

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## Senator Cathy Giessel Senate District N

December 6, 2012

Senator Mark Begich  
111 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Begich,

I am certain you are aware that the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** has imposed an **Emissions Control Area (ECA)** within a 200-mile limit around North America.

The ECA mandates that marine vessels, including freight ships, cruise ships and oil tankers, are restricted to use fuel with 1% sulfur content, as of August 1st, 2012. Beginning January 1st, 2015, the limit will be further reduced to .1%. I am certain you are also aware of the cost factor of this fuel.

It is absurd that the EPA has not conducted air quality monitoring in Alaska to justify the ECA. The rationalization they used to include Alaska cited potential impacts on lichen in Juneau and how it serves as a food source to caribou 1,000 miles away. The only air quality concerns they could cite were winter time air quality issues in Fairbanks, completely unrelated to marine vessels.

Alaska will feel a disproportionate impact compared to other jurisdictions, not only due to its heavy reliance on ocean bound cargo, but also because 100% of marine traffic from Puget Sound to Southcentral Alaska is within the ECA.

**I want to add my voice in supporting your efforts to add language to the Coast Guard reauthorization bill establishing an ECA Pilot Project.** The pilot allows marine vessels to comply with the ECA fuel requirements through the use of populated weighted averaging. Under this approach, vessels would burn even cleaner fuel (.001% sulfur) than required by the ECA while in port communities and other populated areas. This approach will provide even better health benefits than those projected by the EPA and allow vessels to burn more traditional fuel while traveling in remote areas. This approach would also allow Alaska marine vessels to continue to operate economically, in turn supplying 85% of our goods at affordable prices.

Thank you for your efforts to gain support for the ECA Pilot Project among the members of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee which has jurisdiction over the Coast Guard.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathy Giessel".  
Senator Cathy Giessel