

HB

360

<TARGET><BILL>HB 360</BILL><SUBJECT>HB
360</SUBJECT><COMM>HRES27</COMM></TARGET>

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version HB360
 Fiscal Note Number _____
 () Publish Date _____

Identifier (file name) HB360-DNR-MLW-03-15-12 Dept. Affected Department of Natural Resources
 Title Interstate Mining Compact & Commission Appropriation Land and Water Resources
 Allocation Mining, Land and Water
 Sponsor House State Affairs Committee
 Requester (H) RES OMB Component Number 3002

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	FY13 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY13 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel	20.0		20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Services	40.0		40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants, Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	60.0	0.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0

FUND SOURCE		(Thousands of Dollars)						
1002	Federal Receipts							
1003	GF Match							
1004	GF	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0
1005	GF/Prgm (DGF)							
1037	GF/MH (UGF)							
1178	temp code (UGF)							
TOTAL		60.0	0.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0	60.0

POSITIONS								
Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

CHANGE IN REVENUES								

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY12) operating costs _____ (separate supplemental appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY13) costs _____ (separate capital appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version (if initial version, please note as such)

Initial Version, not applicable

Prepared by Brent Goodrum, Director
 Division Mining, Land & Water
 Approved by Daniel S. Sullivan, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

Phone 269-8501
 Date/Time 3/15/12 12:00 AM
 Date 3/15/2012

FISCAL NOTE

Analysis

This bill would authorize Alaska to join and participate in the Interstate Mining Compact.

This fiscal note has two components, annual membership and travel.

Membership Dues:

Membership in the commission requires annual dues paid by each party state. The amount of dues to be paid by each party state is covered under Article VII of the Compact and Bylaws. There are currently 19 member states, Alaska's addition would bring that total to 20.

Specifically; each party state is required to pay one half of the commission's annual budget, in equal shares. With Alaska as a member, Alaska's portion would be 1/20th of half the annual budget. The other half of the annual budget is also paid by the member states but is paid in proportion to the value of the minerals, ores and other solid matter mined in each member state.

DNR estimates that Alaska's share for dues in the first membership-year will be approximately \$40.0. This amount will fluctuate in future years based on the amount of the commission's annual budget and the value of the minerals, ores and other solid matter mined in Alaska annually. This value is based on national valuation reports prepared by federal agencies to insure impartial uniformity assessment of mining data. If the annual dues are significantly higher than \$40.0, DNR may request supplemental funding in that year.

Travel costs:

Membership and participation in the Interstate Mining Compact Commission will require two or more trips per year by Commissioner, department staff, and possibly other representatives of the Governor's office. The department estimates \$20.0 per year for this expense.

Alaska State Legislature

Chairman
State Affairs Committee

Member
Judiciary Committee
Energy Special Committee
Joint Armed Services Special Committee
Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee

Finance Subcommittees
Administration
Corrections
Military and Veterans' Affairs



A Communication From
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Sponsor Statement **HB 360**

“An Act enacting the Interstate Mining Compact and relating to the compact; relating to the Interstate Mining Commission; and providing for an effective date.”

This act authorizes the State to join and participate in the Interstate Mining Compact Commission.

Alaska has a unique and important relationship with mining. It was the lure of gold that brought thousands of eager prospectors, and served as the founding purpose for many cities and communities. As the territory and later the State grew, zinc, lead, coal, sand, gravel, and other subsurface products all played roles in this all-important sector. Today, mining is Alaska's second-largest industry, and it continues to thrive.

Alaska's five operating mines – Ft. Knox, Greens Creek, Red Dog, Usibelli, and Pogo – employ more than 2,000 people combined. The mining industry also creates public revenue by paying both state and local taxes. Interest in Alaska's mining potential continues to spur new exploration and investment in the subsurface minerals of the Last Frontier.

The Interstate Mining Compact Commission is a coalition of mining states that join together to represent the environmentally sound resource development interests of its members on a national level. Established in 1971, the IMCC recognizes the basic importance of the mining industry to the nation, and believes that the collective voice of mining states is an important aspect in preserving and advocating for states' rights. IMCC regularly serves as the spokesperson for mining states in Washington D.C., and works to represent the member states efficiently and articulately to executive agencies.

Mining was foundational to Alaska's statehood. It continues to be a major economic driver and will play an important role in the state's future. Joining the IMCC gives Alaska the opportunity to build on our successes, share what works with others, work together to build a better mining industry, and foster a better understanding and constructive relationship with the federal agencies. I urge your support of HB 360.

