



BUSINESS to BUSINESS

ALASKA CHAMBER

JUNE
2017

Interior Secretary: Road to American Energy Runs Through Alaska



On a cloudless Tuesday evening after the long Memorial Day weekend, the Alaska Chamber hosted Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke. The former U.S. House Representative and Seal Team 6 commander addressed members of the Alaska business community while flanked by Senators Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, Alaska's senior statesman Representative Don Young, and Chamber CEO Curtis W. Thayer.

In his opening remarks, Thayer wel-

of the United States of America.

While in Congress, Zinke worked with Alaska's Congressional Delegation on issues that have serious impact on our state. Issues like the military and veterans' affairs, energy production, states' rights and resource production. The secretary's tour of Alaska shows that those working relationships have clearly continued as he advances the administration's economic, energy, and public lands initiatives.

Energy dominance is "different than energy independence" Zinke said. "It is better to produce energy here in North America under reasonable regulation than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. If you want to watch the catastrophes of environmental recklessness I invite you to spend some time in the Middle East or in Africa."

comed a refreshing new tone from the developing administration in Washington D.C., saying, "Over 60 percent of all Alaska lands are owned by the federal government. It is a great sign when 'our landlord' wants to partner with us to help responsibly develop our natural resources and grow our economy."

Zinke delighted attendees with a surprising familial tie to Alaska: his wife, Lola, worked at Lucky Wishbone in Anchorage as a teen. And as a geologist, the secretary has a science-based understanding of Alaska's unique resource potential.

His address illustrated a deep and welcome understanding of Alaska — as a state with a strong identity, a diverse community, and also as a key component for the future

As Secretary of the Interior, Zinke plays an important role in defining the future of Alaska. Western states, Alaska in particular, are dominated by federally controlled lands. Recent actions from D.C. have erected barriers to resource development, but Zinke assured attendees that the new administration better understands Alaska's importance in the national and worldwide landscapes.

The President's goal for the United States is "energy dominance." It will require infrastructure development, access to resources, and working American men and women to achieve dominance here at home.

Energy dominance is "different than

See Zinke, Page 5



PHOTOS/FRANK FLAVIN

TOP: Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, center, is flanked on the left by Alaska Chamber President Curtis Thayer and Rep. Don Young and on the right by Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan as he addresses an audience of Chamber members May 30 in Anchorage. **MIDDLE:** Zinke with Pat Foley and Chamber Board Chair Casey Sullivan, both of Caelus Energy. **BELOW:** Zinke, Thayer and the Alaska Congressional Delegation give a thumbs up to responsible resource development.

OUR VISION & MISSION

To be the leading voice advancing Alaska Business. | To promote a healthy business environment in Alaska.

From the President: Fix spending before turning to taxes

By Curtis W. Thayer

Alaska Chamber President & CEO

The spring edition of Business to Business is where I prefer to write an end-of-session legislative report for all our hard-working Alaska Chamber members.

However, recurring special sessions have become the norm while the State fails to reform unsustainably extravagant spending habits.

So while 2017 has seen positive movement on critical business issues like Workers' Compensation reform, public sector financial failure still looms as a threat to the overall Alaska economy.

The Senate came up with a reasonable budget compromise.

It balanced modest yet meaningful budget reductions with new revenues from the private sector, those

coming as sacrifices from the oil and gas industry foregoing future development incentives.

Bringing spending in line with revenues is a foundational first step to lead Alaska out of recession.

That ought to be the sole focus in Juneau right now, and we've already witnessed the private sector meeting state government in the middle.

But the House Majority and Governor Walker have dollar signs in their eyes.

It's a fact made clearly apparent by the laundry list of new taxes outlined in the executive proclamation issued by the Governor on May 17.

Three of the Governor's eight special session to-dos are budget mandates that the legislature must perform.

If legislators accomplish nothing else this year, by oath they have to address appropriations. Specifically, the legislature must adopt capital, operating, and

mental health budgets.

