

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
JOINT MEETING
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND
ARCTIC POLICY**

SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARTIC

Anchorage, Alaska

August 25, 2015

2:04 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND
ARCTIC POLICY

Representative Bob Herron, Chair
Representative Craig Johnson
Representative Charisse Millett
Representative Louise Stutes (via teleconference)
Representative Cathy Tilton
Representative Dan Ortiz (via teleconference)
Representative Adam Wool

SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARTIC

Senator Cathy Giessel, Co-Chair
Senator Lesil McGuire, Co-Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND
ARCTIC POLICY

All members present

SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE ARTIC

Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Donald Olson
Senator Click Bishop
Senator John Coghill
Senator Berta Gardner (alternate)

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Representative Lora Reinbold
Representative Neal Foster

Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative David Guttenberg (via teleconference)
Representative Liz Vazquez

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

REPORT(S): THOUGHTS AND TAKEAWAYS FROM THE ALASKAN ARCTIC: A
SUMMIT ON SHIPPING AND PORTS

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

SEAN O'KEEFE
(No address provided)

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The
Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

OLAFUR RAGNAR GRIMSSON, President
Republic of Iceland
Reykjavik, Iceland

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The
Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

MEAD TREADWELL, President
Pt Capital, LLC
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The
Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

REGGIE JOULE, Mayor
Northwest Arctic Borough
Kotzebue, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The
Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

HUGH SHORT (ph)
(No address provided)

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The
Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

ALICE ROGOFF, Publisher/Owner
Alaska Dispatch News (ADN)

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

SHIRLEY MARQUARDT, Mayor

City of Unalaska

Unalaska, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

TARA SWEENEY, Executive Vice President

External Affairs

Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC)

Barrow, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

DENISE MICHELS, Mayor

City of Nome

Nome, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

CHARLOTTE BROWER, Mayor

North Slope Borough

Barrow, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

PATRICK PLETNIKOFF, Mayor

City of St. George

St. George, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

THOMAS SPITLER, Mayor

City of Adak

Adak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

MAIJA LUKEIN, Mayor

City of Kotzebue

Kotzebue, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Reported thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports.

ACTION NARRATIVE

2:04:41 PM

CHAIR BOB HERRON called the joint meeting of the House Special Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Arctic Policy and the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic to order at 2:04 p.m. Present at the call to order from the House Special Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Arctic Policy were Representatives Herron, Wool, and Tilton; Representatives Johnson, Stutes (via teleconference), Ortiz (via teleconference), and Millett arrived as the meeting was in progress. Present from the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic were Senators McGuire and Giessel. Representatives Reinbold, Foster, Edgmon, Guttenberg (via teleconference), and Vazquez were also in attendance.

REPORT(S): Thoughts and Takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports

**REPORT(S): Thoughts and Takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic:
A Summit on Shipping and Ports**

2:05:25 PM

CHAIR HERRON announced that the only order of business would be a reporting of thoughts and takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports, which just concluded.

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE - noting that both the House Special Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Arctic Policy and the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic have passed legislation pertaining to infrastructure in the Arctic - said that her favorite part of The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports was that pertaining to financing, finding it to be particularly insightful and thought-provoking, providing her with ideas regarding other things that can be done with the tools available. The Arctic is one of the most coveted, visited, and interesting places on the earth, and it's time to start using existing policies and tools to build and create an Arctic that attracts [more] people.

2:10:25 PM

SEAN O'KEEFE offered his understanding of what the late U.S. Senator Ted Stevens - for whom he said he once worked - might have thought and said about The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports. In closing, Mr. O'Keefe commended the

members of the committees for meeting jointly [to consider issues raised during the summit].

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE indicated that at the summit, Mr. O'Keefe presented information regarding icebreaker construction. On the issue of Arctic infrastructure, she offered her belief that once ports in the Arctic become available and more infrastructure is developed, then more people from around the world will come to the Arctic, thereby benefiting [Alaska's] economy.

[2:18:09 PM](#)

OLAFUR RAGNAR GRIMSSON, President, Republic of Iceland, offered his belief that [while] there is a growing interest in the Arctic from business leaders and governments around the world, there is a deficiency with regard to [participation by] elected representatives of Arctic territories and countries. He asked that the Alaska State Legislature become more active in working with others across the Arctic to ensure that during the coming years and decades, the Arctic evolves as the people - through their elected representatives - will it to, with regard to setting the course and deciding the future of the Arctic. He said the Republic of Iceland, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland play a crucial role in the future of the Arctic, and, referring to Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and [the Russian Federation], offered his understanding that over 90 percent of the Arctic's land mass is under what he called a "federal constitutional system." He offered his belief that the Arctic, constituting a big part of the planet, is now being viewed by the United States, Canada, and other Arctic countries as global territory, bringing with it extraordinary political, economic, and scientific challenges but, with the cooperation of the countries involved, offering new opportunities for investment, construction, financing, and scientific and political progress now that the Arctic is no longer as geographically and politically isolated as it once was.