HB 360 – Interstate Mining Compact & Commission

Sectional Analysis

Passage of HB 360 would elevate Alaska from associate membership to full membership in the Interstate Mining Compact Commission, allowing the Governor to be an active, voting member.

Section 1: Amends AS 27 by adding:

☐ Sec. 27.08.010, which contains and enacts into law the Interstate Mining Compact, which includes the following articles:

- **Article 1:** Findings and Purpose – finds the importance of mining to the state and proposes to support environmentally sound mining,
 - **Article 2:** Definitions – defines “mining” and “state”,
 - **Article 3:** State Programs – ensures a member state has adequate mining regulations, which Alaska does,
 - **Article 4:** Powers – specifies the power of the Commission to study, make recommendations, and gather and disseminate information on mining-related issues,
 - **Article 5:** The Commission – creates the Commission,
 - **Article 6:** Allows the Commission to establish Advisory, Technical, and Regional Committees,
 - **Article 7:** Finance – details how the Commission’s finances are to be handled,
 - **Article 8:** Entry Into Force and Withdrawal – describes that states must enact the compact to participate and must repeal the act to withdraw,
 - **Article 9:** Effects on Other Laws – maintains that the compact does not limit, repeal, or supersede any state laws,
 - **Article 10:** Construction and Severability – Provides that all phrases, clauses, sentences and provisions are severable;
- ☐ Sec. 27.08.020, which provides for an alternate; and
- ☐ Sec. 27 27.08.030, which requires the Interstate Mining Compact Commission to file its bylaws and amendments with the Department of Natural Resources.

Section 2: Provides for an immediate effective date.

Interstate Mining Compact Commission

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Welcome

The Interstate Mining Compact Commission is a multi-state governmental agency / organization that represents the natural resource interests of its member states. First envisioned in 1964, the Commission came into existence in 1970 with the entry of its first four states. Since that time, 19 additional states have enacted legislation bringing them into the Compact, and 5 additional states have become associate members as they pursue enactment of legislation which will make them full members. The Commission established its headquarters in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C. in 1988. The states are officially represented by their Governors who serve as Commissioners. The Commission operates through several committees composed of duly appointed representatives of the Governors from their respective Departments of Natural Resources or Environmental Protection.

IMCC Staff

Gregory E. Conrad - Executive Director

Beth A. Botsis - Director of Programs

Phyllis Plummer - Bookkeeper



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Interstate Mining Compact Background

The mining industry is one of the most basic and important in the Nation. Our manufacturing activities, transportation systems, and the comfort of our homes depend on the products of mining. Yet it is also true that generations of mining operations have had their effect on the surface of our land and on the condition of other resources. There is an urgent need to find improved means of turning mined lands to their most useful functions and to find ways of reducing the undesirable effects of mining operations on other property and resources. The necessary programs should be undertaken with due regard for the interests of all land and other resource users, including homeowners, mining and other industries, recreationists, conservationists, and the general public.

Governmental action to assist mining industries in their efforts to become more efficient in their methods, thereby increasing yields at lower costs, also is in the public interest. Such activities can and should go hand in hand with programs aimed at improving the usefulness of the surface of mined land.

Individual states have the power to establish and maintain programs of land and other resource development, restoration and regulation appropriate to cope with the surface effects of mining. The Interstate Mining Compact would not shift responsibility for such programs. On the other hand, states acting singly without reference to actions in other jurisdictions labor under serious handicaps in mounting desirable programs. While physiographic, climatic and regional differences in density of population and varying availability of recreational facilities make the application of rigid, single standards inappropriate, fundamental equity would be served by making it possible for individual states to construct their programs in such a way that those mining operations which actually are similarly situated be afforded similar types of assistance and be subjected to comparable regulatory patterns. There is much that an interstate agency like the Interstate Mining Commission established by this compact could do to develop and pool experience in dealing with mining problems.

The Interstate Mining Compact could do much to overcome the limitations just outlined. The Interstate Compact to Conserve Oil and Gas (in successful operation for about thirty-five years and now participated in by virtually every oil and gas producing jurisdiction of the United States), suggests some of the accomplishments that might result from interstate efforts in the field of the mining of solid substances. "The form statute for the conservation of oil and gas," and the many other suggestions of the Interstate Oil Compact Commission, have brought an increasing degree of comparability into state programs affecting the production of oil and natural gas. Also, that Commission serves as a forum for the exchange of useful information in its field of interest. While the focus of an Interstate Mining Compact as here envisaged would be somewhat different from that of the Oil and Gas Compact, and while its format bears only slight resemblance to the Oil and Gas Compact, its basic approach is the same. By adopting the compact, states would obligate themselves to undertake and maintain certain types of programs. In addition, an interstate body with roots in each of the party states and an ability to facilitate the sharing of knowledge would be placed in operation.