Every other item in Governor Walker's proclamation calls for new or increased revenues from hardworking Alaskans.

It is poor governance to shoulder Alaskans with the burden of an inappropriately sized government.

Particularly when we are struggling with recession and losing thousands of private sector jobs.

So while special session is unfortunately necessary, the Governor's call pulls legislative attention away from the critical issues of reducing the budget.

Alaskans and Alaska's industries are willing to compromise where it's warranted. We've witnessed that happen with oil and gas tax credits, and restructure of the Permanent Fund.

But the State must demonstrate responsible spending before turning to new taxes. And the Chamber will continue to advocate for sustainable spending before new tax measures are considered.



THAYER

From the Chair: Annual awards, policy submissions open

By Casey Sullivan

Board Chair, Alaska Chamber



The Alaska Chamber's advocacy platform is a wonderful illustration of a grassroots movement working for the good of Alaskans.

Every policy position is basically a successful ballot initiative — advanced by an individual business and adopted by the statewide business community — for the betterment of Alaska's economy.

That's probably a big part of why the Chamber is the most credible advocate for business in Alaska.

Chamber policy positions come directly from Alaska's private sector companies. The online submission system is available for members starting on Monday, June 5.

The submission period closes on Friday, August 4, allowing staff and committee members a chance to prepare positions for presentation to the statewide business community.

The Chamber's Policy Forum is the culmination of all this important work. The forum is an annual event that moves around the state, ensuring participation and representation for all Alaskans and each region's unique needs.

This year we're headed to Sitka, the First City of Alaska, for three days of meetings from October 10-12.

The annual forum is also an opportunity for education with presentations on local and national issues of our day. It's a chance for like-minded professionals to share experiences and build connections with peers from around the state.

It's also a chance to celebrate the year's best in business with our Top Business Awards.

The Bill Bivin Small Business of the Year and Local Alaska Chamber of the Year awards recognize exceptional performance from Alaska organizations that embody the ideals that make our state great.

Similarly, the William A. Egan Outstanding Alaskan of the Year award is a prestigious recognition of the unique and lifelong contributions of some of Alaska's greatest citizens.

Nominations for these awards also come directly from the business community. Again, the submission period begins on Monday, June 5 and runs through Friday, August 4. Consider the businesses, local Alaska chambers and exemplary Alaskans that you work with, and nominate the best of them for recognition in Sitka this October.

The Alaska business community is strong, and we're at our strongest when we work together across all geographic and industry boundaries. Be part of the grassroots, pro-business effort. The policy submission and awards nomination guidelines are available online at alaskachamber.com, and save the date to join us in Sitka this fall.

Alaska Business Week 2017



Alaska Business Week (ABW) is a one-week summer program teaching Alaskan high school students the basics of business, leadership and entrepreneurship. Participants live on a college campus, and work as teams with the guidance of a mentor from the business community. After completing the program, students have a competitive edge on workplace readiness, college preparation, and overall life success.

Learn more at
alaskachamber.com/ABW



BusinessWeek
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Welcome New Members

Avitus Group

Avitus Group takes the worry and stress out of HR management, from administering payroll to recruitment and training. Their experts guide you through always-changing health insurance regulations, seek out the best benefits and deliver unmatched service and support. Most importantly, you choose the options that fit you best, from individual services to an all-inclusive outsourced human resources solutions package. Visit them online at avitusgroup.com.

CVS Health

Millions of times a day, CVS Health helps people on their path to better health. From advising on prescriptions to helping manage chronic and specialty conditions, CVS plays an active, supportive role in shaping the future of health care. Visit them online at cvshealth.com.

Denali Commercial

The leasing arm of Denali Commercial Management, Denali Commercial provides leasing services to over 600,000 square feet of office, retail and warehouse space in Anchorage, Wasilla and Palmer. Visit them online at denalicommercial.com.

Insurance Brokers of Alaska

A full-service insurance agency, Insurance Brokers of Alaska offers property and ca-

sualty, workers compensation, surety and bonding, employee benefits, and other specialized types of coverage to meet specific client needs. Visit them online at insurancebrokersak.com.

