

# Kirk Zinck

During the past 10 months I have listened (in-person) to Jason Brune (DEC Commissioner) label regulations governing oil production and transportation "burdensome and onerous". He has dodged questions regarding who specifically is pushing change, and described them as "a lot of people".

It appears that the push to change regulations comes from within the oil industry, not from we Alaskans who live, work, raise families, and pursue outdoor recreation here, and not from those among us who make their living through commercial fishing. Alaskan residents will be left "holding the bag" and dealing with environmental and economic fallout, should another major oil spill occur. Current regulations, provisions for environmentally safe procedures in handling and shipping oil, ongoing monitoring by citizens' councils composed of Alaskans, and monitoring by other entities appear to be working. There has not been a spill like the Exxon Valdez in 30 years.

Regulations do warrant review and updating from time to time. Yet the current push for "review" seems to be code for "change" and all about catering to an industry that is too often uncaring and irresponsible, when it is not closely monitored and regulated. Citizen interest, citizen oversight, and strong regulations serve to raise and maintain the level of concern related to safety within the oil industry, and to ensure that this concern is ongoing.

Current regulations work. They have been reviewed many times. Except for re-emphasizing and insuring that the most advanced technology is utilized, and that response capabilities are upgraded on an ongoing basis, there should be little if any, change in regulations that govern the oil industry in Alaska. We must maintain high standards for safe oil production and transportation. Further, we must continue to let it be known that safety, environmental protection, and long-term concern for the health and welfare of all Alaskans, are among the costs of doing business here.

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