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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

July 28, 2017

Rear Admiral Michael V. McAllister
Commander
United States Coast Guard – District 17
Attn: Lieutenant Jonathan Dale
709 West Ninth Street, Suite 223 B
Juneau, AK 99802

RE: CIRCAC Recertification Docket #USCG-2017-0289

Dear Admiral McAllister:

As Governor of the State of Alaska, and a lifelong Alaskan, I support recertification of the Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council (CIRCAC). CIRCAC has been an effective organization in promoting programs to prevent spills, enhance safety in both marine transportation and oil facility operations in Cook Inlet, and helping to protect Cook Inlet's waters, shorelines, cultural, natural, and wildlife resources.

No other organization has focused as much attention for as many years on assessing and mitigating risks in this region. CIRCAC advocates for better regulatory oversight and safety measures, and they contribute concrete solutions toward achieving those goals, including conducting risk assessments, sharing data, developing applicable tools and strategies, evaluating best available technology, encouraging public engagement, and thoroughly reviewing contingency plans and regulations that prioritize prevention and safety.

CIRCAC has been proactive in identifying risks and concrete recommendations to address them. Even before the series of recent leaks in Cook Inlet, CIRCAC was in the process of updating its 2000 subsea pipeline report and is now actively participating in scoping out a pipeline risk assessment with federal and State of Alaska agency partners. CIRCAC also prompted the State to review policies and procedures in conducting oil spill response. Throughout all the incidents, CIRCAC was heavily involved in monitoring and providing resources, local knowledge, and expertise to influence the response. CIRCAC also served as a subject matter expert in the environmental monitoring plan following the Platform A gas line leak and participated in overflights to monitor impacts.

CIRCAC continues to strengthen oil spill contingency plans and recommend substantive changes to ensure facilities are adequately staffed and that the plans are executable, and it also has an eye toward the future. Through its scholarship program, CIRCAC is encouraging the next generation of stewards committed to protecting Cook Inlet, and CIRCAC is expanding public awareness of Cook

Inlet through opening the Tourism Stakeholder Group to include other vested interests in Cook Inlet, including tourism marketing councils, regional chambers of commerce, and other travel and tourism related industry representation.

Among its many other accomplishments, CIRCAC conducted the first ShoreZone coastal habitat mapping project in Alaska and developed an online data portal, which has since developed into a statewide, multi-organizational partnership (www.shorezone.org).

Since its inception, CIRCAC has formed partnerships and encouraged consensus decision-making, bringing stakeholders together to create environmental monitoring and oil spill prevention programs that promote safe production and transportation of oil and gas in Cook Inlet. 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.

Sincerely,



Bill Walker
Governor

cc: The Honorable Larry Hartig, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation
Michael Munger, Executive Director, Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council