Juneau 1, LLC

A commercial property management company, Juneau 1 LLC oversees properties in Anchorage and Juneau.

K.Jardell Company

With experience in all three branches of Alaska government, K.Jardell Company provides strategic guidance, representation and advocacy to clients on policy and political issues before the State of Alaska Executive and Legislative branches of government. Visit them online at kjardell.com.

Lockheed Martin Corporation

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin Corporation is a global security and aerospace company that is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. Visit them online at lockheedmartin.com.

Peak Trust Company

Since 1997, Peak Trust Company (PTC) has provided exceptional trust and invest-

ment management services to thousands of individuals and families across the nation. PTC offers tax-favored trust situs in either Nevada or Alaska, flexible and customized trust administration solutions and unparalleled service for a reasonable fee. Visit them online at peaktrust.com.

Talking Circle Media

Based in Anchorage, Alaska, Talking Circle Media (TCM) has filmed all across the state. From the rainy southeastern rainforest, to the surface of a glacier, to shooting in far away locations no camera has ever shot, TCM's crew will meet all your needs. Visit them online

at talkingcirclemedia.com.

UBER

Based in San Francisco, California, Uber is an application-based ridesharing service with operations in 528 cities worldwide. Pending legislation, Uber hopes to be operating in Alaska soon. Visit them online at uber.com.

“When you see Alaska through Robert Murphy's eyes, you see a world of possibilities.”

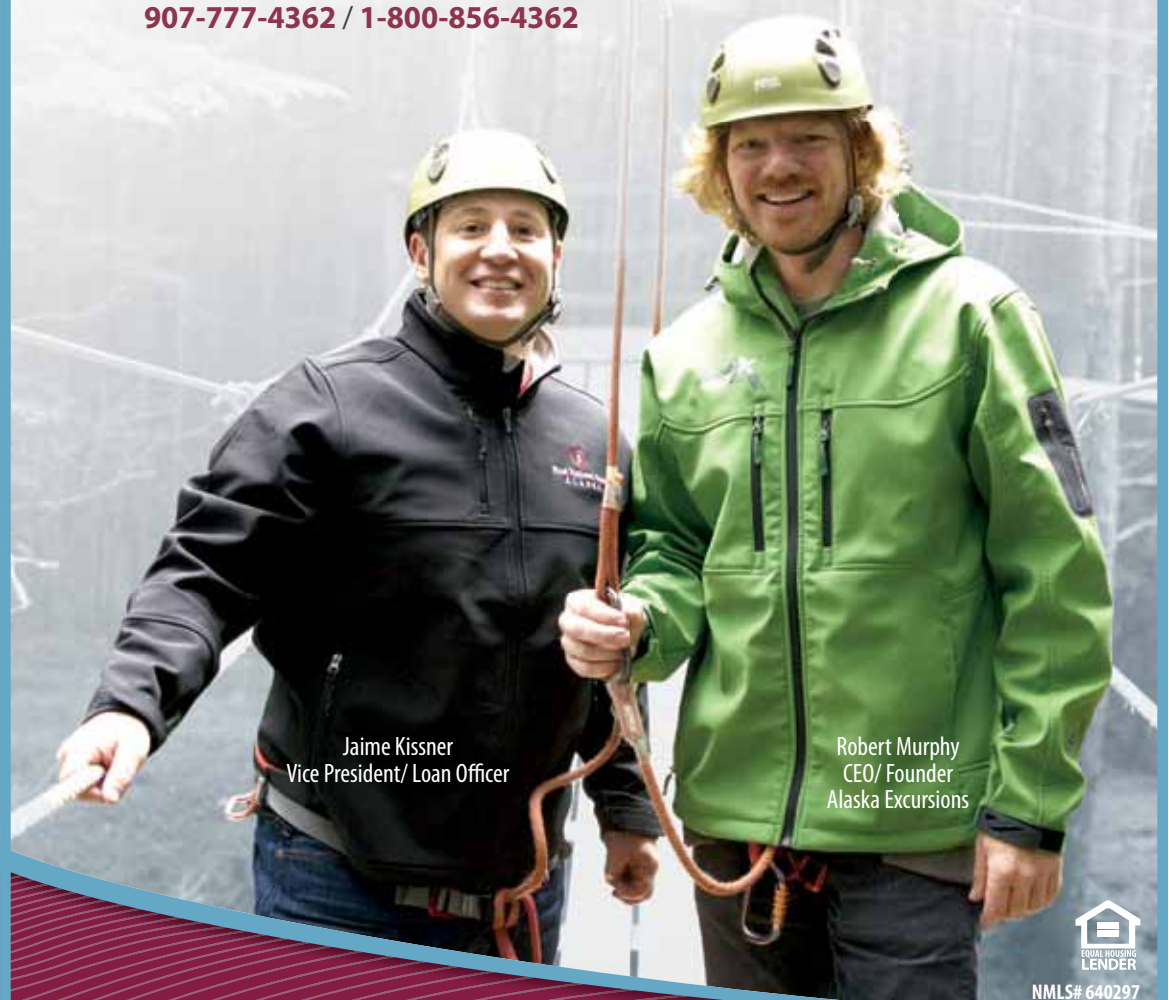
Jaime Kissner, First National Bank Alaska, Vice President/ Loan Officer

