



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

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Submitted electronically via: [Lucy Murfitt@indian.senate.gov](mailto:Lucy.Murfitt@indian.senate.gov), [Joe Byrnes@sullivan.senate.gov](mailto:Joe.Byrnes@sullivan.senate.gov), Joshua.Walton@mail.house.gov

Honorable Senator Lisa Murkowski
522 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Senator Dan Sullivan
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Congressman Nick Begich
153 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515



RE: Support Chugach Alaska Land Exchange Oil Spill Recovery Act (S. 2016 and H.R. 3903)

Dear Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Begich:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska (RDC) writes in support of S. 2016 and H.R. 3903, the *Chugach Alaska Land Exchange Oil Spill Recovery Act*, which was recently introduced by Alaska's congressional delegation in the 119th Congress and is designed to resolve decades-old split-estate conflicts while delivering lasting benefits to all Alaskans.

RDC is a statewide, non-profit trade association founded in 1975. Our membership is comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's fishing, tourism, forestry, mining, and oil and gas industries and includes Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

For years, Chugach Alaska Corporation (Chugach) and the people in this region have faced barriers to effectively managing and benefiting from their lands. The split-estate issues stem from the use of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) Trustee Council settlement funds, which led to the federal and state governments acquiring surface rights and well-intentioned conservation easements, while Chugach retained subsurface rights. This has resulted in a complex arrangement which has increased costs to develop mineral resources while conflicting with the intent of the lands purchased for conservation purposes.



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The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was meant to bring together Village and Regional Corporations, granting surface rights to the former and subsurface rights to the latter. But EVOS-funded land acquisitions disrupted this balance, creating confusion and hindering both economic development and cultural stewardship.

If enacted, the proposed legislation would allow Chugach to receive approximately 65,000 acres of full-estate land that are vital to their culture, economy, and accessibility. These are lands identified for potential timber, tourism, transportation, and cultural significance. In exchange, Chugach would transfer ownership of over 230,000 acres of subsurface estate to the federal government, aligning ownership and reducing management conflicts.

This exchange is more than an administrative correction, it is an opportunity for healing, fairness, and forward progress. It will correct historic imbalances, enable Chugach to manage lands for the benefit of shareholders, as ANCSA intended, and contribute to the greater good of Alaska Native communities and all Alaskans.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and introducing this legislation which will support economic development in the Chugach region.

Sincerely,

Leila Kimbrell
Executive Director
Resource Development Council for Alaska
Celebrating 50 Years of Responsible Resource Development in Alaska



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