

SJR

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TESTIMONY
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 46

The scheduling of hearings in Alaskan communities impacted by pipeline construction along the Alcan is an excellent idea.

For Alaska, the proposed pipeline will entail much more than a right-of-way. It is a large scale industrial project passing through communities with no local government, no statutory authority to control growth, no ability to tax development and no mechanism to officially receive impact assistance.

While the pipeline will be built primarily on federal lands, State funds and technical assistance will be required to anticipate what might happen and to prevent unwanted impacts. My department has in the past, been responsible for providing planning assistance to unincorporated villages and for seeing that federal impact money (CEIP) was distributed to those communities needing funds.

We thus have a great interest in the proposed federal project recognizing that, at the same time, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Department of Interior both have the responsibility to inform Alaskan communities of the scope and magnitude of the project, to solicit their views on the project itself and its impact on the environment, village organization, values, use of land and lifestyles, and most importantly, they have the responsibility to incorporate the findings of the hearings in the conditions of right-of-way leases and certificates of public convenience and necessity.

To further strengthen the resolution before your committee today, I recommend the following changes be made:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the Department of Interior and the Alaska Gas Project Office of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are respectfully requested to schedule separate or joint hearings on socio-economic impacts in Alaskan communities this year, especially in those located on or near the proposed route. And furthermore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission use the findings of the hearings in conditions of the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and that the Department of the Interior incorporate findings in the right-of-way lease it issues.

The Canadian government has been forthright in its intent to seek out the implications of pipeline development along both the Alcan and Arctic routes. The Berger and the Lysyk Commissions reflect well Canada's genuine respect for the hearing process and the government's ability to lay out the terms and conditions under which development will take place, keeping in mind the best interest of the communities and people who will be affected.

Our federal government should take heed to the Canadian example and begin soon. With the proposed additions, I heartily support this resolution.