Robert Murphy started Alaska Excursions with a single van, a lot of imagination and a simple mission: Offer visitors from around the world the Alaska experience of a lifetime.

Robert could bank anywhere but he chooses First National Bank Alaska. Today, Robert operates Alaska Excursions in Skagway, Haines and Juneau. And First National has helped him grow every step, tour, cruise, zipline run and charter along the way.

If you have a vision and need a local bank that knows how to navigate Alaska's changing economy, give us a call. We'd love to explore your possibilities and discover new ways to help your business – and Alaska – succeed.

For the rest of Robert's story visit FNBAAlaska.com
907-777-4362 / 1-800-856-4362



Jaime Kissner
Vice President/ Loan Officer

Robert Murphy
CEO/ Founder
Alaska Excursions



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Save the Dates!

2017 Member Appreciation Reception

July 24, 2017
Anchorage, Alaska

2017 Policy Submission Period

June 5-August 4, 2017

2017 Top Business Awards Nomination Period

June 5-August 4, 2017

2017 Fall Forum

October 10-12, 2017
Sitka, Alaska

**Mark your calendars and check
our website for more information
at alaskachamber.com.**

A foundation based on shared understanding

By Curtis W. Thayer
Alaska Chamber President & CEO

Beginnings are important. Whether you're starting a new project or growing an economy, you have to start with a firm foundation.

I recently returned from Washington, D.C., for a set of in-person meetings with a dramatically changed federal administration.

Once again, the Alaska Chamber was fortunate to partner with the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce on their 32nd Annual Washington-to-Washington, D.C. Conference (WA2WA).

This is a four-day series of highly topical meetings with the lawmakers and political insiders that set national policy for the country and for Alaska.

Alaska is vital to national defense

Our military service men and women are core components of our communities and of Alaska's economy. That valuable military presence has been bolstered by important moves like the F-35A squadron recently assigned to Eielson Air Force Base.

Alaska will always have critical strategic importance when it comes to national defense. Indeed, it's difficult to envision Alaska without our talented warfighters.

I was able to share this message with leadership for the Army and Air Force, and Base Realignment and Closure administrators.

Healthcare for Alaska's workforce

Healthcare is an important and growing industry in Alaska, but it shares some of the difficulties of healthcare throughout the country.

As employers, it may sometimes feel like we are alone in trying to provide meaningful healthcare options to our employees. Costs are a burden. And in many cases, options for care are limited or unavailable.

