

E1-6984



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03/21/2008 02:39 PM

To "David Navecky" <naveckyd@stb.dot.gov>  
cc  
bcc  
Subject STB Finance Docket No. 35095

Hello Again Mr. Navecky,

The above attachment is Alaska HB 229 which I referred to in a larger document sent to you today. I believe it had much to do with the time frame which the MSB ARRC co-sponsors have set as the goal to lay track by 2012. The Agrium part of this project has been cancelled. Have not been able to get answers concerning any alternative plans for funding for RR spur etc.

I understand that you are not as concerned about the financial/political aspects. However-- I believe this is relevant as it indicates a rush to meet the 2012 deadline .



Doug Smole scan0001.pdf

AN ACT

1 Authorizing the Alaska Railroad Corporation to participate in a project consisting of the  
2 acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, equipping, or operation of real and  
3 personal property, including facilities and equipment, for the Kenai gasification project and  
4 Port MacKenzie rail link, authorizing the corporation to issue bonds to finance all or a portion  
5 of the project, and identifying these as bonds for an essential public and governmental  
6 purpose; and providing for an effective date.

7

8 \* Section 1. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
9 to read:

10 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS, INTENT, AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. (a) The  
11 legislature finds that

12 (1) Agrium's urea and ammonia plants in the northern Kenai Peninsula are in  
13 danger of being permanently shut down because of a lack of adequate natural gas feedstock in

1 the area;

2 (2) closure of the Agrium plants will result in a loss of a significant number of  
3 high paying jobs and tax base for the northern Kenai Peninsula as well as tax revenue to the  
4 state;

5 (3) Agrium's Kenai gasification project will bring low-sulfur coal from Healy  
6 to North Kenai where a low-emission coal gasification plant and electrical generation plant  
7 will be built on land adjacent to Agrium's existing urea and ammonia plants;

8 (4) producing gas from coal will provide Agrium with an alternative feedstock  
9 to natural gas, which is in short supply in Southcentral Alaska, and will allow Agrium to  
10 continue to operate its urea and ammonia plants for the foreseeable future;

11 (5) the Kenai gasification project will also generate competitively priced  
12 electricity for the regional power grid and excess carbon dioxide that could be used to  
13 enhance oil recovery from the wells in Cook Inlet;

14 (6) the Alaska Railroad Corporation is uniquely suited to serve essential  
15 functions of the state by providing, among other things, rail transportation of coal and other  
16 freight and by financing all or a portion of the Kenai gasification project;

17 (7) the Kenai gasification project furthers the purposes of both the state and  
18 the Alaska Railroad Corporation by creating a new market for the state's coal reserves at  
19 Healy, which will be transported from Healy to the northern Kenai Peninsula, creating  
20 revenue for the Alaska Railroad Corporation and for the state and providing employment  
21 opportunities for residents of the state;

22 (8) these results are essential purposes of the state, and the achievement of  
23 these purposes is critical to the health and welfare of the state.

24 (b) The purpose of this Act is to clarify the statutory functions and powers of the  
25 Alaska Railroad Corporation by expressly including the power to participate in the Kenai  
26 gasification project and to finance all or a portion of the project with bonds as described in  
27 this Act.

28 (c) It is the intent of the legislature that

29 (1) this Act be construed broadly to permit the Alaska Railroad Corporation  
30 the greatest flexibility to accomplish the purposes described in (b) of this section within the  
31 limitations set out in this Act; and

1 (2) other provisions of AS 42.40 in existence before the enactment of this Act  
2 be similarly construed to complement the provisions of this Act.

3 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 42.40 is amended by adding a new section to article 7 to read:

4 **Sec. 42.40.570. Kenai gasification project.** (a) The corporation may  
5 participate in a project consisting of the acquisition, construction, improvement,  
6 maintenance, equipping, and operation of real and personal property, including  
7 facilities and equipment for the transportation of coal from Healy to the northern  
8 Kenai Peninsula, and facilities and equipment for coal gasification and electrical  
9 power generation adjacent to the Agrium fertilizer plants in the northern Kenai  
10 Peninsula.

11 (b) The corporation may participate in a project consisting of the acquisition,  
12 construction, improvement, maintenance, equipping, and operation of real and  
13 personal property, including facilities and equipment, for the transportation of coal by  
14 rail from Healy to Port MacKenzie and thereafter by barge to the northern Kenai  
15 Peninsula.

16 (c) The corporation may finance all or a portion of the projects described in (a)  
17 and (b) of this section through the issuance of its bonds.

