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Governor Bill Walker STATE OF ALASKA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 292

I, Bill Walker, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority of Article III, Sections 1 and 24, Constitution of the State of Alaska, establish the Governor's Commuter Rail Advisory Task Force (Task Force).

PURPOSE

The Glenn Highway between the Matanuska-Susitna Valley and Anchorage is the fastest growing transportation corridor in the state. Traffic volume has increased over the past ten years, and growth is expected to continue in the future. As the only transportation link between Alaska's two largest communities, it is incumbent upon the State to explore more cost effective and environmentally friendly transportation options.

TASK FORCE DUTIES

The Task Force shall serve as an advisory panel to the Governor to research and propose recommendations regarding the feasibility and implementation of a pilot project for a commuter rail system between the Matanuska-Susitna Valley and Anchorage using to the maximum extent possible existing railroad infrastructure. The Task Force will provide written findings and recommendations to the Governor. The analysis will draw from prior work, which will be provided by the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and the Task Force shall seek the Alaska Railroad Corporation's assistance, and will include initial and ongoing capital costs, expected annual operating costs, estimate ridership, recommended governance structure, corollary benefits (such as potential savings in other areas, the lowering of emissions, and reduced maintenance costs on the Glenn Highway, etc.), and other challenges or opportunities associated with the potential operation. Possible Federal funding sources will also be explored. Initial findings and recommendations are due by May 31, 2018, and a final report and recommendations will be due by September 30, 2019.

MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force will consist of nine members, appointed by, and who serve at, the pleasure of the Governor. The Commissioner of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development, or their designees, shall serve as non-voting members to provide background and technical support. The Governor may appoint additional non-voting members at the Task Force's request for additional technical support. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities shall provide administrative support to the Task Force so the Task Force may fulfill its assigned duties.

Members will include the mayors, or their designees, of the City of Wasilla, City of Palmer, City of Houston, Matanuska Susitna Borough, and the Municipality of Anchorage; the Director of Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions or his designee; a representative from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson; and two members of the public, appointed at large, possessing appropriate expertise or background in either rail or transit.

The Governor will appoint the Chair or Co Chairs.

OTHER PROVISIONS

The Task Force shall hold meetings no less than quarterly; with additional meetings authorized at the call of the chair, or at the call of three members. Meetings of a Task Force and any workgroup shall comply with AS 44.62.310 - 44.62.319 (Open Meetings Act).

Task Force members do not receive compensation as members of the Task Force; however, per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180 are authorized for members of the Task Force who are not State, federal, or local government employees. Per diem and travel expenses for a member of the Task Force who is a representative of a government agency are the responsibility of that agency.

A majority of appointed voting members of the Task Force constitutes a quorum for conducting business.

Records of the Task Force and any workgroup are subject to inspection and copying as public records under AS 40.25.100 - 40.25.295 (Alaska Public Records Act).

Nothing in this order effects the powers and authority of the Alaska Railroad Corporation.

DURATION

The Task Force expires on October 1, 2019.

This Order takes effect immediately and remains in effect until rescinded.

Dated this ninth day of January, 2018.



Bill Walker
Governor