Meetings with healthcare policymakers like Washington's Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler and Congressman Tim Murphy of Pennsylvania reaffirm that this is a national issue for pri-



PHOTO/COURTESY/ALASKA CHAMBER

Congressman Don Young addresses business leaders and civic officials during the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce's 32nd Annual Washington-To-Washington D.C. Conference.

vate sector business. Our state's size and geography might provide a uniquely Alaskan twist, but we are not alone in seeking a cure for healthcare.

The ties that bind

Ties that Bind is an economic impact survey that measures the impact of Alaska on the Puget Sound Region. Repeated roughly once each decade, the report is a poignant reminder that Alaska is far more than a stunning vacation destination. Alaska also represents a consumer base of nearly three-quarters of a million people.

According to the most recent Ties

that Bind report, published in February 2015, Alaska is directly responsible for 113,000 jobs in the Puget Sound region alone.

For every seven people who make their home here in Alaska, somebody in Washington just got a full-time job.

Economic impact on that scale simply cannot be ignored.

Senator Lisa Murkowski and Congressman Don Young along with Senator Maria Cantwell participated in the WA2WA event with a Ties that Bind discussion.

The panel included both house and senate members from Washington and

Alaska, plus representatives from companies like Tote, Tesoro and PNW utility groups. The unanimous takeaway from the meeting was that as Alaska goes, so goes our partners in the Pacific Northwest.

The WA2WA event was a productive trip. It's important that Alaska be present while a new administration develops in D.C.

The trip also provided the opportunity to find additional common ground with our nearest business partners. I expect our Pacific Northwest counterparts to join us, providing a stronger, more united voice for Alaska's future.

Hard change needed for workers' compensation reform

By Curtis W. Thayer
Alaska Chamber President & CEO

Change is hard... even when everyone agrees that change is necessary. It's easier to do nothing than it is to affect change. But every once in a while you bump into something that's just so utterly broken that change is the only option. That's where we're at with Alaska's Workers' Compensation system.

In 2004 Alaska was the second most expensive workers' compensation state in the country. It took us almost a decade, but in 2012 we finally dethroned states like California and Illinois as the worst in the United States.

When it comes to getting hurt people back to work, we're no longer dead last in the nation. But we're close enough to remember the feeling.

The Alaska Chamber has been working alongside Senator Cathy Giessel and the Workers' Compensation Committee of Alaska to tackle our broken workers' compensation system. The introduction of Senate Bill 112 is the first step in addressing the problem and we look forward to working with all parties to fix the system.

The argument for reform

The obstacle that derails many reform attempts is that frequently there are opposing constituencies on either side of an issue. That's not the case with workers' compensation. Alaska's current system is broken and it's not serving anyone.

In 49 of 50 U.S. states litigating attorneys are compen-

sated based on a set percentage of settled claims. In Alaska, attorneys invoice for their time and preferred hourly rate, in some cases exceeding the settlement amount.

Ten years ago when the Chamber started advocating for reform, you'd mention workers' compensation in a room full of people and everyone's eyes would just glaze over.

There are a lot of moving parts to the system, and it's taken a long time to get everyone up to speed on why it's failing Alaska workers. But we're there now.

Over that last three or four years, Alaska has flirted with incremental improvements.

Progress has been frustratingly slow, particularly if you're an injured worker floundering in a bungled system or an employer hemorrhaging money at activities that don't help your employees.

We've made small improvements, particularly with the medical community stepping up to accept certain payment controls on common procedures. And now we're finally ready to tackle the foundational flaws in Alaska's failed workers' compensation system.

So what has to change?

Make wise choices

Alaska needs to adopt options for employees to direct their own care. Currently, if an Alaska worker is uncomfortable or dissatisfied with their doctor, they can switch once. Then they're stuck. It's worse for employers.

If there's a talented specialist or experienced out-of-state option, our Alaska companies or their employees

don't have that option.

Use what works

There are medical treatment guidelines that help ensure treatments for injured workers are both reasonable and necessary. Alaska doesn't use those guidelines and we should. Similarly, we need to adopt official disability guidelines and utilization reviews to make sure our provider community is getting our workers the care they need.

