

Debra Thompson

From: Bradley Gilman <mackerel@hsgblaw-dc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 7:34 AM
To: Stephen Giesbrecht; Debra Thompson
Cc: tarpon@hsgblaw-dc.com
Subject: fr: Gilman re: DC Trip

Stephen: You asked for my thoughts on the reasons for coming back to Washington, D.C. to meet with the Alaska Congressional Delegation and the various Federal agencies of interest to the Petersburg Borough. The following are my thoughts—

- **Issues:** Every year we go through an exercise to identify Federal priorities. These include capital budget items and federal policy initiatives. Petersburg's priorities are communicated in writing to the Alaska Delegation staff. We follow up with the Alaska staff as necessary when there is an opportunity to make progress on specific issues. We work at the staff level. The Alaska Members' time is extremely tight and the offices are appreciative that we understand and respect the time demands that are placed on the Senators and Congressman Young. The exception is when the Mayor and/or Assembly Members come to DC. Our Delegation bends over backwards to meet with Alaska community leaders. It gives us an opportunity to hone the message on the top priority issues. The staff take the materials that we provide them throughout the year (updated for the DC trip) and fully brief the Members. The face-to-face meetings between the Mayor/Assembly and Delegation portray the importance of, and commitment to, specific goals and objectives. A good example is the issue of Coast Guard homeporting. The Coast Guard is in the process of a major re-tooling of its water fleet and air fleet. The decisions on where to base specific operations are dynamic. The Delegation feels pressure from many Alaskans to have specific missions based in their communities. The DC trip would serve to emphasize the importance of the Coast Guard presence to Petersburg. The best way to obtain commitments from the Delegation is always a face-to-face meeting. This goal needs to be constantly reinforced, both in DC and when the Delegation travels to Petersburg. Persistence is key to convincing federal agencies to take actions that they might not otherwise be inclined to take.
- **Learning Process:** It is been my experience over the years in representing Alaskans that occasional trips to DC provide significant benefits in the collective understanding of our federal process. It is much easier for a well informed Assembly to identify and articulate federal program and policy goals and objectives. Meetings with Federal officials allow you to have insight into agency policies and the budgetary constraints they face. Additionally, the congressional process has been unstable and constantly evolving since 2011. The DC trip helps to put a very fluid situation in perspective.

The following are available dates through April—

Week of January 29
Week of February 26
Week of March 12
Week of March 19
Week of April 9
Week of April 16
Week of April 23

Let me know what else you need.

Brad