From: Michael Caputo
To: House Fisheries; House Resources
Subject: I support the nomination of Abe Williams
Date: Thursday, September 3, 2020 2:31:06 PM

My name is Mike Caputo, I am representing myself – from Boston, MA, and I support the nomination of Abe Williams.

On Pebble: I believe there is a lot of misinformation about this project. Be known that groups such as UTBB and BBEDC have been propagating misinformation about this project for many years with the goal of bankrupting this project (https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55319e94e4b02842e0615731/t/5c1a8de8352f536c6718775c/1545244147340/Pebble2019Needs.pdf). They use false and outdated information, often painting a picture of the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment's findings, which were based on hypothetical mining scenarios handpicked by the previous Administration to deny Pebble from being validated through the NEPA process, and not the findings of the EIS – which is the first time a specific mine plan has been analyzed in NEPA. I believe the only conflict of interest here is the public sway that these groups have. Even on the hearing today some of the representatives have repeated these falsities in their comments. The Corps has opined that "Impacts to Bristol Bay Salmon are not expected to be measurable" Page 4.24-47 – layman = no "unacceptable adverse effects" to salmon populations or the health of Bristol Bay or Cook Inlet fisheries. That is what the science tells us. Please note to understand the difference between mitigation impact (mitigating mine site footprint) and mine life impact (..The project "would not be expected to have a measurable effect on fish numbers and result in long-term changes to the health of the commercial fisheries in Bristol Bay," the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wrote in a July environmental assessment.).

On Opposition: The form letters are generated by the same groups that spread misinformation about Pebble - UTBB, Save Bristol Bay, BBEDC, Trout Unlimited, NRDC etc. This has tainted public opinion. Using quotes like "majority of Alaskans are against" are completely unfounded. That is based on a polling by the very same groups that polled 500 Bristol Bay residents and made misleading accusations to sway the poll opinion (https://stoppebbleminenow.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BBDF_PollingMemo.pdf). The opposition groups have a stranglehold in anything Pebble and work to politicize it as much as possible. The testimony on this very hearing, having Rep. Huffman defund the Corps from issuing a permit through two poison pills – there are so many examples of it I hope the chair can see that. It is concerning to see the politicization and that representatives are using incorrect information about this project, information that these groups create in the name of fear (https://transportation.house.gov/news/press-releases/huffman-defazio-urge-epa-administrator-to-protect-bristol-bay-from-pebble-mine).

On Permits: It is clear that Alaska's fisheries are becoming outside owned. Taking the above into consideration, it is concerning that many of the outside interests swaying public opinion on both Pebble and Abe – benefit from Alaska fisheries. "Of the 6.4 billion pounds of seafood harvested in Alaska in 2017, UFA's 2018 Alaska Commercial Fishing and Seafood Processing report lists 4.6 billion pounds – almost two-thirds – harvested by permit holders from Washington, Oregon or California." (https://mustreadalaska.com/the-last-colony-outside-fishing-interests/) (https://www.alaskapeninsulacorp.com/commentary-bristol-bays-loss-of-fishery-permits-significant/). Many of the roadblocks Pebble has faced, misinformation, and public opinion is generated by Representatives of these states. I appreciate Mr. Williams input on the topic.

On Abe: There is no better man for the job. His role with Pebble is to ensure the continued success of the fisheries and that the development of the project is in line with that view. Mr. Williams brings a unique perspective to the table that I do not see as a conflict of interest – there is no decision making that impacts Pebble in this role (if there is he can recuse). His perspective is one that will benefit the fishing community and his experience more than qualifies him for the job.

In closing, I support Abe Williams nomination.
Thank you,

Michael Caputo