Pull the rest

Re-employment benefits pay for training so injured workers can move into a new field. Re-employment training sounded pretty good as a concept; however, in practice, re-employment benefits doesn't do anything and needs to be repealed.

Between a Department of Labor commissioned study and one from California, we find that nearly no one completes their re-employment program and they return to their old profession.

Instead of giving people a lump sum for training they'll never get, we should implement a voucher system that will go towards a person's re-employment program.

The inner workings of workers' compensation are legitimately challenging, but the goal of the system isn't.

Many states have success models that we can use to improve our system. Alaska can make wise workers' compensation choices, use what works, and get rid of programs that don't.

Q&A with the Avitus Group

Q. How long have you been an Alaska Chamber member?

A. While we are a recent member addition to the Alaska Chamber, we have had an office presence in Alaska for about two years. In July 2015 we acquired Swan Employer Services and today have an office Anchorage, as well as a satellite office in Fairbanks.

Q. Can you briefly describe your business?

A. Avitus Group is a full service, back office solutions company that works with business owners to offer a unique array of services designed to eliminate everyday hassles that come with running a business. Avitus Group offers services such as; Human Resources, Payroll, Accounting, IT, Marketing, Co-Employer and Recruiting.

Q. What sets you apart from competitors?

Avitus Group is a one-stop shop for all of your back office needs. While many of our competitors offer payroll and human resources, Avitus Group can offer a variety of services, all of which are a-la carte, suited to help your business succeed.



Q. What trends or insights are you finding in your field or market?

Over the years more and more business owners are choosing to outsource their back office functions in order to focus on what they do best, run their business. With Avitus Group, you can focus on what you do best, while we handle all of the back office hassles.

Q. Why did you get involved with the Alaska Chamber?

At Avitus Group we believe it is important to be connected to the community in which we work in. Joining the Chamber is a great way to get involved in the community while building relationships with the local members.

Q. How can people reach you? (E.g. Locally, Nationally, etc.)

We have a local representative in the area, Steven Abeln, and he would be happy to speak with you about any of our services or questions you may have about Avitus Group. Steven can be reached via email at sabeln@avitusgroup.com or via his cell (907) 302-1122. In addition to Steven, I am also available at (720) 582-3450 or mbreckenridge@avitusgroup.com.

Zinke: Continued from Page 1

energy independence,” Zinke said. “It is better to produce energy here in North America under reasonable regulation than watch it be produced overseas with no regulation. If you want to watch the catastrophes of environmental recklessness, I invite you to spend some time in the Middle East or in Africa.”

As important as energy policy is to the economy of Alaska, it’s also a matter of national security. “I’ve seen war,” Zinke said, “and I don’t want any of your children – ever – to experience what I did. I don’t want our country to ever be held hostage by a foreign entity because of our energy.”

Putting action to words, the following day Zinke signed an order to jumpstart Alaskan energy production in the National Petroleum Reserve (NPR-A).

The promising reserve has been increasingly locked away, hampering energy and economic development in Alaska. But as Senator Sullivan said in his introductory remarks, “What a difference six months makes.”

Zinke is passionate about public lands, and we know that Alaska will be developed responsibly with the respect and care that Alaskans demand. The secretary is also passionate about energy. And in his words, “There is no path that leads to energy dominance in this country that does not go through Alaska.”

Welcome to Alaska, Secretary Zinke. We look forward to a responsible and productive partnership on the path to energy dominance for America



PHOTO/COURTESY/US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke signs a secretarial order on May 31 at the Alaska Oil and Gas Association annual conference in Anchorage. The order requires a reexamination of the development plan for the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and a fresh evaluation of the oil potential in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Member Milestones

35 YEARS

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Temsco Helicopters, Inc.

