## In the Matter Of:

## IN RE PUBLIC HEARING - HB 111

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

January 11, 2018

## PACIFIC RIM REPORTING

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1	BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
2	STATE OF ALASKA
3	
4	In re: CERTIFIED TRANSCRIPT
5	Public Hearing - HB 111 Proposed Regulations, Packet 2.
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10	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
11	
12	Pages 1 - 44, inclusive
13	Thursday, January 11, 2018 9:00 A.M.
14	3.00 II.II.
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18	Taken at REGULATORY COMMISSION OF ALASKA
19	701 West 8th Avenue, Suite 300 East Hearing Conference Room
20	Anchorage, Alaska
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1	A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S
2	For State of Alaska, Department of Revenue:
3	
4	John Larsen, Audit Master Lennie Dees, Audit Master 550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 500
5	Anchorage, Alaska 99501 907/269-8436
6	
7	Also Present:
8	Ken Alper, Department of Revenue Brandon Brefczynski, AOGA
9	Marie Evans, ConocoPhillips Colleen Glover, Department of Revenue
10	Michael Hurley, ConocoPhillips Jon Iversen, Stoel Rives
11	Teri Kostka, ConocoPhillips Kara Moriarty, AOGA
12	Nicole Reynolds, Department of Law Jennifer Roberts, ConocoPhillips
13	Erin Ruebelmann, Department of Revenue Jamie Volz, ConocoPhillips
14	
15	Present via Teleconference:
16	Anna Anklam, Anadarko Diane Colley, BP
17	Mary Gramling, Department of Law Will Nebesky, Chevron
18	
19	Court Reporter:
20	Gary Brooking, Registered Professional Reporter PACIFIC RIM REPORTING
21	711 M Street, Suite 4 Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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1	ANCHORAGE, ALASKA; THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2018
2	9:07 A.M.
3	-000-
4	MR. LARSEN: Good morning everybody. It's a
5	little sparser crowd than we normally have, but it
6	looks like I don't know if we're going to get
7	anybody else in attendance here, so we will go ahead
8	and get started.
9	Today's date is Thursday, January 11th, 2018,
10	and the time is 9:07.
11	Welcome everyone to today's public hearing on
12	regulations proposed by the Alaska Department of
13	Revenue to implement Chapter 3, the Second Special
14	Session of the Legislature 2017, otherwise known as
15	нв 111.
16	The purpose of today's public hearing is to
17	receive input and comments from the public and other
18	interested parties regarding regulation changes
19	proposed in the Department's public notice dated
20	December 21, 2017.
21	In the public notice, the Department
22	identified numerous regulations as being proposed to
23	be either amended or added for the administration of
24	the Department's Oil and Gas Production Tax Program.
25	Today's public hearing is scheduled from

- 1 9:00 to 11:00 but may be extended, if necessary, to
- 2 accommodate those present before 10:00 who have not
- 3 had an opportunity to comment. And based on the
- 4 gathering here, I don't know that we will need to
- 5 extend it.
- 6 Prior to taking comments, there are some
- 7 administrative matters. In the event of a fire, the
- 8 fire exit is near this elevator, so out the door to
- 9 your left and the same -- the stairwell right next to
- 10 where you came up in the elevator is there.
- 11 The restrooms are out to the right, in the
- 12 first hallway to the right.
- 13 If you do have an electronic device, your
- 14 cell phone on, please turn it to mute.
- 15 Copies of the public notice and proposed
- 16 regulations are available near the sign-in sheets.
- 17 And if you haven't done so already, please sign in
- 18 before leaving.
- 19 Next I would like to go around the room and
- 20 have everyone introduce themselves and their
- 21 affiliations, and then on to the phone lines.
- 22 My name is John Larsen, and I'm with the
- 23 Alaska Department of Revenue.
- MR. DEES: My name is Lennie Dees, Alaska
- 25 Department of Revenue.

MS. EVANS: Marie Evans, ConocoPhillips. 1 2 MS. VOLZ: Jamie Volz, ConocoPhillips. MS. ROBERTS: Jennifer Roberts, 3 4 ConocoPhillips. 5 MS. KOSTKA: Teri Kostka, ConocoPhillips. MR. HURLEY: Michael Hurley, ConocoPhillips. 6 MR. ALPER: Wrong side of the room here. Ken 7 8 Alper, Department of Revenue. 9 MR. BREFCZYNSKI: Brandon Brefczynski, Alaska 10 Oil and Gas Association. 11 MS. MORIARTY: Kara Moriarty, AOGA. 12 MR. IVERSEN: Jon Iversen, Stoel Rives. 13 MS. RUEBELMANN: Erin Ruebelmann, Department 14 of Revenue. MS. GLOVER: Colleen Glover, Department of 15 16 Revenue. 17 MS. REYNOLDS: Nicole Reynolds, Department of 18 Law. 19 MR. LARSEN: And on the phone lines? 20 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [Unintelligible] for 21 Chevron. 22 MR. NEBESKY: Will Nebesky, Chevron. 23 MS. COLLEY: Diane Colley, BP. 24 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Anna Anklam, Anadarko. 25 MS. GRAMLING: Mary Gramling, Department of