The Interstate Mining Compact had its beginnings in 1964. In April of that year in Roanoke, Virginia, the Council of State Governments held a conference on surface mining, attended by state and federal legislative and administrative officials, by mining industry representatives, and by conservationists. In the aftermath of this meeting, the Southern Governors' Conference, that Fall, called on the Council of State Governments to assist the states in developing one or more compacts to deal with surface mining problems. These initiatives led to the subsequent adoption in many states of strengthened laws and programs for regulating surface mining; and to supplement these intra-state activities, the Interstate Mining Compact was drafted and became available for their consideration in the legislative sessions of 1996.

The Compact, Article by Article

It may be helpful to present a brief article-by-article description of the Compact. In

particular, a number of matters which appear rather cryptic in statutory language can be illustrated in order to supply a fuller idea of the considerations behind key provisions of the Compact's ten articles.

Article I – "Findings and Purposes"

This provides the general setting for the compact. It puts into language customary for declarations of legislative intent the considerations to be employed in interpreting the policies underlying the compact and its objectives.

Article II – "Definitions"

With only two exceptions, the words and phrases used in the compact should be taken in their ordinary dictionary meanings. The words "mining" and "State" are specially defined for the purposes of the Compact.

The definition of "mining" includes more than surface mining and more than would probably be included in mining as sometimes conceived. While the problem of effects on the surface of land and water are frequently identified as effects of surface mining processes, all mining operations have some effects on the surface. Consequently, for compact purposes, mining is defined in such a way as to include the surface effects of any kind of mining within the scope of the compact. If the Interstate Mining Commission were a regulatory or law making body, this novel definition could raise questions of considerable scope. However, in view of the entirely recommendatory character of the proposed Commission, it has seemed desirable to permit a wide scope for activities under the compact.

Also, it should be noted that the definition of "mining" is broad enough to include quarrying and excavation for the removal of a wide variety of materials. Such operations can present the same kinds of problems with respect to effects on land and water surface as so operations conducted in furtherance of activities more commonly understood to be mining.

Both deep mining and the various kinds of surface mining are involved. However, certain operations conducted underground are not meant to be encompassed, because they have no demonstrable effect on the surface. On the other hand, surface subsidence, underground mine fires, and the deposit of wastes above ground (whether associated with surface or deep mining operations) do have effects on the surface. Consequently, the definition of "mining" in the compact would cover them.

"State" obviously means any one of the fifty states. In order to open the compact to participation by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Territories, the word is specially defined.

Article III – "State Programs"

Each of the party states will continue to be the regulatory authority in fields related to the compact. The only function of the interstate agency established by the compact is to study and make recommendations with respect to mining, as defined by the compact, and to study and make recommendations designed to assist the mining industries to improve their techniques. On the other hand, it is thought essential that each party state obligate itself to undertake programs in the key areas to which it applies as set forth in this article. It will be noted that the emphasis is on state programs to accomplish certain results. In certain instances, voluntary measures of nongovernmental entities may be the means of accomplishing necessary objectives; in others, law and administration of a regulatory or other character may be necessary. Depending on the conditions and circumstances prevailing in each of the states, the various ingredients of the program may be used in differing combination. However, this article is a pledge that the states will have programs adequate to the purposes of the compact.

Article IV – "Powers"

This article enumerates a number of powers which the Interstate Mining Commission may exercise. All of them are of a study, recommendatory or consultative character. This implements one of the basic purposes of the compact, and where necessary, formulates the experience and expert research and thought necessary for the implementation of their individual programs.

Article V – "The Commission"

Although this article is lengthy, most of its provisions are of a more or less routine

character and deal with the internal management on the Interstate Mining Commission's day-by-day affairs. Two features of the article which merit special attention are the actual creation and composition of the Interstate Mining Commission, and the voting procedures for it.

