

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 to promote the availability of affordable, clean-burning natural gas to North American markets, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. BEGICH introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 to promote the availability of affordable, clean-burning natural gas to North American markets, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Alaska Natural Gas
5 Pipeline Improvement Act of 2011”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) North American demand for natural gas is
2 expected to increase dramatically over the course of
3 the next several decades, as described in section 114
4 of the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 (15
5 U.S.C. 720l);

6 (2) although North American natural gas sup-
7 plies are adequate to meet customer needs in cal-
8 endar years 2011 and 2012 and for the near future,
9 the availability of Alaska gas as an additional do-
10 mestic source would further shield the United States
11 from any future reliance on overseas energy supplies
12 in the years ahead;

13 (3) 2 military installations in the Fairbanks
14 North Star Borough, Alaska, Fort Wainwright and
15 Eielson Air Force Base—

16 (A) are a central component of the ability
17 of the United States to project power over a
18 vast area of the Pacific region;

19 (B) are home to approximately 23,000
20 military members and families;

21 (C) are located along or relatively adjacent
22 to any cost-effective Alaska natural gas pipeline
23 project corridor; and

24 (D) would benefit from access to affordable
25 natural gas supplies drawn from the proposed

1 Alaska natural gas pipeline project, freeing up
2 funding for pursuing mid-term and long-term
3 renewable energy goals;

4 (4) the Fairbanks North Star Borough—

5 (A) suffers from a thermal inversion that
6 traps particulate emissions and other air pollut-
7 ants; and

8 (B) has been declared a nonattainment
9 zone for failing to achieve reductions in particu-
10 late matter by the Environmental Protection
11 Agency;

12 (5) the availability of affordable clean-burning
13 natural gas would significantly improve air quality
14 in the public health interest of Borough residents;

15 (6) the most logical route for an Alaska natural
16 gas transportation project (as defined in section 102
17 of the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 (15
18 U.S.C. 720)) would travel through Atigun Pass;

19 (7) Atigun Pass—

20 (A) holds both the James W. Dalton High-
21 way and the trans-Alaska oil pipeline, both of
22 which are essential to the strategically impor-
23 tant operation of North Slope oil fields; and

24 (B) is the highest-altitude point on the
25 Dalton Highway (with an elevation of 4,739

1 feet or 1,422 meters) and is on the Continental
2 Divide;

3 (8) space constraints and difficulties of Arctic
4 construction in Atigun Pass restrict the available
5 right-of-way, allowing room for only 1 additional
6 pipeline in the preferred route through the Pass;

7 (9) the public interest would best be served by
8 all proponents of a natural gas pipeline from the
9 Alaska North Slope agreeing on a single project
10 that—

11 (A) passes through Atigun Pass, taking
12 advantage of the preferred right-of-way and
13 avoiding costly duplication of design, permit-
14 ting, and construction expenses that would fall
15 on consumers; and

16 (B) serves Alaskans and other North
17 American consumers; and

18 (10) a natural gas pipeline with sufficient ca-
19 pacity to facilitate economic transportation of nat-
20 ural gas as part of a Alaska natural gas transpor-
21 tation project (as defined in section 102 of the Alas-
22 ka Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 (15 U.S.C.
23 720)) is in the national interest.

1 **SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF ALASKA NATURAL GAS TRANSPOR-**
2 **TATION PROJECT.**

3 Section 102 of the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act
4 of 2004 (15 U.S.C. 720) is amended by striking para-
5 graph (2) and inserting the following:

6 “(2) ALASKA NATURAL GAS TRANSPORTATION
7 PROJECT.—The term ‘Alaska Natural Gas Trans-
8 portation Project’ means—

9 “(A) any natural gas pipeline system that
10 carries Alaska natural gas to the border be-
11 tween Alaska and Canada (including related fa-
12 cilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Com-
13 mission) that is authorized under—

14 “(i) the Alaska Natural Gas Trans-
15 portation Act of 1976 (15 U.S.C. 719 et
16 seq.); or

17 “(ii) section 103; and

18 “(B) any pipeline segment that the Com-
19 mission finds could feasibly be incorporated into
20 and serve as an integrated segment of the sys-
21 tem described in subparagraph (A) (including
22 the construction and operation of the segment),
23 which shall be subject to this Act and the juris-
24 diction of the Commission under the Natural
25 Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.), regardless of
26 whether the segment—

1 “(i) is proposed and constructed prior
2 to the construction of the entire system de-
3 scribed in subparagraph (A); or

4 “(ii) initially transports Alaska nat-
5 ural gas solely for delivery to consumers
6 within the State of Alaska.”.