30 YEARS

Doyon Limited

25 YEARS

Bering Straits Native Corporation
Kinross Fort Knox
Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference

15 YEARS

Sweeney's Clothing

10 YEARS

Flavin Photography

5 YEARS

AES Electric Supply Inc
Automatic Welding & Supply Corp
Insulfoam

1 YEAR

Alaska Gasline Development Corporation
Alaska PTAC
Chris Birch
Denali Occupational Health
Dimond Center
Financial Reality Foundation
Matson
Pfeffer Development
Petroleum Club of Anchorage
Saltwater Safari Company
Sleep Centers of Alaska
St. Elias Specialty Hospital

We've moved!

The Alaska Chamber team has moved...
next door in the same building!

We're still working on getting settled in, but we're incredibly excited to be in the new space. We'll be hosting an Open House soon along with our new neighbor – stay tuned.

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing all of you at the new office!

Our new office address is:
471 West 36th Avenue, Suite 200
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Cook Inlet producers power Alaskan business



PHOTO/FILE/ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE

Cook Inlet oil and gas production is a major economic driver for jobs and energy in Southcentral Alaska. Hilcorp, the largest producer in the region, invests about \$150 million per year in its infrastructure.

By Curtis W. Thayer
Alaska Chamber President & CEO

Alaska is fortunate to have abundant natural resources that drive our economy in a number of ways. From tourism and recreational hunting and fishing, mining, maritime transportation, to oil and natural gas development, economic prosperity is brought about by the state’s resources and the ingenuity of Alaska’s business community.

Within this broader landscape, in and of itself, and the Alaska Chamber is proud of the work by our members that make this region one of opportunity for all Alaskans.

The recent economic downturn has again highlighted the importance of companies who continue to invest in Alaska. In particular, independent energy companies have taken on a greater role in recent years, as the mix of energy companies in the state has shifted with changes in technology and strategy.

The oil and gas industry is not only a significant source of state revenue and jobs for many Alaskan families, but it serves a critical role in producing the energy our communities depend upon throughout the year.

Hilcorp has been operating in Cook Inlet since they entered Alaska in 2011. The company’s massive investments in the state have led to a revitalization of existing energy infrastructure throughout the Cook Inlet, averaging over \$150 million a year.

These investments have been a critical factor in taking Anchorage, and many other Alaskan communities, from energy scarcity several years ago to one of energy abundance today.

Lately, Hilcorp has been the topic of much discussion, as they’ve recently had to manage operational challenges related to their Cook Inlet operations. While no one welcomes events like this, I would like to point out that these situations serve as an example of a company’s capacity and attitude towards their host communities.

In this regard, Hilcorp engaged and coordi-

nated with regulators and the public to rectify the issues at hand as soon as conditions allowed workers to safely do so.

The company’s response has been resolute through coordination with local, state and federal partners and regulators. It is indicative of their regard for the community, the environment, and the overall wellbeing of the region, and we here in Alaska expect nothing less.

Energy companies must abide by the highest regulatory standards if they want to conduct business in Cook Inlet’s waters, and when incidents occur they are responsible for rapid remediation efforts.

Oil and natural gas produced in Cook Inlet goes on to power the marine transportation industry of the region. Local tug and barge companies, along with freight vessels all rely on energy produced in Cook Inlet to power their vessels.

These maritime transportation services and their providers are then utilized by Cook Inlet’s fishing industry to store and transport the fish to customers. The cycle of commerce in the region is reliant upon all industries being good stewards and cooperating with one another.

Cook Inlet needs industries of all kinds to continue to do business and collaborate with one another if we are to extend the region’s record of economic prosperity.

The success of each industry is directly tied to the success of the others in the region. Responsible companies working together to solve challenges and conduct good business practices is key to a bright future for our community.

Our members work hard to keep things running smoothly in Cook Inlet, and they learn from their mistakes when incidents occur. The legacy of Cook Inlet is one of economic success and responsible stewardship, and the businesses that operate in the area would like it to stay that way.

Curtis W. Thayer is lifelong Alaskan and serves as president and CEO of the Alaska Chamber.

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2017 Fall Forum
October 10-12 • Sitka, Alaska
Harrigan Centennial Hall





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