1	Law.
2	MR. LARSEN: And anyone else on the phone
3	line?
4	Thank you. As previously stated, the
5	Department is holding this public hearing in order to
6	provide opportunity for the public and interested
7	parties to provide input and comment on the
8	Department's proposed regulations dated December 21,
9	2017.
10	Those proposed regulations deal primarily
11	with the treatment of carried-forward annual losses,
12	reasonably related exploration expenditures under
13	AS 43.55.165(s) and other conforming changes required
14	by the statutes.
15	After the close of the public comment period
16	on Friday, January 26, 2018, the Department will
17	either adopt the proposed regulation changes or other
18	provisions dealing with the same subject without
19	further notice or decide to take no action.
20	The language of the final regulations may be
21	different from that of the proposed regulations. If
22	you believe your interests may be affected, the
23	Department encourages you to submit any relevant
24	comments either here today or by the close of the
25	written comment period on Friday, January 26, 2018, at

1 4:00 p.m. 2 Written comments may be submitted to me, John Larsen, by any of the following means: By e-mail to 3 4 JohnLarsen@Alaska.gov -- that's J-o-h-n, dot, 5 L-a-r-s-e-n at Alaska.gov -- via fax to 907/269-6644, or hand delivered or mailed to 550 West 7th Avenue, 6 7 Suite 500, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. 8 All comments must be received by the close of 9 business Friday, January 26, 2018, at 4:00 p.m. 10 When making comments, please use the microphones at the front of the table and give your 11 name and affiliation, if any. Please be sure the 12 13 microphone is activated, by observing the green light 14 on the stand. 15 The hearing is being transcribed, and copies will be made available on the Department's website 16 17 after they have been received. 18 Please note that the hearing and all written 19 comments received will become part of the public 20 record and are available for public inspection. For making comments and testimony, I'd like 21 to first begin here in Anchorage and then move to the 22 23 phone lines after that.

MS. MORIARTY: Go ahead, Marie.

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MS. EVANS: Okay.

24

1 MS. MORIARTY: You get to go first today. 2 MS. EVANS: Marie Evans, Tax Counsel for 3 ConocoPhillips. 4 All right. I will try not to read too much, but in order to make some sense of these 5 regulations -- they're a little bit cumbersome, so I 6 have written a lot of notes today. 7 So my comments are all, I think, on 217 for 8 9 the carried-forward annual loss regulations. And when 10 I looked back at what did the legislature intend or discuss when they were creating the carried-forward 11 12 annual loss in place of the net operating loss tax 13 credit, there were about three points that came to 14 mind. 15 And the first was that the carried-forward annual loss would be annual -- it was going to follow 16 17 the annual production tax calculation -- that if a positive production tax value was calculated, then the 18 19 ring fencing wouldn't apply. It was only if a 20 negative production tax value resulted or was calculated that a carried-forward annual loss would 21 22 be, quote, unquote, ring fenced. 23 And it's our understanding that the ring 24 fencing addressed a concern that was voiced by the 25 administration for a concern that the larger producers

- on the North Slope would purchase small -- smaller
- 2 players/explorers for their losses, apply the losses
- 3 to the legacy production, and then not pursue or
- 4 develop what the little or smaller producer, slash,
- 5 explorer had found or thought was in the ground.
- 6 And the third kind of legislative intent
- 7 discussion point that we reflected on was the
- 8 application of the carried-forward annual loss was
- 9 purposefully unrestricted by the legislature. And we
- 10 see that specifically at AS 43.55.165(m) because the
- 11 legislature provided the taxpayer with an opportunity
- 12 to decide when to apply the loss as well as the amount
- 13 to apply.
- 14 And then of course we have the other part,
- 15 which, I think, in the 11th calendar year, the loss,
- 16 if not used, or whatever is remaining, starts to
- 17 diminish.
- 18 And I believe the reasoning behind allowing
- 19 the taxpayer to apply a portion or deciding when to
- 20 apply how much of a loss was to allow the taxpayer to
- 21 maximize their loss, because I don't think the
- 22 legislature could figure out all the different
- 23 taxpayer situations, and each taxpayer has different
- 24 individual characteristics. And so the taxpayer made
- 25 an investment either in low prices or without revenue.

- 1 And so the thought process behind allowing the
- 2 taxpayer the flexibility in determining when and how
- 3 much to apply was to let the individual taxpayers do
- 4 what's best for their situations.
- 5 So with those three legislative-intent points
- 6 in mind, I'm going to move to 15 AAC 55.217(d), which
- 7 is the first subsection I had a comment on regarding
- 8 the carried-forward annual losses.
- 9 And it ties to the legislative intent I
- 10 talked about at 43.55.165(m), which states: In a
- 11 calendar year, after application of a producer's lease
- 12 expenditures that are incurred that calendar year, the
- 13 producer may choose to apply all or a portion of a
- 14 carried-forward annual loss or carry an unused portion
- 15 forward. The Department may not require a producer to
- 16 apply all or a portion of the carried-forward annual
- 17 loss in a calendar year.
- 18 However, when I go to 15 AAC 55.217(d) -- and
- 19 bear with me, because I'm going to have to read
- 20 this -- (d) says: This subsection implements
- 21 AS 43.55.165(o)(1). A carried-forward annual loss
- 22 established under (b) of this subsection, referring to
- 23 217, may be deducted only in calculating the annual
- 24 production tax value for the same segment under
- 25 15 AAC 55.206, subsection (c), sub (1), for which the

