



August 24, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of our organizations and the tens of thousands of jobs we represent, we welcome you and Secretary John Kerry to Alaska. Thank you for coming, and we hope you take the opportunity to learn Alaska's true story and its value to the nation. As you visit our state, often referred to as "The Last Frontier," you will see firsthand Alaskans' achievements and the tremendous opportunities that are yet untapped for the United States.

Alaska benefits from a diversified economy anchored in the responsible development of oil and natural gas resources, forestry, mining, fishing, and tourism, all of which successfully co-exist. Exploration and development of Alaska's vast resources have always provided a firm foundation for the state's economy and opportunities for sustained employment. From the earliest days of the Klondike Gold Rush, to safe and reliable energy production on the North Slope and in Cook Inlet today, Alaska's resources have provided, and can continue to provide, opportunities for generations of Americans.

The very concept of Alaska's statehood is predicated on the development of our natural resources. More than five decades ago when Alaska statehood was debated, many politicians in Washington, D.C. doubted this northern territory could build an economy and contribute to the union. Alaskans joined together to convince Congress that development of Alaska's vast resources could establish and sustain a strong private sector economy. Following the commercial discovery of oil, Washington responded by adding a 49th star to the American flag. Alaska was allowed to join the union because of the expectation that the development of our natural resources would sustain our economy.

Since becoming a state in 1959, 88 percent of state revenue from all natural resource development has come from oil and gas development. Including all direct, indirect, and induced employment and wages, oil and gas spending accounted for 110,000 jobs and \$6 billion in public and private sector wages - estimates that do not include nonresident industry workers or their wages. The positive impacts of Alaska's oil and gas industry in terms of energy production and job creation extend well beyond the state's borders, with access to these resources benefiting every major area of the economy and energy consumers throughout the country.

Mining, like energy, is a key driver for growth and development in Alaska, and also has enormous implications beyond the state's confines. Production of zinc, lead, gold, silver, and coal in the state, as well as materials for construction such as sand, gravel, and rock, is critical to the development of new technologies and infrastructure expansion and modernization. Minerals and coal are Alaska's second-

largest export commodity, accounting for about 36 percent of the state's export total with a value of \$1.6 billion. Mining accounts for more than 9,000 direct and indirect jobs, which pay about \$630 million in payroll annually.

Three million lakes, 3,000 rivers, and 34,000 miles of coastline make Alaska one of the world's most important fishing regions, supplying a wide variety of healthy seafood. Alaska's fisheries are recognized as some of the best-managed in the world, and provide about 60,000 seasonal and full-time jobs. Annual revenues generated by the fishing industry total more than \$100 million in state and local taxes, ranging from fish processing and corporate taxes to fishery resource landing taxes, license fees, and seafood marketing assessments.

Tourism is the second-largest private sector employer, and accounts for one in eight Alaskan jobs. Alaska tourism generates nearly 40,000 direct and indirect jobs, nine percent of Alaska employment, and \$1.32 billion in combined labor income. Visitor spending approaches nearly \$2 billion annually, excluding travel costs such as air fare. Dozens of Alaska communities and boroughs collected \$78 million in sales and bed taxes and cruise ship docking fees in 2013, and the state collected \$101 million in visitor-related revenues.

The forestry industry supported more than 700 direct jobs last year, with an average wage \$10,000 higher than the average private sector job. This industry is important to support the families and communities in which it exists, and it has the potential to diversify the economy.

Alaska depends on the responsible development of its natural resources to expand and support its economy. Article VIII of our state constitution mandates that we develop our resources to the maximum benefit for all Alaskans. To do that, we need access and responsibility for our own lands.

Alaska's motto is "North to the Future." As you develop and implement federal regulatory policy, we encourage you to consider the potential future impacts to Alaskans and Americans in the Lower 48, and strike a reasonable balance that will continue to permit the development and use of our resources. Alaska may be small in population, but its opportunities are countless.

Sincerely,

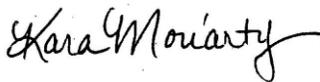
Vince Beltrami, Alaska AFL-CIO



Joey Merrick, Alaska Laborers District Council



Kara Moriarty, Alaska Oil and Gas Association



Rebecca Logan, Alaska Support Industry Alliance



Rachael Petro, Alaska Chamber



Deantha Crockett, Alaska Miners Association



Rodney Brown, Alaska Petroleum Joint Crafts Council



Aaron Plikat, Building and Construction Trades Council of South Central Alaska



Anne Seneca, Consumer Energy Alliance



Lake Williams, Fairbanks Building and Construction Council



Marleanna Hall, Resource Development Council



Karen Matthias, Council of Alaska Producers



Rodney Hesson, Juneau Building and Construction Trades Council



Rick Boyles, Teamsters Local 959



cc: The Honorable John F. Kerry
The Honorable Lisa A. Murkowski
The Honorable Daniel S. Sullivan

The Honorable Donald E. Young
The Honorable William M. Walker