

Doniece Gott

From: Shirley McCaa [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 4:04 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Clean Water Act 404

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

As you deliberate the FY24 Operating budget, please support funding for the State to assume primacy over the Clean Water Act 404 program.

We Alaskans care about our state more than any outsider could ever understand and we are committed to protecting it. Many of us own remote properties for fishing and hunting and we more than anyone want to keep the permitting process local. Alaska's environment and economy would suffer at the hands of outsiders making those decisions for us. Alaskan regulators understand the uniqueness of Alaska and can better manage environmental protection policy in our state and we have a fantastic track record doing so.

State assumption of the 404 program will bring stability and predictability to our permitting process. Too often, federal employees come to Alaska and serve in their roles for three years or less, often without an understanding of ANILCA and ANCSA, and other formational laws and policies that guide our land management principles, and Alaska's unique environment and characteristics. Alaskan regulators understand the uniqueness of Alaska and can better manage environmental protection policy in our state.

I am convinced the State of Alaska has the capacity to assume this program and do an even better job than the federal government at protecting our environment, just as we have done with the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES; now the Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System APDES), the Clean Air Act, and the Safe Water Drinking Act.

Many permittees have already stated on the record they are open to an appropriate increase in fees to cover what it costs the state to administer the 404 program, and I stand ready to work with ADEC on that fee structure. We also support State efforts to pursue and secure federal funding for the program.

Please support funding the Clean Water Act 404 program in this budget, as it will strengthen the State's regulatory system and attract the investment needed to grow our economy.

Best regards,

Shirley McCaa



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