- 1 carried-forward annual loss was established. A
- 2 carried-forward annual loss established for a segment
- described in subsection (1), 15 AAC 55.206(c)(2)(A)
- 4 may be deducted only in calculating annual production
- 5 tax values for the following segments.
- 6 These sections continue on and require a
- 7 taxpayer that made a North Slope investment for oil,
- 8 and didn't have either production -- I'm going to use
- 9 an example here, as I read these regulations. And it
- 10 may be I -- let me back up so you have the right cite.
- 11 So it's 217(d)(1) and (d)(2). And so the
- 12 reference for both 217(d)(1) and (d)(2) is to the
- existing 206(c)(2), which means the individual
- 14 explorer or small producer or new entrant did not have
- any production, if they're under 206(c)(2).
- 16 However, these two sections are requiring
- 17 that taxpayer, as I read them, to go back and allocate
- 18 volumetrically their loss between gas used in state
- 19 and oil and other gas.
- 20 So you look at this language. And I'm going
- 21 to pick it up in the middle of the subsection. And it
- 22 says: By the producer from leases or properties that
- 23 include land North of 68 degrees North latitude during
- 24 the first calendar year that regular production of oil
- 25 commences or any -- from any of the leases or

- 1 properties.
- 2 So if I am reading this correctly, a taxpayer
- 3 could make North Slope investments for oil and not
- 4 have production in year one, two, three, or four, but
- 5 then say they have production in year five.
- 6 But that taxpayer would not be allowed to
- 7 apply the loss in year one, two, three or four unless
- 8 the taxpayer allocated a portion of those prior-year
- 9 losses to gas used in state based on their current
- 10 production.
- 11 And as we discussed, I already have a little
- 12 heartburn over the fact that we only -- many of us or
- 13 most of us only incur expenses to look for oil. The
- 14 gas is a byproduct. And so there's that.
- 15 But setting that aside and looking at just
- 16 what this legislature intended with House Bill 111, I
- 17 don't believe that years one, two, three, four, or
- 18 whatever they are, should then have to
- 19 backwards-allocate a part to gas used in state.
- Now, maybe the taxpayer will luck out and not
- 21 have any gas used in state, and thereby have no
- 22 volumes to allocate to. But if they don't, I don't
- 23 think it was the intention of the legislature to have
- 24 someone who has spent several years investing to then
- 25 have to allocate, based on current-year production,

- 1 part of a prior-year loss. 2 Does that kind of make sense? MR. LARSEN: Yes, Marie. I understand the 3 4 question. And I don't know -- I'll have to go out and 5 take a look at that. We will take that under advisement. The statutes do require an allocation 6 7 between oil and gas used in state. And I don't know that there's an alternative to that. But I will 8 9 certainly take a look at that language. 10 MS. EVANS: Well, I think -- I understand if 11 you're producing you have to do that. Right. 12 MR. LARSEN: 13 MS. EVANS: But here, this is someone who 14 hasn't been producing, because they're at 206(c)(2). 15 And I don't think, when they earned their losses, they 16 weren't producing. 17 MR. LARSEN: Okay.
- 18 MS. EVANS: And I'm reading this to say:
- 19 Before they can use their loss, they have to go back
- 20 and allocate to gas used in state using the
- 21 current-year volumes.
- I can understand, okay, you're producing.
- 23 You're under 206(c)(1) now. You have to allocate
- 24 under (c)(1).
- 25 MR. LARSEN: Right.

MS. EVANS: But it seems a little odd that 1 2 we're going to have them go backwards. 3 MR. LARSEN: Okay. 4 MS. EVANS: And most likely this doesn't 5 apply to the company I represent. I just -- I can't figure out why that would be appropriate, or if it 6 7 was -- this language is not easy to write. 8 MR. LARSEN: Yeah. And I guess just maybe 9 for the purposes of discussion and understanding, like 10 you say, there was no production when any of those expenditures were incurred; but when production 11 begins, the oil and other gas and the gas used in 12 13 state, if there is any sold, are produced jointly at 14 that point in time. And so that's when the expense is 15 being taken, when -- after production begins. Because like you say, during the exploration phase, during 16 17 development, there's no production going on, and so 18 there's no allocation of cost to either category at 19 that point. 20 So that's kind of the situation that exists, that there's no production in those first four or five 21 22 years, for either oil or gas, or gas used in state, 23 and therefore no allocations can be done until the production begins. And once it does begin, both --24 25 like I say, the oil and other gas and the gas used in

- 1 state are being produced, and so that's when those
- 2 costs are allocated.
- 3 But I do understand your question, and we'll
- 4 take a look at that.
- 5 MS. EVANS: So I kind of thought a little bit
- 6 about that.
- 7 MR. LARSEN: Okay.
- 8 MS. EVANS: And so I can see, like, say in
- 9 the example I've been using, like, in year five say
- 10 they have another loss, but they actually have
- 11 production. I can see year five's loss having to be
- 12 allocated --
- 13 MR. LARSEN: Okay.
- 14 MS. EVANS: -- between -- based on
- 15 current-year production, assuming they have gas used
- 16 in state, they need to allocate.
- 17 MR. LARSEN: Right.
- 18 MS. EVANS: But then I thought about the
- 19 reverse situation where somebody is -- they have
- 20 production, so they're doing their production tax
- 21 value calculations for segments under (c)(1). And say
- 22 they come up with a loss, and so the loss is caused by
- 23 a new development.
- 24 So the new development doesn't have any
- 25 production, so is it going to then move to (c)(2)?