The Governors of the party states are to be the commissioners. This means one commissioner from each party state. However, it was considered essential to provide mechanisms for the representation of the state by a Governor's alternate, when the Governor himself could not carry out his responsibilities in compact work in person. To accomplish this purpose, the article requires that there be in each party state an advisory body to counsel the Governor in matters relating to the compact. This body must include representatives of mining industries, conservation interests, and other public and private interests. While the precise composition and functioning of this advisory board is a matter for each state to consider and implement in its own way, Section 2 of the Suggested Enabling Act which accompanies the compact should be consulted for an illustration of what might be done along these lines. In order to assure the connection between the Governor's work on the Interstate Mining Commission and this advisory body, the article also requires that the Governor's alternate be a member of the advisory board.

The voting procedures contained in this article are divided into two parts. The net effect of the provision (assuming a membership of fifty-four jurisdictions) would be to require twenty-eight affirmative votes for the taking of certain specified important actions by the Commission, such as the making of recommendations or the authorization of certain kinds of studies, and to require only a majority of those present and voting on more routine business.

Article VI – "Advisory, Technical, and Regional Committees"

Because of the variety of interests and commodities involved in various aspects of mining and the use of mined lands, it is doubtful that any agency, however expert or representative, could contain within its own membership all of the necessary knowledge and awareness of the problems which the Interstate Mining Commission will have to consider. Consequently, this article gives the Commission authority to assemble and use advisory, technical, and regional committees of the widest possible scope. The committee structure authorized by this article and the state advisory groups required by Article V provide two means of making sure that the Commission will have the benefit of the views and knowledge of all relevant segments of the community.

Article VII – "Finance"

The basic support of the Interstate Mining Commission is to come from appropriations made by the party states. However, with a large number of jurisdictions participating, it is unlikely that the appropriation requested from any single state would be very large. The article contains a formula for the apportionment of appropriation requests. In part this formula is dependent on a comparison of relative values of ores and other solid matter mined in the party states. In making such comparisons, the Commission is authorized to use publicly available sources of information. For example, the U.S. Bureau of the Census and of Mines now publish data of this sort. In particular, the "Minerals Yearbook" of the Bureau of Mines contains state-by-state breakdown of the kind that could be used. The article also contains recognition of a power, conferred elsewhere in the compact, to accept gifts and grants to aid its work. The article also contains audit and accounting safeguards.

Article VIII – "Entry Into Force and Withdrawal"

Adoption by four states will be necessary to bring the compacy into effect. Withdrawal by a state is possible upon enactment of a repeal of the compact and one year's notice to the other states. This notice provision is designed to give the other party states and the Commission an opportunity to adjust compact activities in accordance with the new situation.

Article IX – "Effect on Other Laws"

Since the compact operates in a field where there is already much state legislation, this article gives specific assurance that none of these other statutes are impaired or repealed by implication.

Article X – "Construction and Severability"

This is a technical provision of standard character and language.

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Virginia
West Virginia

Associate Member States

Alaska
Colorado
New Mexico
Utah
Wyoming

Member State Contact Information

The IMCC Membership Directory with state contact information can be accessed here: [Membership Directory](#)

Benefits of Membership

Quarterly newsletter - "The Compact"
Annual National Reclamation Awards Program
Annual National Mineral Education Awards Program
Special Informational Studies and Reports
Annual Reports of activities
Membership Directory
Annual and Mid-Winter Meetings
Interaction opportunities with other states and federal government officials

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What We Do

The Commission exercises several powers on behalf of the states, all of which are of a study, recommendatory or consultative nature. The Commission does not possess regulatory powers, as some Compacts do. The Commission provides a forum for interstate action and communication on issues of concern to the member states. It is the potential to stimulate the development and production of each state's mineral wealth through effective regulatory programs that draws many of the states together in the prosecution of the Commission's work. Given the environmental sensitivities associated with this objective, a significant portion of the Commission's work is dedicated to the environmental protection issues naturally associated with this mineral development. It is the significant value and clout that comes from "compacting" together and speaking with a strong, united voice that can make a difference in each state's efforts to implement effective regulatory programs that will conserve natural resources and secure a vibrant state (and thus national) mineral economy.

