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July 27, 2023

Rear Admiral Megan Dean
Commander - 17th Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard

Re: Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council Recertification Application - *Docket Number USCG-2023-0392*

Admiral Dean:

I am a member of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC) and currently serve as its President. I fully support recertification of CIRCAC. Since its creation in 1990, CIRCAC has been and continues to be 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.

CIRCAC advocates for better regulatory oversight and safety measures and contributes to concrete solutions on how to achieve those goals. By conducting risk assessments, sharing data, developing tools and strategies, evaluating best available technology, engaging the public, and thoroughly reviewing contingency plans and regulations CIRCAC prioritizes prevention and promotes safety. No other organization has focused as much attention for as many years to identifying, assessing and mitigating risks in this region.

Since its inception, CIRCAC has formed and strengthened partnerships and encouraged consensus decision-making. Through this collaborative process, CIRCAC's exceptional staff works to bring a varied group of stakeholders together to create environmental monitoring and oil spill prevention programs to promote safe production and transportation of oil in Cook Inlet.

An example of how CIRCAC has effectively worked with industry and multiple local, state and federal agencies in the expansion of its Ice Camera Network. The information provided by these cameras has significantly reduced the risk of an incident in Cook Inlet's dynamic winter conditions and highlights CIRCAC's ability to develop partnerships and share information.

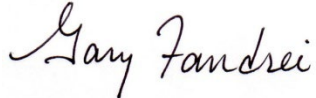
Another example is CIRCAC's science program which provides valuable information to regulators, industry, and the public about coastal habitats, physical oceanography and oil behavior. This includes compiling historical contaminants data from Cook Inlet into an integrated database for online access.

In the last three years CIRCAC's accomplishments have included, but are certainly not limited to:

- Advocating for strengthening oil spill prevention and response regulations,
- Increasing public outreach efforts through new, local advertising, exhibits and expanding audiences for its newsletter, website, and social media,
- Expanding the Geographic Response Information Database (GRID) in scope and accessibility,
- Participating on and providing expertise to the Cook Inlet Harbor Safety Committee,
- Expanding the Cook Inlet Ice Monitoring Camera Network with modern video technology,
- Updating Alaska ShoreZone visual data with new surveys along the outer Kenai Peninsula coast,
- Working cooperatively with BOEM to develop a study plan for data needs for model validation in Cook Inlet.

CIRCAC provides its stakeholders and the public an avenue through which they can work with industry and regulators to ensure safe operations in the region. I strongly urge the U.S. Coast Guard to recertify CIRCAC so that it can continue to build on its work and positively impact the future of Cook Inlet.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Fandrei".

Gary Fandrei, President
Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council