- 1 That's where I was trying to kind of apply it in the
- 2 reverse. And I didn't -- because it feels like what
- 3 this does is move between 206(c)(2) and (c)(1). And
- 4 so can someone who's in 206(c)(1) then have something
- 5 that is then falling under (c)(2), because it never
- 6 had any production, and might not for many, many years
- 7 of big development.
- 8 So that's kind of where I was -- you don't
- 9 have to answer me. But that's where I was, like,
- 10 trying to figure out why this was happening.
- 11 MR. LARSEN: Okay. And I will try to answer
- 12 that, Marie.
- MS. EVANS: Okay.
- MR. LARSEN: I think the answer is no,
- 15 because (c)(1) and (c)(2) are two completely different
- 16 situations. (c)(1) is for someone that is in
- 17 production --
- 18 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- 19 MR. LARSEN: -- right?
- 20 And then (c)(2), it says if a producer or
- 21 explorer does not produce any oil or gas from leases
- 22 in the properties in the state that include land North
- 23 of 68 degrees.
- 24 So I think the question about the property
- 25 that they're -- where the losses were incurred on is

not really relevant, because they are producing in the 1 2 state in other areas, as I understood the scenario. 3 And so I don't think that -- I would say that as long as someone is producing in the state -- on the 4 5 North Slope -- excuse me -- and they incur lease expenditures on a nonproducing property, they're still 6 subject to (c)(1). 7 8 MS. EVANS: Okay. 9 MR. LARSEN: Because (c)(1) -- or excuse me. 10 (c)(2). (c)(2) applies only to a producer that has no producing properties in the state on the North Slope. 11 Okay. And so once they start 12 MS. EVANS: 13 producing, they're going to be under (c)(1)? 14 MR. LARSEN: They're going to be under 15 (c)(1).16 MS. EVANS: Okay. 17 MR. LARSEN: Yeah. So there's not that kind 18 of --19 MS. EVANS: There's not the reverse 20 situation --21 MR. LARSEN: Reverse. 22 MS. EVANS: -- that had crossed my mind. 23 MR. LARSEN: Yes. MS. EVANS: Okay. Well, if you could just 24

look at whether it's really meant to be that they

- 1 allocate the prior-year losses before they start, that
- 2 would be good.
- 3 MR. LARSEN: Okay. And I have that down --
- 4 MS. EVANS: That down?
- 5 MR. LARSEN: -- as a question, Marie.
- 6 Thanks.
- 7 MS. EVANS: Okay. Moving on
- 8 15 AAC 55.217(e). This is the section which
- 9 implements AS 43.55.165(s), which has to do with
- 10 exploration expenditures when there is a net operating
- 11 loss. And I have to redo my vocabulary to say
- 12 carried-forward annual loss. It's not intuitive after
- 13 all these years.
- 14 Starting with 165(s) in the statute, I'm
- 15 going to just read it to ground myself.
- In adopting a regulation that defines the
- 17 lease or property where a lease expenditure resulting
- 18 in a carried-forward annual loss is incurred for
- 19 purposes of (o) and (p) of this section, the
- 20 Department shall include an exploration lease
- 21 expenditure that is reasonably related to the lease or
- 22 property.
- 23 So looking at 15 AAC 55.217(e)(1), this
- 24 proposed regulation has what I would call a
- 25 geographical restriction as well as a time restriction

that I don't believe comport with the legislative 1 2 intent to continue to incentivize exploration. And 3 I'm confused on some of the timing. 4 So 15 AAC 55.217(e)(1) states: A lease 5 expenditure incurred by a producer to explore for oil or gas deposits, large (A), within the land that later 6 becomes part or all of a lease or property of the 7 producer, or big (B), in the case of geological or 8 9 geophysical exploration, other than a stratigraphic 10 test well within 25 miles of land that later becomes part or all of a lease or property of the producer is 11 reasonably related to that lease or property beginning 12 13 in the calendar year the land becomes part or all of 14 that lease or property. 15 My first observation is: Why 25 miles? I could not figure out how 25 miles means 16 17 "reasonably related," because "reasonable" is, to me, a measure of fair or sensible, and it really can't be 18 19 measured in miles. 20 And then when I look at AS 43.55.165(a)(2), which defines lease expenditures, that part of the 21 22 statute specifically states that an activity does not need to be physically located on, near or within the 23

premises of a lease or property within which oil or

gas deposits being explored for, developed or produced

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- 1 is located, in order for the cost of the activity to
- 2 be upstream of the point of production of the oil or
- 3 gas.
- 4 So with this proposed regulation placing this
- 5 25-mile restriction, which is going to have to be
- 6 measured somehow, so we have to have a starting point
- 7 at some point, it seems to contradict the definition
- 8 of a lease expenditure. And I don't see how it's
- 9 going to incentivize exploration, which I think the
- 10 legislature still wants to do, incentivize.
- 11 So then I looked at the language that says --
- 12 that later becomes part -- the lease expenditure that
- 13 later becomes part or all of the lease or property of
- 14 the producer is reasonably related to that lease or
- 15 property beginning in the calendar year the land
- 16 becomes part or all of that lease or property.
- 17 So what I couldn't figure out with the timing
- 18 is if the taxpayer has a negative production tax
- 19 value, so it has a loss, would the costs for this
- 20 exploration be removed from that loss and then set
- 21 aside? And then maybe five years later, when the
- 22 lease becomes part of a unit, those exploration costs
- 23 are deemed reasonably related, so then do you deduct
- 24 them?
- I couldn't figure out what the language was

