

The 33rd Alaska State Legislature



From: Members of the Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

April 3, 2023

To: The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dan Sullivan
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mary Peltola
153 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lisa Murkowski, Senator Dan Sullivan, and Representative Mary Peltola,

On behalf of the thousands of Alaskans we serve, we write to encourage you to continue your work on an all-of-the-above approach to energy and resource development so that Alaskan families, workers, and communities can benefit from the power of domestic energy production. This work requires a commitment to building, repairing, and modernizing our nation's core infrastructure and development projects without needless delay.

As you know, many infrastructure and energy projects are coming to Alaska as a result of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Many of these critical projects will experience onerous delays because of our nation's slow and inefficient permitting processes. Not only do these delays undermine the value of taxpayer investments, they can prevent projects from moving forward—blocking otherwise shovel-ready projects with significant economic, national security, climate, and quality-of-life implications for communities throughout Alaska and across the country.

The permitting and review processes for new infrastructure and energy projects have become overly complicated, burdensome, and riddled with inefficiencies. Projects, depending on location and funding sources, are often subject to multiple permitting regimes on the federal level, made only more complicated by requirements on the state and local levels. Environmental reviews alone can take several years—if not a full decade or more—to complete. These inefficiencies increase costs, decrease overall investment, and delay the economic and environmental benefits of modern, more sustainable

infrastructure. At the same time, the lengthy federal permitting process discourages private-sector investment by increasing risks for interested companies and their investors.

As our Congressional leaders, we ask you to advocate in favor of reducing burdensome regulations delaying the permitting process and to seek opportunities to streamline the federal review process for the betterment of both Alaskans and the environment.

As Congress renews its efforts this month to advance meaningful permitting reform, including critical policies like the National Environmental Policy Act, Congress must work toward a bipartisan solution to these overly bureaucratic permitting and environmental review processes. Importantly, these changes should not lower the exceptional environmental standards that Alaska and the rest of the United States currently maintain. We ask that you work to make infrastructure project approvals more efficient, coordinated, and predictable for all parties involved. The right kind of permitting reforms should increase transparency and accountability while reducing the duplication of efforts made at the federal, state, and local levels, which are the unfortunate norm of our current system.

Alaska is ready to move forward with the development of new infrastructure and energy projects that will help create jobs, strengthen local communities, and put us on track to a more sustainable future. However, in order to move these projects forward in a timely manner, we need more efficient and streamlined permitting, review, and approval processes. This way we can address our nation's supply chain challenges and meet our goals in areas of energy, job creation, and environmental stewardship—spurring American innovation and strengthening our entire economy.

As has been emphasized time and time again, these efforts will help streamline the already-onerous federal permitting process and will help the hard-working men and women who build, feed, and grow this country get their jobs done. Please continue working with your colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make federal permitting reform the priority it deserves to be in the 118th Congress in order to help our nation maximize the benefits of federal investments you continue to champion in Congress.

Thank you for your work on this issue and your leadership on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee, and both the House Natural Resources and House Transportation and Infrastructure Committees, respectively.

Sincerely,

The following members of the Alaska State House and Senate:



Senator James Kaufman



Senator Kelly Merrick



Senator David Wilson



Senator Robert Myers



Senator Shelley Hughes



Senator Jesse Bjorkman



Senator Bill Wielechowski



Senator Click Bishop



Senator Matt Claman



Senator Löki Tobin



Speaker Cathy Tilton



Rep. Calvin Schrage



Rep. Jesse Sumner



Rep. Craig Johnson



Rep. Donna Mears



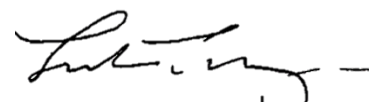
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Rep. Kevin McCabe



Rep. Will Stapp



Rep. Frank Tomaszewski



Rep. Sarah Vance



Rep. Mike Prax



Rep. Zack Fields



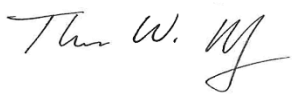
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Rep. Justin Ruffridge



Rep. Stanley Wright



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Rep. Ben Carpenter



Rep. Julie Coulombe



Rep. Laddie Shaw



Rep. Dan Saddler