



March 22, 2023

House Finance Committee
HB 39 Public Testimony

Re: Primacy funding for 404 permitting

Co-Chairs Edgmon, Foster, Johnson, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my name is Kati Capozzi and I serve as the president and CEO of the Alaska Chamber. I testify today in support of funding the State primacy program of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The Alaska Chamber was founded in 1953 and is Alaska's largest statewide business advocacy organization. Our mission is to promote a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state, representing 58,000 Alaskan workers and \$4.6 billion in wages.

The Chamber has a longstanding position in support of increasing responsible natural resource development by improving the efficiencies of the permitting process and gaining access to our resources. As identified in the feasibility study requested by the legislature, state primacy of the 404 program would result in a timelier and better coordinated permitting processes without compromising current regulatory standards and requirements. It would also allow for a greater ability to tailor policies and procedures to Alaska's unique conditions. We are pleased the Legislature approved the statutory authority to implement the 404-primacy program and encourage you to take the next crucial step in providing for the funding needed to successfully apply for and implement the program.

There have been significant federal administrative and legislative actions that have negatively impacted Alaska's businesses and overall investment climate. By providing the funding needed to implement the 404 program, the Legislature can bring some much-needed stability back to Alaska. A State-run program is accountable to Alaskans and the legislature and will assure that Alaska will have control of its permitting priorities.

Thank you for your consideration in funding the 404 primacy program, which will help Alaska's economy get back on track and set us up for success moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kati Capozzi' in a cursive script.

Kati Capozzi
President and CEO



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