PRESIDENT GRIMSSON, referring to the summit, indicated that taking advantage of the economic opportunities presented in the Arctic is going to require the creation of infrastructure - energy systems, roads, and harbors - and economic activity in both urban and rural settings. And such progress in the Arctic, he predicted, will start with small-scale projects in villages and other [rural] communities; these projects, once linked together, will transform the Arctic. The world's financial, corporate, and economic communities - many of which were represented at the summit - are expressing interest in becoming

partners [in such transformation]. He suggested that the Alaska State Legislature simply go forth with its own Arctic infrastructure projects, enter into agreements with other nations - say for financial backing, for example - and establish its own Arctic policy in order that Alaska may take advantage of the Arctic's [opportunities] and remain the nation's vanguard in terms of Arctic development; Alaska shouldn't wait for others to agree with its proposals, because the pace of change in the Arctic is far more [rapid] than people once thought possible.

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MEAD TREADWELL, President, Pt Capital, LLC, offered his belief that as a result of information provided by President Grimsson at The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports, people are beginning to recognize that there is a maritime industry in the Arctic. Referring to Mr. O'Keefe's presentation at the summit regarding alternative financing for icebreakers, Mr. Treadwell characterized the information provided as very important; there is a need for icebreakers in the Arctic, and Mr. O'Keefe's presentation emphasized that something different must be done with regard to procurement. Mr. Treadwell relayed that the presentation by Governor Bill Walker included the governor's vision of Arctic ports and the sentiment that Alaska [should] take the lead with regard to the Arctic's maritime [industry].

MR. TREADWELL indicated that one major topic addressed at the summit was [that of establishing] a seaway [through the Arctic Ocean]. His company, he relayed, has been working on the issues of safety, security, and reliability; a lot of progress has been made with regard to safety and security, but with regard to reliability, the issues of "regime," business structure, trans-shipment ports, and securing customers must still be addressed, with a focus on solving the problems of how to finance ports and icebreakers, and determining what type of international cooperation to seek. A second major topic addressed at the summit was that of port development, and some of the ideas that were brought forth, he ventured, could be worked on through Alaska's legislative process or via the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) and other such organizations. According to information provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, one out of every five ships transiting the Aleutian Islands is not yet subject to an oil-spill contingency plan; he ventured that by working with Canadian counterparts, progress on that issue could probably be made via the use of what he called reciprocal "port state" agreements, which could specify, for example, that all

ships must comply with certain oil-spill prevention and response plans. A third major topic addressed at the summit was that of financing; ideas brought forth included the use of Arctic infrastructure funds, and the financing of icebreaker construction.

MR. TREADWELL, in conclusion, recommended establishing an Arctic ports association that could research what other countries need, establishing a "vessel traffic system" in the Bering Strait in cooperation with Russia, and advocating for an icebreaker in order to establish a program that could result in a seaway.

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REGGIE JOULE, Mayor, Northwest Arctic Borough, characterized The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports, as interesting, and indicated that Alaska's favorable position in the Arctic, especially given the opportunities arising, was a topic of discussion, as was the issue of financing infrastructure [in the Arctic]. [It was relayed that] how such infrastructure would be financed in rural Alaska would be different [than in other places], and that's to be expected given the challenges faced. However, it's not yet known exactly what that will mean for the people living in Alaska's rural communities, and this can be worrying, particularly given their many-millennia-long reliance on subsistence fishing/hunting and the area's other renewable ocean resources. Changes [in the Arctic] are going bring considerable challenges and opportunities to the people living there, and the issues of how to adjust to those changes, how to lessen their costs and impacts, and how to focus on a direction and work together must still be addressed, as must issues regarding financing, the environment, maintaining existing maricultures, search and rescue operations, foreign investors, and other issues related to the development/construction of infrastructure.

[2:53:20 PM](#)

HUGH SHORT (ph) indicated that he'd given a presentation about Australia during The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports, mentioned that his presentation came to a similar conclusion as that of another presentation given at the summit, and repeated portions of his Australia presentation. With regard to that other presentation given at the summit, he indicated that it used larger-scale [infrastructure-financing estimates and debt estimates] than his did, and said that both it and his presentation are proposing an idea that could maybe

be used for catalyzing investment in Arctic ports so as to be able to take advantage of the opportunities being presented in the Arctic. "We have the assets, we have the leverage, we have the private-sector partners, and - from my calculations - we have a potential of almost a \$10-billion-fund to be able to go out and invest into our state," he said in conclusion.

