

Doniece Gott

From: Michael Rieser [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 7:54 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for State of Alaska 404 Primacy

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

I am writing to express my support for the State of Alaska assuming primacy over the 404 program. I believe this change will increase efficiency for the regulated community and provide financial benefit to the State of Alaska while maintaining or improving environmental protection.

I have worked in permitting at several mining companies, Donlin Gold, Pebble, Teck American, and Teck Alaska. The fields I have worked with the state for permitting include air quality, water discharge, and habitat. Based upon my experiences, I believe Alaska primacy for 404 would provide the following benefits:

- State of Alaska agency staff are very knowledgeable in their respective fields and the geographic area of a proposed project, creating an efficient permitting process in which they can work through a proposed action with the applicant to identify problems and improve the project plan prior to submitting final applications.
- The 404 program is closely related to water quality and habitat protection which the state of Alaska already regulates, and would integrate well with the Office of Project Management and Permitting for larger projects.
- State of Alaska primacy for 404 would result in additional expertise being developed within state agencies and would increase the pool of expertise within the state.
- Policies and regional permits can be tailor-made to needs in Alaska, saving local governments and businesses significant costs.

The assumption of 404 by the state of Alaska would also help address long Federal permit timelines, a problem drawing a lot of national attention. Time is money, and excessively long timelines and uncertainty are detrimental to investment in any project. To remain competitive with other jurisdictions, for example for production of critical minerals required for the Inflation Reduction Act, the State of Alaska must take every opportunity to make the permitting process efficient and effective. I believe assuming primacy will provide such an opportunity, while maintaining a high level of environmental protection.

Best Regards,

Michael Rieser ·
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Anchorage, Alaska