- 1 saying when it says, beginning in that calendar year
- 2 that the land becomes part or all of the lease or
- 3 property, then it's reasonably related.
- 4 MR. LARSEN: Okay. There's a packet of
- 5 questions there, Marie.
- 6 MS. EVANS: I know. I know.
- 7 MR. LARSEN: So let me kind of try and walk
- 8 through them, and then whatever I left out, then we --
- 9 MS. EVANS: Okay.
- 10 MR. LARSEN: -- can try and come back and
- 11 cover that. The first question that I understand is
- 12 kind of the, like as you described, the geographic
- 13 limitation.
- 14 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- MR. LARSEN: And this, to be clear, really
- only applies to the seismic and the G & G type costs.
- 17 MS. EVANS: Okay.
- 18 MR. LARSEN: Okay. That's the intent of
- 19 paragraph -- in paragraph one, we're talking about
- 20 kind of the very beginning of the exploration phases,
- 21 the seismic and the G & G. And so at that point in
- 22 time, there really aren't leases of property. What
- 23 you're doing -- what an explorer is doing is trying to
- 24 identify potential prospects.
- 25 MS. EVANS: Correct.

- Okay. And so the reason for the 1 MR. LARSEN: 2 25 miles -- and from the discussion draft, that was, I 3 think, originally set at three miles. 4 MS. EVANS: Three, yeah. 5 MR. LARSEN: And what the Department is doing is trying to give some meaning to subsection (s) that 6 7 says that the exploration costs must be reasonably related to the lease or property where the 8 9 expenditures were incurred. 10 And there were -- the Department did receive some comment that the entire North Slope is reasonably 11 related. And, in fact, that is how the current 12 regulations read, that if an exploration expenditure 13 14 is incurred, it's deducted against the entire segment. 15 But it was the Department's belief that the "reasonably related" language was to put some type of 16 17 parameters around those expenditures. And I think you 18 alluded earlier that the legislature was concerned 19 with people buying losses, and a property must be 20 brought into production. And so the Department was attempting to give 21 meaning to the statute to make sure that the 22
- 25 Because a hundred percent of the exploration

expenditures that are associated with the leases or

properties are properties that come into production.

23

- 1 expenditures would still be deductible if all of the
- 2 properties over which those expenditures were incurred
- 3 were brought into production.
- But if they're not, then that's the
- 5 Department's understanding of what the legislative
- 6 intent was, is that the property must be brought into
- 7 production before those losses can be applied against
- 8 the production tax value for that property. And so
- 9 that's what I'm going to say as far as that.
- 10 Moving on to the second point that I think
- 11 you made, or what I'll -- for purposes of my
- 12 discussion, is the second point, that lease
- 13 expenditures do not necessarily incur -- need to be
- incurred on a lease or property to be a lease
- 15 expenditure on the property.
- And I would say what that's really in
- 17 reference to and -- within the span of our lifetimes,
- 18 the charge -- the way charges are deducted against a
- 19 property have evolved. You know, going back to
- 20 earlier times, there was a strict -- I would say a
- 21 fairly strict restriction that the lease expenditures
- 22 had to be incurred within the four corners of the
- 23 property.
- 24 But as technology grew and advanced, the
- 25 operators realized that there could be cost savings by

- 1 work that could be -- that is directly chargeable to a
- 2 lease or property but is not performed on the lease or
- 3 property.
- 4 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- 5 MR. LARSEN: Right? Correct. And --
- 6 MS. EVANS: Like all seismic analysis is not
- 7 done up north.
- 8 MR. LARSEN: Right. The analysis --
- 9 and even some of the technical labor --
- 10 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- 11 MR. LARSEN: -- are not necessarily on the
- 12 lease or property. And so that's the intent. And I
- 13 think to try and take that language and apply that to
- 14 the G & G cost is outside the meaning of that language
- 15 there.
- MS. EVANS: Okay. So when I read that,
- 17 I -- I mean, I understand we can understand it,
- 18 sitting here. What I'm more worried about later is
- 19 audits.
- MR. LARSEN: Okay.
- 21 MS. EVANS: So we have -- you know, you drill
- 22 an exploration well. You have your core sent down to
- 23 Anchorage. The analysis has to be done down here. To
- 24 me, that's a lease expenditure.
- MR. LARSEN: Sure. And (e) doesn't change

- 1 any of that. All (e) does is address the reasonably
- 2 related exploration expenditures, what's reasonably
- 3 related. And so like I say, (e)(1) deals with the
- 4 seismic and the G & G cost.
- 5 And then, for (e)(2), these would be costs
- 6 incurred after the -- we took a term from DNR, the
- 7 potential hydrocarbon accumulation --
- 8 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- 9 MR. LARSEN: -- and applied that into the
- 10 regulations here. And so the (e)(2) is after your
- 11 initial seismic exploration, but continues on with
- 12 other exploration costs for delineating the reservoir
- 13 and identifying the PA.
- MS. EVANS: Okay.
- 15 MR. LARSEN: And then just to -- to
- 16 further -- then (e)(3) is for reasonably related
- 17 exploration expenditures related to drilling to expand
- 18 or delineate the reservoir.
- 19 (e)(4) is for leases or properties that are
- 20 not on state lands. But it doesn't change really
- 21 anything for (2) or (3), but (2) or (3) are recognized
- 22 that these are specifically for state lands and leases
- 23 or properties. But (4) recognizes that there may be
- 24 federal leases, private leases.
- 25 MS. EVANS: Right.

