and the Tlingit culture places an emphasis on taking care of the earth while still being able to use the resources it provides. I was given the name "Naash," by Josephine Paul of Kake and I strive to live by this value, not just for today, but also for the future world in which my son and daughter will live.

Congress and the Alaska legislature establish the laws which DEC is responsible for implementing. To create a positive and predictable business climate, we must do no more, and no less, than what we have the authority to do. I believe the experiences that I have outlined uniquely prepare me for this position. Those who know me will speak to my integrity and commitment to the environment.

I am proud to work to promote Governor Dunleavy's agenda of showing Alaska is open for business. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my opening statement and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.