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE, in response to comments, indicated that the Arctic infrastructure [funding] mechanism that's already in place has not yet been [used], and characterized the notion of selling Alaska's existing assets in order to pay for infrastructure projects in the Arctic as intriguing.

MR. SHORT, in response to questions, indicated his beliefs that the state's existing debt authority could potentially be used for leveraging purposes, and that there may be an opportunity for the state to sell the assets from its hydro-electric projects and other energy-producing projects to global investors; he also acknowledged that for purposes of matching private investment dollars with public dollars, monies from the general fund (GF) could be used in lieu of monies from the selling of the state's existing assets.

[3:09:58 PM](#)

ALICE ROGOFF, Publisher/Owner, Alaska Dispatch News (ADN), [speaking as the organizer,] indicated that a lot of what was accomplished at The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports was made possible as a result of actions taken [by legislators, in various roles, and other interested parties]. The summit was intentionally focused on Arctic ports and shipping because they constitute the aspect of the Arctic that Alaska [could address as landowner]; it was felt that it was time to start focusing on the specifics of the issue in order to come up with some sort of framework for a legislative action plan. She indicated that at the summit, Governor Walker and Craig Fleener announced that they were going to develop an Arctic infrastructure plan for Alaska; she predicted that a lot of that infrastructure will be located on the coast since Alaska is a coastal state. She said she thinks the inevitable emergence of a maritime economy in Alaska is becoming more tangible, but noted that discussions with the private sector thus far indicate that first an expansion of Alaska's existing ports might be in order, particularly given that some don't even have docks yet.

MS. ROGOFF mentioned that at the summit, a speaker from Canada had relayed that the Port of Prince Rupert was developed as part of a national plan designed to focus on what she called, "multi-modal infrastructure"; she surmised that that's why a rail line with connections to Eastern Canada and the U.S. Midwest is located near that port, helping to make it so vital. She predicted, therefore, that any maritime economy that gets developed in Alaska will require the development of ground-transportation infrastructure such as a rail line running from the coast of the Bering Sea to Alaska's Railbelt, for example, since that's where [the bulk] of cargo will be headed. She also mentioned that the Port of Nome was discussed at the summit, and that she'd recently heard that there is a U.S. Coast Guard cutter currently moving towards Port Clarence in advance of a bad Bering Sea storm in order to take refuge. Without planning, she added in conclusion, one will never get where one intends to be, regardless that sometimes plans go awry.

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SHIRLEY MARQUARDT, Mayor, City of Unalaska, said that one of her big takeaways from The Alaskan Arctic: A Summit on Shipping and Ports was a positive and energized outlook with regard to some of the ideas that have been discussed for several years, because finally some specifics with regard to financing, investment, planning, and strategies were also discussed, and she found this to be really helpful. Mayor Marquardt expressed appreciation for the work that Ms. Rogoff did in organizing the summit, bringing those specifics to the forefront, both locally and internationally, and keeping everyone engaged. Information provided at the summit addressed both what communities should be doing as well as what they shouldn't be doing, and this can be really helpful in terms of community planning. The state's financial difficulties will present challenges for the legislature, she acknowledged, and expressed her hope, therefore, that people will be able to come up with a strategic and immediate plan to implement, in terms of what she called "protection and response." Such a plan will be key, and once in place as much as is possible in and around the Arctic, then the rest of the necessary infrastructure can start to be developed. Progressing on infrastructure without already having such a plan in place would cause her concern, though.

MAYOR MARQUARDT characterized the information provided at the summit regarding private and public partnerships as very exciting and helpful. In conclusion, she encouraged legislators to attend as many such [gatherings/conferences/summits] as

possible, because of the amount and type of information that's provided, information that can really make a big difference in terms of how the associated challenges are viewed.

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE, in terms of takeaways from the summit, noted that Alaska's deep-water Arctic port is located in Unalaska, that vessels transiting the Arctic are passing right through [some of Alaska's richest] fishing grounds, and that Unalaska has already "outgrown" its [existing facilities].