1 MR. LARSEN: And so that's to incorporate 2 those. 3 And then (5) is -- we included an example for 4 a stratigraphic test well. I don't know when the last 5 time a stratigraphic test well was drilled on the North Slope. 6 My understanding is that is more often 7 incurred possibly even by a government agency or for 8 9 some type of a scientific purpose. I don't know 10 when's the last time a producer or explorer drilled a stratigraphic test well, but that's not to say that 11 12 they wouldn't. And so this provides a specific 13 opportunity for those expenditures to be allowed if 14 that well led to a producing property. 15 MS. EVANS: Okay. So then the timing, the beginning in the calendar year the land becomes 16 17 part --18 MR. LARSEN: Oh, okay. MS. EVANS: -- or all of that lease or 19 20 property, because the timing is also in, like, (e)(2) and (e)(4). I didn't see any in (e)(3). 21 22 MR. LARSEN: Right. And that's precisely 23 because at (e)(3) the leases have been acquired. But 24 in (e)(1) and (2) and potentially, depending on time, 25 in (e)(4), it's in that predevelopment phase and

- 1 before the lease -- before the lease or property has
- 2 been purchased. And we're only talking about a
- 3 situation in which there's a loss incurred, right?
- 4 MS. EVANS: Right.
- 5 MR. LARSEN: Because if an existing producer
- 6 can't absorb all of the costs of the exploration, then
- 7 that can be deducted against their GVPP in determining
- 8 production tax value.
- 9 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hope to actually never
- 10 actually have to use any of these sections.
- 11 MR. LARSEN: We're with you on that, Marie.
- 12 We hope that you always have a positive production tax
- 13 value.
- But the -- like I say, certainly in (1) and
- in the early stages of (2), there are no leases or
- 16 properties that attach to -- that those lease
- 17 expenditures attach to. And so in the event of a
- 18 loss, that language provides that those lease
- 19 expenditures are associated with what becomes the
- 20 lease or property in the future to account for the
- 21 ring fencing that you mentioned earlier.
- MS. EVANS: So this is, I think, part of my
- 23 confusion. So I have a loss, and part of that loss
- 24 is, say, related to something that's in production,
- 25 lease or property, in a unit.

- Okay. So then I'm going to have perhaps some
- 2 of the loss created because of shooting seismic. So
- 3 beginning in the calendar year the land becomes part
- 4 or all of that lease, we're saying that the lease
- 5 expenditure is then incurred. Say, like it becomes --
- 6 say we get the lease five years later. So then it's a
- 7 lease expenditure, like, five years later?
- 8 So then do I start my, like, ten-year clock
- 9 when it becomes part of that -- the calendar year the
- 10 land becomes part or all of that lease or property?
- 11 That's where I'm trying to figure out where my -- how
- 12 my timing works.
- MR. LARSEN: Marie, I'm not going to answer
- 14 that question right now.
- 15 MS. EVANS: That's okay. I told you this was
- 16 stuff that mostly came to me later.
- 17 MR. LARSEN: That's good. And to the extent
- 18 that I can, I'd like to try and address the questions
- 19 here. But on ones that we can't, then we'll take them
- 20 under advisement.
- 21 I think that's a great question. You know,
- 22 looking at the language of the statute, it says -- and
- 23 there's a couple situations depending on whether it
- 24 was production or not.
- 25 But it says beginning -- you know, under

- 1 (p)(1), 165(p)(1), beginning January 1 of the 11th
- 2 calendar year after the lease expenditure is carried
- 3 forward under (a)(3) of this section.
- And so under (a)(3), (a)(3) is the year that
- 5 the lease expenditure -- or was a part of lease
- 6 expenditures that exceeded GVPP and was carried
- 7 forward.
- 8 And so my initial response is going to be
- 9 that it's from the year that that lease expenditure
- 10 was incurred, not from when the lease or property came
- 11 into being. Because that's my initial reading of the
- 12 statutes here. Because, like I say, it's based on
- 13 (a)(3). And if you look at (a)(3), it says lease
- 14 expenditures, you know, beginning -- excuse me --
- 15 165(a)(3), beginning with (3), lease expenditures
- 16 incurred in a previous calendar year that met the
- 17 requirements in 160(e) in which -- excuse me -- in the
- 18 year in which the lease expenditure was incurred.
- 19 And so I think that's the initial reading of
- 20 the statute, that it starts at the beginning of the
- 21 year that it was incurred. But that's a good
- 22 question, and I think we'll take a look at that.
- 23 MS. EVANS: Okay. And I actually just had --
- 24 I mean, I started with (e)(1), but that same language
- 25 is in (e)(2) and (e)(4) and that was the only other

comments I had on (e). 1 2 MR. LARSEN: Okay. 3 MS. EVANS: Okay. At 15 AAC 55.217(f), this 4 regulation or proposed regulation prohibits the 5 taxpayer from deducting a carried-forward annual loss out of order. In other words, if you have a loss in 6 year one, two and three, you have to first deduct all 7 8 of the loss in year one before deducting all of the 9 loss in year two or part of the loss in year two. 10 And I understand, and especially because the value of a loss begins to erode, that you would 11 actually -- it's inherent, kind of common sense that 12 13 you would first deduct year one, year two, year three. 14 My concern is, is that that wasn't really 15 what was behind the legislative intent in 43.55.165(m). So I was just going to point out that 16 17 that might not comport with the statute, because the statute said that the producer may choose to apply all 18 19 or a portion of a carried-forward annual loss, or carry any unused portion forward. 20 But the regulation is saying you have to do 21 22 it this way. So you can just take that under 23 consideration. I think the way the regulation is 24 written is kind of common sense that a taxpayer would 25 do that. But I think there was a little more

