May 22, 2017

Rear Admiral Michael F. McAllister

Commander – 17th Coast Guard District

United States Coast Guard

P.O. Box 25517

Juneau, AK 99802-5517

Attn: Lt. Jonathan Dale

Reference Docket #:

Dear Admiral McAllister:

It is my pleasure to write in support of recertification of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC) as the citizens’ representative for Cook Inlet, Alaska.

CIRCAC has been Cook Inlet’s most effective organization for promoting programs to prevent spills, enhance safety in both marine transportation and oil facilities operations, and protect Cook Inlet’s waters, shorelines, cultural, natural and wildlife resources for more than 26 years.

No other organization has focused as much attention for as many years to identifying, assessing and mitigating risks in this region. Not only does CIRCAC advocate for better regulatory oversight and safety measures, they contribute concrete solutions on how to achieve those goals, including conducting risk assessments, sharing data, developing applicable tools and strategies, evaluating best available technology, public engagement, and thoroughly reviewing contingency plans and regulations that prioritize prevention while promoting safety.

Of particular relevance to the people of the Native Village of Eklutna is the extensive body of research that CIRCAC has conducted on Cook Inlet’s biology, chemistry, geomorphology, contaminants, and oceanography. These studies create a baseline of work that is available to all who are working in and around Cook Inlet. There are resources here that the peoples of the Native Village of Eklutna have relied upon for millennia. CIRCAC provides an avenue for sharing useful and valuable information on the health of the Inlet, which is of great importance to the future health and wellbeing of our community. CIRCAC is a mechanism for all people who enjoy Cook Inlet--whether for pleasure, to get to and from a summer cabin, or to harvest salmon to fill our freezers--to speak to Industry about our priorities and concerns.

The Native Village of Eklutna wants to see progress and growth in our state but not at the expense of our environment. We share CIRCAC’s Mission and are pleased to write in support of their recertification. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lee Stephan, President

Native Village of Eklutna
26339 Eklutna Village Road
Chugiak, AK 99567