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TARA SWEENEY, Executive Vice President, External Affairs, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), said she also serves as International Chair for the Arctic Economic Council (AEC), and noted that the chairmanship transferred to the United States in April of 2015. During the conference in Ottawa, Canada, the AEC provided a presentation to foreign ministers on the progress of the AEC. She then described the AEC's themes, focus, and growth, and explained that subsequent to the AEC encourages the legislature to establish a delegation of legislators, AEC representatives, Institute of the North members, and Alaska Chamber members to work directly with the Arctic Affinity Group within the U.S. Department of Commerce to identify trade barriers and potential state and federal solutions to increase and improve Arctic trade, and to offer responsible investment in the Arctic. She relayed that there are opportunities for other Alaska businesses to invest in the Arctic - providing access to capital - and noted that the Arctic Aboriginal Corporation, for example, is reviewing its opportunities for investment. She stated that the AEC is interested in working with the legislature regarding investment issues and reviewing Alaska's policies to ensure there are no barriers to Arctic commerce, and, if there are, submit legislation to remedy those barriers. With respect to shipping, she advised, an area of concern within the maritime industry is that of obtaining insurance, and emphasized the need to ensure that the insurance industry has established clear policies with regard to its Arctic maritime customers. She informed the committee that often such insurance policies are unpredictable, inconsistent, and expensive. Therefore, the legislature should ascertain that [the insurance industry's] vision for the maritime transportation industry is aligned with Alaska's business climate and practices.

CHAIR HERRON advised that Alaska is one of the members of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER), and extended an

invitation that AEC attend its winter meeting, in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada, on November 15-18, 2015.

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DENISE MICHELS, Mayor, City of Nome, said that a takeaway from the summit is that a lack of infrastructure in the Arctic constitutes a national and economic security issue for both the nation and Alaska. When reviewing this issue globally, she pointed out, there are other countries interested in developing resources in the Arctic, and advised that the City of Nome continues to work [on using] assets for environmental protection, search and rescue, and a deep-draft port. She stated she is grateful to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the work they have provided, and will continue to provide during the review process. She expressed gratitude for the infrastructure bank, and indicated that she has been discussing with the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) one option of public and private financing to determine how much control of the facility would be given away. With regard to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' project, things will happen very quickly and the hope is that by January, the chief report will be out and work with Congress can begin in order to determine how significant the project will be to the nation in comporting with its Arctic policy.

CHAIR HERRON asked whether a letter from the House Special Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Arctic Policy, and the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic would be helpful.

MAYOR MICHELS relayed that it would be.

3:39:44 PM

CHARLOTTE BROWER, Mayor, North Slope Borough, said that Arctic shipping is increasing in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, and expressed that Alaska lacks port and other essential infrastructures to take advantage of emerging opportunities, and more must be done to develop its resources. She proffered that action, and not just words, is what's required now. She said she has pushed for the formation of the North Slope Port Authority in order that her region could begin leading the way in developing ports and other types of transportation infrastructure in the Arctic. Furthermore, the North Slope Borough joined with the Northwest Arctic Borough and the City of Nome and pushed for the creation of the Arctic Waterways Safety Committee (AWSC) to protect local hunters and the maritime

industry, and she is encouraged about the progress it has made in a relatively short period of time. This is an example of Alaskans being willing to take the initiative and demonstrate leadership on Arctic issues. While the challenges Alaska is facing are daunting, they are not insurmountable and offer the impetus necessary to explore ways of increasing Alaska's economic base beyond oil and gas development. She advised that the legislature can show support for what she referred to as U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Revenue Sharing legislation, as Alaska [currently] risks OCS development with little benefits. Alaska's tribes could use the dedicated funds to develop needed infrastructure along unprotected coast lines, and the state's coastal municipalities would have access to revenues to build an infrastructure needed to support OCS development and build up local spill-response capacity.

[3:45:18 PM](#)

MAYOR BROWER opined that enactment of Senator Murkowski's bill will result in providing momentum for greater infrastructure development along the North Slope and America's Arctic. This infrastructure development could include substantial investments to import infrastructure pertaining to telecommunications, spill response, search and rescue, and airports in a relatively short period of time. For example, this year the U.S. Coast Guard is experiencing lack of hanger space at the Barrow airport. She pointed out that this is an opportunity for the state to partner with the U.S. Coast Guard to build hanger space in that facility and other facilities, and support increased commercial activities. She suggested the legislature look at more opportunities to facilitate public-private partnerships, using the state's ability to finance projects at low interest rates so as to help make more projects economical for the potential of greater return years down the road. For example, she said, building a medium-sized port may have somewhat limited returns today, but could provide larger returns in the future with OCS development and increased Arctic shipping. She recommended the legislature re-examine the infrastructure fund authorization, contained in Senator McGuire's bill from a few years ago, as a starting point. She remarked that the state could take a direct role in financing Arctic port infrastructure; for example, they could consider placing before the voters the question of whether to approve an Arctic Port general obligation bond. Alaskan voters could then determine how much initiative they want to take with respect to investing in Arctic development in conjunction with the federal government and private industry.