Initiatives

- Liaison with Federal government and Congress
- Monitoring of regulatory and legislative developments
- Development and communication of State positions and recommendations on Federal rulemakings and national legislation
- Information gathering and dissemination
- Coalition building with related State organizations
- Interaction with environmental and industry groups
- Public mining and minerals education outreaches

Issues pursued by IMCC

- Mine waste regulation under the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)
- Regulatory implementation issues arising under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) such as: primacy, federal oversight, enforcement, the Applicant/Violator System, bonding, citizen participation, acid mine drainage, single source coal reporting, national technology transfer, and environmental protection standards
- Reform of the 1872 Mining Law
- Groundwater and stormwater regulations
- Inactive and abandoned mine reclamation
- Underground Mine Mapping
- Mine Placement of Coal Combustion Wastes
- Mine Safety and Health Issues
- Zoning and other land use restrictions

Committees

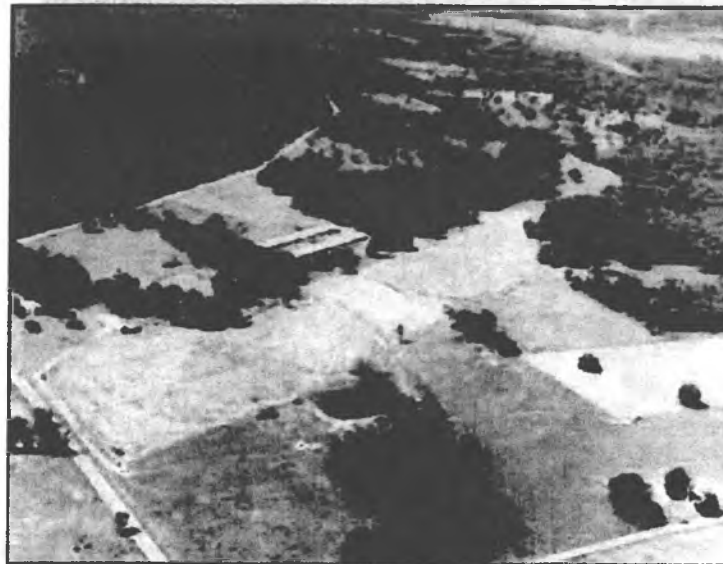
- Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) and Reauthorization of the AML Program under SMCRA
- Awards
- Education Work Group
- Finance & Administrative
- Environmental Affairs, Coal Section

- Environmental Affairs, Noncoal Section
- Mine Safety and Health
- Resolutions

Photos of Active Mining and Reclamation of one site:



*Russ & Sons,
Inc.
Russ and Sons
No.1 Mine,
Sebastian
County,
Greenwood,
Arkansas
(Active
Mining).
April 18, 1990*



*Russ & Sons,
Inc.
Russ and Sons
No.1 Mine,
Sebastian
County,
Greenwood,
Arkansas
(Reclamation).
June 15, 1993*

[See More Photos...](#)



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Participants – HB 360 Testimony

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Council of Alaska Producers/Alaska Miners Association



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Memorandum

TO: Senator Cathy Giessel
FROM: Chuck Burnham, Legislative Analyst
DATE: February 28, 2012
RE: Alaska Membership in Interstate Compacts and Commissions
LRS Report 12.212

You asked for an account of interstate compacts and commissions that Alaska has joined including where in statute each is codified, and the identity of the state's designated representatives to the agreements.

We located 23 unique interstate compacts and commissions in Alaska Statute to which the state is a signatory. Those agreements, their statutory citations, years of the state's joinder, and designated representatives are delineated in the attached table. Full text of each agreement and listings of their member states are available on the website of the Council of State Governments' National Center for Interstate Compacts at <http://apps.csg.org/ncic/>.

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

Interstate Compacts and Commissions in Alaska Statute

Agreement	Citation	Year of Joinder	Alaska Designees
Western Regional Education Compact	AS § 14.44.010-040	1955	Diane Barrans, Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
Compact on Mental Health	AS § 47.30.880	1957	Melissa Stone, Director, Dept. of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Behavioral Health
Interstate Compact for Juveniles	AS § 47.15.010-080	1960	Barbara Murray, Program Officer, DHSS Office of Youth Corrections
Western Corrections Compact	AS § 33.36.060-100	1961	Joe Schimdt, Commissioner, Dept. of Corrections (DOC)
Pacific Marine Fisheries Compact	AS § 16.45.010-040	1962	Cora Campbell, Commissioner, Dept. of Fish and Game
National Guard Mutual Assistance Compact	AS § 26.25.010-030	1968	Governor Sean Parnell
Western Interstate Energy Compact	AS § 41.98.110-150	1969	Unclear
Agreement on Qualifications of Educational Personnel	AS § 14.20.620-650	1970	Mike Hanley, Commissioner, Dept. of Education and Early Development (DEED)
Multistate Tax Compact	AS § 43.19.010-050	1970	Bryan Butcher, Commissioner, Dept. of Revenue
Compact on Placement of Children	AS § 47.70.010-080	1976	Christy Lawton, Director, DHSS Office of Children's Services
Civil Defense and Disaster Compact	AS § 26.23.120	1977	Repealed
Compact for Education	AS § 14.44.050-060	1980	Esther Cox, President, State Board of Education; Senator Bettye Davis; Representative Carl Gatto; Mike Hanly, Commissioner DEED; Governor Sean Parnell; Carl Rose, President, Association of Alaska School Boards; and Karl Wing, Student Body President, University of Alaska Anchorage