- 1 flexibility in the statute.
- 2 MR. LARSEN: Okay. And so just to be clear,
- 3 Marie, are you advising that, say, a lease expenditure
- 4 that was incurred in a fifth year would or should be
- 5 deducted before one in a prior year?
- 6 MS. EVANS: I'm just saying that if someone
- 7 wanted to do that, I think the statute gave them the
- 8 freedom to. I would question their ability to
- 9 understand that year five is going to expire after
- 10 year one. But to each their own.
- 11 MR. LARSEN: Yeah. No. And I understand the
- 12 question. And I --
- MS. EVANS: It's not the way I would deduct
- 14 them but --
- 15 MR. LARSEN: I agree. And I think that part
- 16 of the intent of the regulation in this regard is
- 17 administratively. In order to be as efficient as
- 18 possible, I believe it makes much more sense to, you
- 19 know -- a party could have numerous projects over
- 20 numerous years, and to track each of those separately,
- 21 if they're being deducted piecemeal over time, I think
- 22 could be somewhat of an administrative nightmare. But
- 23 we will take a look at the statute and the language
- 24 there and see if it needs to be changed.
- 25 So let me -- okay.

I would not deduct them out of 1 MS. EVANS: 2 order. 3 MR. LARSEN: Right. 4 MS. EVANS: And I did have flashbacks to when we had the 43.55.023 credits that had to be cut back 5 or did half in one year and half the next year. 6 MR. LARSEN: Right. 7 I did have flashbacks when I read MS. EVANS: 8 9 that, but it was probably one of those nightmares to 10 track administratively. So I understood why it was written that way. I was just pointing out it might be 11 12 not exactly what the statute said. 13 So moving on to 15 AAC 55.217(i), this one 14 If a producer acquires another producer or 15 explorer, the amount of the acquired entity's previous unused carried-forward annual losses that may be used 16 17 may not exceed the value of consideration paid for the 18 acquisition multiplied by 2.86. 19 And curiosity simply got the better of me. 20 Why 2.86? I just couldn't figure out what the acquisition value had to do with a carried-forward 21 22 loss. And then why 2.86? I actually joked: Why not 23 pi? 24 MR. LARSEN: Well, actually the 2.86

represents the tax benefit at 35 percent.

MS. EVANS: The tax benefit. How is that? 1 2 So you have a hundred-million-dollar loss, and then 3 you buy it -- I guess I will have to do the math, 4 because I can't do it mentally here. 5 MR. LARSEN: So if someone had a hundred-million-dollar loss that was purchased for, 6 say, 500 million --7 8 MS. EVANS: Okay. 9 MR. LARSEN: Okay? -- the Department's going 10 to say that you can't deduct -- the maximum that can be deducted is the hundred-million-dollar loss. 11 12 Because, for one thing, the -- well, yeah. 13 MS. EVANS: I'll work on my math. 14 MR. LARSEN: Okay. 15 MS. EVANS: If I don't understand it, I will write a comment. 16 17 MR. LARSEN: Okay. 18 MS. EVANS: 15 AAC 55.217(j), the last 19 sentence says: Upon receiving a written request from 20 the producer, the Department will request the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to determine 21 22 whether, and, if so, regular production of oil or gas 23 has commenced from lease or property. 24 And this regulation specifically pertains to

AS 43.55.165(o), which is the application of a

- 1 carried-forward annual loss, what we've been talking
- 2 about.
- And I was just wondering. We don't have the
- 4 same language for the AOGCC and the GVR, so would it
- 5 be -- or maybe I missed it. But would it be helpful
- 6 to maybe also have it for the GVR?
- 7 MR. LARSEN: I think this is not restricted
- 8 to the carried-forward loss. And if that's the way
- 9 that's being read, Marie, I -- it was our -- it was
- 10 the Department intent that this language also include
- 11 a GVR request.
- MS. EVANS: Oh, okay.
- 13 MR. LARSEN: I'll take another look. But I
- 14 don't see anything in the regulation that necessarily
- 15 restricts this to the carried-forward losses. But if
- 16 that's not true, then it was our intent that that --
- 17 it also include the GVR. And so if it's not, then
- 18 we'll go back and take a look at that.
- 19 MS. EVANS: Okay. I will also go back. I
- 20 probably -- I read -- I was reading about (o) in that
- 21 paragraph, but I will go back and look to make sure.
- MR. LARSEN: Yeah.
- MS. EVANS: Okay.
- MS. GRAMLING: This is Mary. Sorry. Not to
- 25 cut you off, Marie, but I just wanted John to be

