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Joint Committee on Natural Gas Pipelines

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Torgerson to Testify Before Congress on Pipeline **Will Tell Senate Energy Committee ‘ANGTA Best Law for Alaska’**

(ANCHORAGE) – The chairman of the U.S. Senate Energy Committee today invited Sen. John Torgerson (R-Kasilof), as chairman of the Joint Committee on Natural Gas Pipelines, to present the Alaska Legislature’s position on federal gas line legislation at a hearing in Washington D.C. on Oct. 2.

“The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on the status of proposals for the transportation of natural gas from Alaska to markets in the lower 48 states and on legislation that may be required to expedite the construction of a pipeline from Alaska,” Energy and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-New Mexico) wrote Torgerson in a letter dated today.

Torgerson plans to report to Bingaman and the rest of the committee, including ranking Republican member Sen. Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska), that the Legislature supports the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Act (ANGTA) of 1977, which authorizes expedited construction of a pipeline taking North Slope gas to market via a southern route.

Meeting in Anchorage on Wednesday, the joint pipeline committee endorsed the ANGTA legislation, and rejected new federal pipeline legislation proposed by North Slope producers.

“Alaska is committed to seeing expeditious construction of a pipeline that will not only get Alaska gas to southern markets, but also bring new jobs, a diversified economy, reliable in-state access to gas and other benefits to the state,” Torgerson said. “The Joint Pipeline committee addressed the issue this week, and voted to support ANGTA, with some changes, as the best way to make that happen.”

Torgerson will propose a package of amendments to ANGTA, which would explicitly ban an “over-the-top” route; allow access to the pipeline by future gas producers; set pipeline tariffs to encourage future in-state gas exploration and development; ensure in-state access to gas for consumer use and economic development; establish financial incentives pertaining to accelerated depreciation schedules; and encourage the use of Alaska workers and businesses on the job.

“I welcome Chairman Bingaman’s invitation as an opportunity to tell Congress that the people of Alaska, as expressed by their elected representatives in the Legislature, see the ANGTA process as their best chance for maximizing the benefits of North Slope gas to our state and to our nation,” Torgerson said.

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