



MUÑOZ PRAISES FUNDING OF MINING MACHINERY SIMULATOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE PRESS STATEMENT

Friday, June 4, 2010, Juneau, Alaska – Governor Sean Parnell, R-Alaska, signed the Capital Budget into law which includes over \$60 million in Juneau projects. The bill signed into law contains the funding for a UAS mining machinery simulator. The simulator will be part of the University of Alaska Southeast’s Center for Mine Training, and will be available to students and industry workers alike to provide a safe environment for lower-cost training with fewer risks. Representative Cathy Muñoz, R-Mendenhall Valley, released the following statement today regarding the funding of the simulator.

Statement

“I am pleased to announce that a top priority for our district has remained fully-funded in the capital budget. A state of the art mining machinery simulator will enhance and expand the University of Alaska Southeast’s nationally-recognized mining tech training program. The simulator will allow students to gain operational experience and help qualify them for employment in the mining industry. Mining has become more mechanized today and this new, highly-technical equipment will provide advanced opportunities for individuals seeking employment in the industry. It will also provide tech-level advancement training for existing employees.

“In addition, I am pleased to see the passage of SB 236, the education tax credit bill, which will enable businesses that contribute to post-secondary vocational education programs and facilities a 50% tax credit for their contributions. It’s important to keep the door open for financial support of educational programs that assist in building Alaska and improving our quality of life.

“With two of Alaska’s premiere mining operations right here in Juneau, this new simulator located at the UAS campus will enhance our ability to get local Alaskans trained and employed. In order to qualify for the well-paying jobs now available in our mines, we can offer the best possible training here in Juneau.”

University of Alaska Mining and Petroleum Training Service Executive Director Dennis Steffy praised the inclusion of the simulator in the budget. “Today’s mining machinery operates at a very high level of technology. Most if not all mining machines utilize computers, GPS positioning and remote sensing,” Steffy said. “The operators of this equipment must be highly trained and retrained to operate the equipment safely and productively. Before now, our only recourse was to use actual mining equipment that incurred major expenditures in fuel and maintenance. Using actual equipment exclusively also prevented training students in real time emergency procedures. These simulators, much like the aircraft simulators used by air transport pilots will allow the instructors to simulate many hazardous situations with no danger to students.”

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