

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE LES GARA

February 19, 2014

Governor Sean Parnell  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Parnell:

I am writing because the state has been spending money to advertise and promote the \$5,000,000,000+ Susitna/Watana Dam (assuming no cost overruns) through large, color newspaper circulars and other media. Over \$70,000 has been spent on public lobbying in the past 3 years.

This project has not been approved by the Legislature. It is improper to use state funds, especially in tight fiscal times, to lobby the general public to support this expensive mega-project.

Debate over this project is proper. Spending public money to lobby the public, in the general media is not.

I would ask that no further public funds be used to purchase general media advertisements promoting this project until it is fully approved by the Legislature. With a deficit of roughly \$1 billion or more, and dwindling savings accounts and oil production (projected by the state to fall by 45% over the next 10 years), the Legislature may decide this project is not a worthy priority. The public may decide funds would be better spent on reversing cuts in public education, or other core functions and projects, including a possible large-diameter gas pipeline. If a large-diameter gas pipeline moves forward, it is highly questionable that there will be any economic purpose for this \$5,000,000,000+ project. A large-diameter gasline will produce more energy than the state can consume for in-state electricity and heating.

Public debate on these issues is healthy. Public spending to lobby voters, on the other hand, is not a prudent or proper use of scarce state funds.

Thank you.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Les Gara", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rep. Les Gara