

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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SENATOR LYDA GREEN SENATE DISTRICT N

Sponsor Statement CS [Senate Bill 255](#) (RES)

“Unequal Land Exchange between the State of Alaska and Gold Cord, Inc.”

[Alaska State Parks](#) has been working since 1978 to develop an opportunity for private reuse and management of historic buildings at [Independence Mine State Park](#) (IMSHP). To make such a private venture economical, the State has already completed or has in the works several projects. Parks completed paving the road to IMSHP, secured the underground mine tunnel (in a previous exchange) to allow for underground tours, and will complete rehabilitation of foundations and roofs on seven buildings (federal funds beginning in 2002), and several TRAAK projects to improve the trail system, parking lots, ADA access to existing visitor center, and interpretive panels on mine’s history. An RFP seeking the private partner is scheduled for release in February 2002. Proposals will be due October 2002.

To facilitate road access to the underground mine tour, the State of Alaska sought an exchange with Gold Cord, Inc., the owner of a critical section of the road. While the State held an easement across the property, it was not of sufficient size to accommodate anticipated reconstruction to provide for bus access. In addition, Gold Cord held a federal mining claim that extended into the existing park boundaries.

The exchange has been agreed to by all parties as exemplified by the final exchange agreement that is anticipated to be signed by the DNR Commissioner on January 18, 2002. The State trades away no land, but provides the process by which Gold Cord can receive fee title to 19 acres of land valued at \$63,000 currently held by Gold Cord as federal mining claims. The State receives about six acres of land valued at \$68,500 from Gold Cord. Because the State brought no land to trade and because final values are not equal, the transaction requires legislative approval.

The Alaska Legislature approved another unequal value exchange at IMSHP between the State of Alaska and Alaska Hardrock, Inc. in 2000.