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Alaska House of Representatives
David Guttenberg



District 8

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June 14, 2010

Mike Thompson
State Pipeline Coordinator
Joint Pipeline Office
411 W. 4th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the oversight of Alyeska and its operation of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. The Deep Horizon disaster and the recent spill at pump station 9 on TAPS ought to serve as a wakeup call for everyone involved in overseeing and maintaining the integrity of Alaska's oil and gas infrastructure. I am concerned that Alyeska is making changes that leave Alaskans vulnerable to possible economic and environmental strife.

While Alyeska enjoys a mostly commendable safety record, I am becoming increasingly concerned that the company is headed down a dangerous road in its efforts to contain costs. Leaving pump stations unmanned and moving critical integrity management personnel hundreds of miles away from the pipeline flies in the face of common sense when it comes to spill prevention and response. We have already gotten a taste of what can go wrong with an unmanned pump station. These cost-cutting measures lead me to believe that Alyeska is on a perilous path considering all the things that can go wrong on a rapidly aging 800 mile pipeline.

While Alyeska's operations have me troubled, I am equally concerned that the Joint Pipeline Office (JPO) is not providing adequate scrutiny of the company's operation of TAPS. According to your website, the JPO is charged with the following duties:

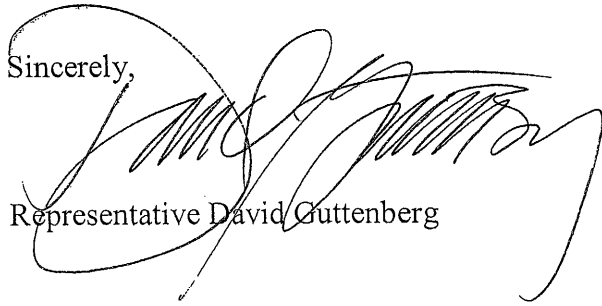
- Continued safe movement of oil through TAPS through reduction of TAPS risk by understanding hardware condition, ensuring follow through on Reliability Centered Maintenance (RCM) action items, effective failure planning, and addressing noncompliance promptly.
- Protection of the environment and public safety through monitoring modification, maintenance, and operation of high-risk systems.
- Prompt and effective response to incidents and events on TAPS to assess, contain, correct and clean up damage, as well as to prevent recurrence.

Anderson • Cantwell • Chena • Denali Park • Ester • Geist • Goldstream • Healy • Pike
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Representative_David_Guttenberg@legis.state.ak.us

- Sustaining a TAPS culture respectful of commitments made to Alaska Natives, diversity, and concerned employees.

As a concerned Alaskan resident and legislator I am requesting that you please write back explaining in detail what the JPO is doing to meet these obligations and specifically what you have done to evaluate the recent changes to Alyeska's operations on TAPS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Guttenberg', written over a large, loopy flourish.

Representative David Guttenberg

CC: Jerry Brossia, Joint Pipeline Office
Dennis Hinnah, PHMSA/DOT