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RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

April 18, 2023

Submitted electronically to: Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov

Senate Labor & Commerce Committee
State of Alaska Legislature

Re: Support for SB 123, an act relating to CDL licensing requirements.

Dear Senate Labor & Commerce Chair Bjorkman and Members of the Committee:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. (RDC) writes in support of SB 123, an act relating to CDL (commercial driver's license) licensing requirements. This bill represents a commonsense approach to improve the time in which otherwise certified commercial driver's license applicants can get the approvals necessary to become a licensed commercial driver.

RDC is a statewide trade association comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's fishing, tourism, forestry, mining, and oil and gas industries. RDC's membership also includes Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. Since 1975, RDC's purpose has been to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through our mission of growing Alaska through responsible resource development.

The bill seeks to address key challenges in our current labor market. First, this bill will help address a shortage of qualified drivers in rural and remote areas of Alaska where there can be significant challenges in obtaining personal as well as commercial driver's licenses – including having to travel to other communities due to a lack of local DMV and/or training facilities. This bill will also help address a nationwide shortage of commercial driver's license holders by expediting the time in which a CDL can be received assuming the applicant passes all other testing requirements. This shortage is currently a significant challenge for many operators in both our oil and gas and mining industries, including the support industries that work for them. Eliminating the one-year waiting period while still ensuring an applicant meets all other training and background requirements will help address this problem.

We encourage you to pass SB 123. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Leila Kimbrell
Executive Director