Interstate Compacts and Commissions in Alaska Statute (continued)

Agreement	Citation	Year of Joinder	Alaska Designees
Interstate Compact to Conserve Oil and Gas	AS § 46.04.100	1980	Daniel Seamount, Jr., Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
Agreement on Detainers	AS § 33.35.010	1981	Joe Schimdt, Commissioner, DOC
Northwest Compact on Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management	AS § 46.45.010-020	1983	Douglas Dasher, Radiation Program Manager, Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Interstate Corrections Compact	AS § 33.36.010-040	1984	Joe Schimdt, Commissioner, DOC
Driver License Compact	AS § 28.37.010-190	1986	Whitney Brewster, Director, Division of Motor Vehicles, Dept. of Administration
Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance	AS § 47.05.090	1998	KariLee Pietz, Program Officer, DHSS Office of Children's Services
National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact	AS § 12.64.010	2001	Kathryn Monfreda, Chief, Criminal Records and Identification Bureau, Dept. of Public Safety
Emergency Management Assistance Compact	AS § 26.23.135-136	2002	John Madden, Director, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Dept. of Military and Veterans Affairs
Interstate Compact for Adult Offender Supervision	AS § 33.36.010-040	2002	Ronald Taylor, Director, DOC Division of Probation and Parole
Interstate Insurance Product Regulation Compact	AS § 21.42.700-705	2007	Linda Hall, Director, Division of Insurance, Dept. of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children	AS § 14.34.010	2009	Mike Hanley, Commissioner, Dept. of Education and Early Development
<p>Notes: Although we believe our research to be thorough, there may be additional interstate compacts and commissions to which Alaska is a party that we were unable to locate through our efforts.</p> <p>Source: Alaska Statutes, Internet searches, and the National Center for Interstate Compacts (http://apps.csg.org/ncic/Default.aspx).</p>			

**Testimony of Gregory E. Conrad, Executive Director,
Interstate Mining Compact Commission before the House
Resource Committee re HB 360 – March 19, 2012**

Good afternoon. My name is Gregory Conrad and I serve as Executive Director of the Interstate Mining Compact Commission. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today in support of H.B. 360, a bill to authorize the state of Alaska to join the Compact as a full member state. As you know, Alaska has been an associate member of the Compact since 2006, during which time the state has had an opportunity to learn more about the benefits and services that IMCC provides to its member states. I believe you will hear directly from a representative of the Department of Natural Resources about Alaska's experience to date, which I understand has been very positive. It is based on this experience that the state has chosen to move forward with the legislation that is necessary to bring the state into the Compact as a full member. In this regard, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have today about the work of the Compact and how it will directly benefit Alaska.

The specific matter I have been asked to address with you today is why Alaska should become a full member. As with other state government organizations, it is the active participation and commitment of the full member states that carries the organization forward in terms of both support and leadership. Upon becoming a full member through the enactment of legislation, the state of Alaska will have a formal vote in guiding the direction of the Compact. Alaska will also be in a position to chair the various standing committees of the Compact and to thereby help lead the Compact in directions that are favorable to both Alaska and the member states. Alaska will continue to enjoy the many other benefits to which it has been exposed over the past six years, including access to all IMCC communications, meetings, programs, and initiatives. Alaska's participation as a full member

will also be recognized and understood by those who work with the Compact on a regular basis, including both the Congress and the federal agencies, and this brings a greater degree of recognition and influence regarding Alaska's participation in our work. IMCC's presence in Washington, DC allows us to monitor federal agency and congressional initiatives that might impact states' rights as well as development constraints on mineral issues. I believe that Alaska's participation in the organization opens avenues for the state to be heard in unique and valuable ways not otherwise available to it and to be supported with the clout that comes from 24 states speaking together as one voice. And since IMCC is focused solely on mining and related environmental protection issues with the federal government, we are able to delve deeper into the concerns that matter most to Alaska in this critical area of resource use and protection.

I know I speak for all of the member states of the Compact in encouraging the Committee to seriously consider and hopefully approve this legislation to bring Alaska in as our newest full member state. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional information. Thanks for the opportunity to participate in today's hearing.