18 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 42.40.630 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

19 (c) Before issuing bonds to provide the financing described in AS 42.40.570  
20 for real or personal property to be owned in whole or in part by an entity other than the  
21 corporation, the corporation shall enter into one or more contracts, leases, or other  
22 forms of agreement that will, in the judgment of the corporation, provide sufficient  
23 consideration to

24 (1) pay the principal of and interest on the bonds as they become due;

25 (2) create and maintain any reserves for the bond payments that the  
26 corporation considers necessary or desirable; and

27 (3) pay all costs necessary to issue, service, or additionally secure the  
28 bonds, including trustee's fees and bond insurance premiums, unless these costs are to  
29 be paid from bond proceeds or by a party other than the corporation.

30 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 42.40.695 is amended to read:

31 **Sec. 42.40.695. Public purpose of bonds.** Bonds of the corporation issued to

1 finance facilities described in AS 42.40.550 and 42.40.560 [AS 42.40.560] and bonds  
2 of the corporation issued to finance the acquisition, construction, improvement,  
3 maintenance, equipping, and operation of real and personal property, including  
4 facilities and equipment, described in AS 42.40.570 [AS 42.40.550] are issued by a  
5 public corporation and an instrumentality of the state for an essential public and  
6 governmental purpose.

7 \* **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
8 read:

9 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL. (a) Subject to the  
10 requirements of AS 42.40.630(c), enacted by sec. 3 of this Act, the Alaska Railroad  
11 Corporation is authorized to issue bonds under the power granted to it in AS 42.40.250 to  
12 participate in and finance all or a portion of the Kenai gasification project, including the  
13 acquisition, construction, improvement, maintenance, equipping, and operation of real and  
14 personal property, including facilities and equipment, for the transportation of coal by rail  
15 from Healy to the northern Kenai Peninsula and facilities and equipment for coal gasification  
16 and electrical power generation adjacent to the Agrium fertilizer plants in the northern Kenai  
17 Peninsula, and associated costs, including, without limitation, reserves for debt service and  
18 capitalized interest, if necessary or appropriate, and costs of issuance. The maximum principal  
19 amount of bonds that the Alaska Railroad Corporation may issue under this section is  
20 \$2,900,000,000, of which

21 (1) not more than \$2,600,000,000 of bonds may be issued for the project  
22 described in AS 42.40.570(a); and *not more than \$2,600,000,000*

23 (2) not more than \$300,000,000 of bonds may be issued for the project  
24 described in AS 42.40.570(b). *for transportation*

25 (b) The Alaska Railroad Corporation may issue the bonds authorized by (a) of this  
26 section in a single issuance or in several issuances, without limitation as to number of  
27 issuances or timing, and as the Alaska Railroad Corporation determines best furthers the  
28 purpose of financing the Kenai gasification project and related real and personal property,  
29 including facilities and equipment described in this section. The Alaska Railroad Corporation  
30 shall negotiate with Agrium U.S., Inc., or with one or more other entities as the Alaska  
31 Railroad Corporation considers appropriate, and shall enter into agreements with those

1 entities or one or more other entities to provide revenue sufficient to accomplish the purposes  
2 described in AS 42.40.630(c), enacted by sec. 3 of this Act. In no event shall the general  
3 credit of the state be pledged for the repayment of these bonds.

4 (c) This authorization extends to bonds issued to refund the bonds authorized in this  
5 Act. The principal amount of the bonds authorized in this Act may be increased in an issue of  
6 refunding bonds in an amount equal to the costs of refunding if the refunding is undertaken to  
7 achieve debt service savings.

8 (d) This section constitutes the approval required by AS 42.40.285 for the issuance of  
9 the bonds described in this section.

10 (e) In this section, "bonds" means bonds, bond anticipation notes, notes, refunding  
11 bonds, or other obligations.

12 \* Sec. 6. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
13 read:

14 TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY FOR KENAI GASIFICATION PROJECT  
15 BONDS; ISSUED BONDS VALID. (a) The authorization described in sec. 5(a)(2) of this Act  
16 to issue bonds of the Alaska Railroad Corporation under AS 42.40.570(b) terminates June 30,  
17 2012.

18 (b) The authorization described in sec. 5(a)(1) of this Act to issue bonds of the Alaska  
19 Railroad Corporation under AS 42.40.570(a) terminates June 30, 2015.

20 (c) Notwithstanding the termination of the authorizations made by (a) and (b) of this  
21 section, bonds of the Alaska Railroad Corporation that are issued not later than the respective  
22 termination dates set out in (a) and (b) of this section are valid and binding obligations of the  
23 corporation under AS 42.40.670.

24 \* Sec. 7. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).