

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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North to the Future

## Senator Cathy Giessel Senate District N

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Rear Admiral Matthew T. Bell  
Commander – 17th Coast Guard District  
United States Coast Guard  
P.O. Box 25517 Juneau, AK 99802-5517

**Subject: CIRCAC Recertification**  
**Docket Number: USCG-2020-0188**

Admiral Bell,

I write to you supporting the recertification of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC). CIRCAC's work has been crucial to preserving the balance between effective marine transportation and hydrocarbon extraction while proactively maintaining the safety of Cook Inlet's waters and shorelines, as well as its cultural and natural resources.

CIRCAC is an organization that recognizes the importance of its oversight and regulatory role while also working towards solutions to issues that affect different stakeholder groups. The Cook Inlet is home to the state's largest population centers, southcentral Alaska's largest source of energy, the state's largest port, and some of the most important watersheds in North America. CIRCAC has a record that prioritizes prevention, public engagement, information sharing, and integrating best practices to keep the resiliency of the Inlet.

In the past couple years, several issues regarding oil and natural gas infrastructure in the Cook Inlet brought widespread attention and concern. During all the incidents, CIRCAC played a material role that provided subject matter expertise and local knowledge that contributed to the response strategies.

CIRCAC continues to broaden its outreach to other stakeholders. One example is the formation of the Tourism Stakeholder Group to include actors such as tourism marketing councils, regional chambers of commerce, and other tourism representatives. CIRCAC is working to maintain the Cook Inlet and its attractions as a place that draws people from around the world to Alaska in a safe and sustainable manner.

The record of CIRCAC is of an organization that is consensus driven, and works from the local level upwards, achieving legitimacy from the numerous interests in the region. I appreciate CIRCAC being an important source of information that policymakers at the local, state, and federal level can leverage when contemplating important decisions in the region.

As I wrote in 2014, and 2017, I look forward, once again, to continuing the positive relationship CIRCAC fosters. I respectfully request the United State Coast Guard approve the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council's application for recertification.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy Giessel". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and connected.

Senator Cathy Giessel