She indicated that the legislature should not become too concerned with Alaska's current challenges as those serving on the local level are willing to work with the legislature and position Alaska to take advantage of the opportunities that lay on its doorstep. She referred to challenges the North Slope Borough currently faces, such as addressing issues related to the [semi-submersible drilling rig,} the TransOcean Polar Pioneer, [intended for deployment 70 miles northwest of] Wainwright. She noted the current lack of icebreakers and infrastructure for them in the Arctic, and raised the specter of an oil spill occurring in the Arctic. The legislature and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers must take a serious step in assisting with developing the necessary infrastructure.

[3:53:12 PM](#)

PATRICK PLETNIKOFF, Mayor, City of St. George, said that in February of 1984, Governor Bill Sheffield signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the federal government, agreeing that Alaska would take responsibility for building harbors at St. George and St. Paul. He offered that in 33 years nothing realistic has occurred at St. George. During a conference, years ago, it was mentioned that rural communities should be consulted, and that the ocean environment should be kept clean so as to protect resources in order to continue a subsistence manner of living. However, his community did not receive information regarding the new routes the U.S. Coast Guard is proposing through the Bering Sea. He said there is concern about ocean acidification, and if that problem develops further it will affect all of the marine mammals and fish, and already adverse impacts are seen. He said he has always lived in St. George and in the spring the birds sing, except this summer it is silent; for example, at one observation point there were 183 eggs in bird nests, but only three were hatched and the remainder were abandoned. He indicated that his takeaways from the summit were: consult with rural Alaska communities, inform the state's federal partners they need to consult more thoroughly, and do everything possible to protect the environment.

[3:57:34 PM](#)

THOMAS SPITLER, Mayor, City of Adak, offered concern about the environment, but noted that development is needed. He said it is a matter of working together and not forgetting about Adak, getting exposure, and he invited the legislature to Adak.

[3:58:42 PM](#)

MAIJA LUKEIN, Mayor, City of Kotzebue, noted that President Barak Obama would be visiting Kotzebue, and that Kotzebue is the gateway to the Arctic, especially in the case of Cape Blossom. She referred to previous witnesses stressing the need for port infrastructure and concurred with their statements. She pointed out that although Cape Blossom was mentioned during the summit, Kotzebue needs more than just Cape Blossom, because multiple ports on the coast of Alaska are necessary for the development of Arctic infrastructure; for example, there are 15-16 vessels owned by Shell in Hope Bay, off of Cape Blossom, because it is a port of refuge. However, Cape Blossom is not just a port of refuge. Furthermore, rural communities suffer the highest costs of energy, shipping, and living, and thus having a deep water port at Cape Blossom will cut shipping costs by approximately 24 percent.

[4:03:35 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GUTTENBERG concurred with the comments expressed regarding the need to start taking action.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD said she found it impressive that the summit attracted potential partners in Arctic investment from across the globe, promoting public-private partnerships. She surmised that Alaskans have hope for the future of the Arctic.

REPRESENTATIVE WOOL referred to President Grimsson's remarks that the rate of change in the Arctic is far more rapid than was once thought possible, and indicated a preference, therefore, for immediately starting the process of obtaining community input.

[4:06:45 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VAZQUEZ said it is imperative that the State of Alaska take initiatives as it is obvious that infrastructure and the issue of climate change must be dealt with. She noted it is not only a matter of national security, but also of state security, economic prosperity, and the wellbeing of Alaskans.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLETT pointed out that the United States is an Arctic nation because of Alaska, and indicated a belief that the Arctic presents as equal an economic opportunity for Alaska as a gas line.

CHAIR HERRON opined that the state, with legislative involvement, should move forward [with the process of developing infrastructure in the Arctic].

CO-CHAIR MCGUIRE pointed out that Alaskans envision a future [in the Arctic] with: more jobs, lower suicide rates, lower addictions to drugs and alcohol - stemming from people lacking hope for a [better] future - better education, more affordable energy, access to world views, access to goods and commodities that come in and out of port, and an opportunity for local kuspuk and jewelry makers to export their goods out as well. She referred to President Obama's upcoming visit to Alaska and expressed hope that he understands the link between human prosperity and emotional and physical independence that comes from the wide development of Alaska's resources. She warned that without that hope or an opportunity to develop the Arctic responsibly, Alaskans living in the North are relegated to secondary status, and stifling a chance to develop Alaska with some goal of reducing global warming isn't in Alaskans' best interest.

[4:13:23 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committees, the joint meeting of the House Special Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Arctic Policy and the Senate Special Committee on the Arctic was adjourned at 4:13 p.m.