

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session:

State Capitol, Room 504
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2186
Phone (907) 465-2327
Fax: (907) 465-5241
Toll Free: (800)336-7383



Interim:

1292 Sadler Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: (907) 456-8161
Fax: (907) 456-8163
Toll Free: (800)336-7383

Senator Click Bishop **SB 90 – Sponsor Statement** **Alaska Minerals Commission**

Senate Bill 90 extends the Alaska Minerals Commission (Minerals Commission) until June 30, 2034. The Minerals Commission is currently set to sunset on February 1, 2024.

Created in 1986, the 11-member Alaska Minerals Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature on ways to mitigate constraints on the development of minerals in Alaska. Five members are appointed by the Governor (one of whom must reside in a rural community), three members are appointed by the President of the Senate, and three members are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Current commissioners represent the placer, hard rock, and coal mining industries across the state, along with a representative from an Alaska Native Corporation. The State of Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs supports the Minerals Commission by facilitating their annual meetings and assisting with the annual report.

The Minerals Commission annually reports its recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature during the first ten days of the legislative session.

Key recommendations made by the Commission and implemented by the Legislature since the Commission's last extension in 2013 include:

- Provided support for analysis of the state obtaining primacy of the Clean Water Act Section 404 Program
- Continued to support reforms of state permitting processes to make them timelier and more efficient
- Continued support for development of access and power infrastructure projects
- Continued to support the Division of Geological & Geophysical Survey (DGGS)
- Continued to support the gathering and publishing geological and geophysical data on Alaska's mineral potential
- Continued to assert and defend public access to roads, trails, and navigable waterways
- Continued funding of mining education programs and outreach

Mining is a cornerstone of our society and economy, supporting all aspects of our everyday life; Alaska is uniquely positioned to play a leadership role in meeting the national mineral supply demand. Forty-nine of the fifty minerals identified in 2022 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as critical to the US economy and national security are found in Alaska. The state boasts a supportive natural resource development policy, and a proven mining industry. There now exists a rare alignment of mineral wealth in Alaska, demand, federal policy, state support, and an established industry, which presents an opportunity for mining industry and economic growth. The Alaska Minerals Commission has worked with the State of Alaska and Alaska State Legislature to successfully implement key recommendations that support a strong and sustainable Alaska minerals industry.