

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Stand for Alaska

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**Proposed Initiative Threatens Alaska's Economy, Jobs, Communities**

The Stand for Alaska (SFA) campaign said today that a proposed ballot initiative that would overhaul regulations affecting virtually any type of project in Alaska poses “a dangerous threat to Alaska’s economy, communities and jobs.” The proposed initiative will likely go before Alaska voters later this year, pending state review and certification of signature petitions filed today with the State Division of Elections.

The SFA campaign formed last October to organize opposition to the potential initiative. The group represents a broad statewide coalition, including Alaska Native corporations, trade unions, business and industry organizations and a growing coalition of Alaskans concerned about the state’s economic future.

SFA said the Stand for Salmon initiative campaign—much of whose funding came from out-of-state special interest groups—threatens current development activities, as well as future public infrastructure projects such as roads, airports, ports and wastewater treatment. Existing resource development activities like oil and mineral production, timber harvests and tourism could be negatively impacted and even brought to a halt, the group said.

SFA co-chair Joey Merrick of the Laborers’ Local 341 said the initiative poses a grave risk to his members’ jobs. “Alaska already is in a serious recession with one of the nation’s highest unemployment rates. The last thing we need is more expensive, time consuming, and unnecessary policies that cost Alaskans their livelihoods,” Merrick said.

Campaign co-chair Aaron Schutt of Doyon Ltd., an Alaska Native corporation based in Fairbanks, said passage of the initiative will hurt communities and people in rural Alaska.

“Projects like building a road or a water treatment plant in rural Alaska will be nearly impossible if this measure becomes law. Our communities cannot grow and thrive under policies like this,” he said.

Campaign co-chair Marleanna Hall of the Resource Development Council for Alaska asserts that the initiative is too broad and vague and “is based on the mistaken belief that current regulations are inadequate to protect salmon habitat.”

Stand for Alaska believes state regulatory policies should be based on sound-science and developed under a fair and transparent process inclusive of Alaska citizens. The language in this initiative, SFA said, was drafted in private, not subject to a public review process and much of the funding to place it on the ballot was paid for by outside special interest groups.

**Organizations, Native Corporations and businesses opposing the proposed initiative include:** Ahtna Incorporated, Alaska Chamber, Alaska Forest Association, Alaska Miners Association, Alaska Oil and Gas Association, Alaska Support Industry Alliance, Alaska Trucking Association, Aleut Corporation, Americans for Prosperity—Alaska, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, ANCSA CEO Association, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Associated General Contractors of Alaska, Bering Straits Native Corporation, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, Calista Corporation, Chugach Alaska Corporation, Cook Inlet Region, Inc., Council of Alaska Producers, Cruise Lines International Association Alaska, Doyon Limited, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, First Things First Alaska Foundation, Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, Koniag, Inc., Laborers 341, Mat-Su Business Alliance, NANA, Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. Sealaska Corporation, Southeast Conference, Teamsters 942