aware that -- I don't know who else is in the room, 1 2 but it's almost 10:00 o'clock, and so --3 MS. EVANS: Oh. 4 MS. GRAMLING: -- I don't know how much more 5 presentation you've got, Marie. But, you know, if there's other people in the room, I want to make sure 6 7 that they have the opportunity to comment and then --I'm just concerned as where we are in time. I don't 8 9 want to, you know, cut your time or anything, Marie. 10 Maybe we could come back to it if there's a lot more. I just want to make sure that we're not taking too 11 12 much time if there's other people that, you know, also 13 want to comment. 14 MR. LARSEN: Thanks, Mary. 15 And maybe let me just pause and ask: As far as those on the teleconference, is there anybody on 16 17 the teleconference that wants to provide testimony at the hearing here today? If so, could you just 18 identify yourselves now, because if Marie -- if we 19 20 could allow Marie to continue, that would be my preference. But if it looks like we're going to run 21 into time constraints, then I'll certainly be aware of 22

that. But maybe just so my awareness -- if there's

anybody that wants to testify telephonically, could

you please identify yourself now, and I will make sure

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that we do allow time for that to happen. 1 2 (Pause.) 3 MR. LARSEN: I'll take that as a no response. 4 Also, I spoke to Kara Moriarty briefly, and 5 it's my understanding that the AOGA presentation today is probably going to be rather limited and will be 6 7 more complete in their written comments. Could --8 MS. MORIARTY: That's correct. 9 MR. LARSEN: Kara's nodding her head in 10 agreement. So I think we'll go ahead and let Marie continue here. 11 MS. EVANS: Yep. I really had mostly summary 12 13 stuff. 14 MR. LARSEN: Okay. 15 MS. EVANS: So I didn't have any other specific sections in here. I did want to just advise 16 17 that the regulations are complex, and I hope that we never have a loss. But I do think they're going to 18 19 require, due to their complexity, a lot of manual 20 calculations. I don't believe that the legislature intended 21 22 to have the allocation to the gas in use -- the "gas 23 used in state" segment. And that I understand is the 24 way the statute is set up. I don't know that that was 25 understood, because I don't believe -- the "gas used

- 1 in state" segment, the way the math works, it's just
- 2 really easy to create a loss. And I don't -- and that
- 3 loss is very unlikely to be used unless your "gas used
- 4 in state" segment starts making a lot of revenues.
- 5 And I don't believe that this legislation was
- 6 passed with the intent of creating a small or smaller
- 7 but permanent tax increase, just because of the way
- 8 the math works for gas used in state.
- 9 I know you are implementing regulations, and
- 10 we have the structure we have, but that does concern
- 11 me a bit. I appreciate the "opt out" language that
- 12 was added into the draft, and that will at least
- 13 provide an opportunity, if you do have a loss, say, of
- 14 \$100 or a thousand dollars, that you don't have to go
- 15 through the complex mathematical calculations because
- 16 no matter what, depending on your size, you may just
- 17 opt to forgo, and I think that was a great addition.
- 18 So thank you.
- 19 What else did I have? And then as I said at
- 20 the beginning -- and I think this has more to do with
- 21 the complexity -- I really understood or we really
- 22 understood the "ring fencing" concept during the
- 23 discussions was to prevent the large producers from
- 24 purchasing explorers for their losses. And
- 25 irrespective of the merits of that policy goal, I

- 1 don't know that the complexity achieves that, and so I
- 2 would encourage the Department to reconsider that and
- 3 the policy goals of the legislature in light of the
- 4 complexity.
- 5 And that's really all I had.
- 6 MR. LARSEN: Thank you, Marie.
- 7 MS. EVANS: Thank you.
- 8 MR. LARSEN: Thanks, Marie. And, Marie, let
- 9 me just comment, if I can, on that, on the last
- 10 comment.
- In looking at the language in 165(o), that a
- 12 carried-forward annual loss may only be applied to
- 13 determine the production tax value of oil or gas for a
- 14 category for which a separate annual production tax
- 15 value is required to be calculated under
- 16 AS 43.55.160(a) or (h), if the lease expenditure
- 17 resulting in that carried-forward annual loss was
- 18 incurred in the same category; and two, beginning in
- 19 the calendar year in which regular production in oil
- 20 or gas from the lease or property with a lease
- 21 expenditure resulting in the carried-forward annual
- 22 loss was incurred commences.
- 23 And so that's -- I think that really is the
- 24 "ring fencing" language there, and that's what
- 25 requires the allocation of those costs to those

- 1 properties.
- I think that -- I don't want to say that the
- 3 formula is unnecessarily complex, but I think that
- 4 there is a necessary complexity in allocating those
- 5 expenditures to the lease or property where the loss
- 6 was incurred. And as we stated at the beginning, if
- 7 the producers' revenues can't absorb the losses, then
- 8 there's no allocation required.
- 9 MS. EVANS: Correct.
- 10 MR. LARSEN: And then in regards to the
- 11 calculations in 217(c), only one of those calculations
- 12 is going to apply during a year to a producer. In
- other words, a calculation under (3)(A), (B) and (C)
- is not -- annual, and the word being "and (C)," is not
- 15 going to be required. Only one of those calculations
- 16 is going to be required. And it's going to be based
- on the -- what level of lease expenditures exceed the
- 18 gross value of the point of production.
- 19 And so the intent is such that if the -- the
- 20 intent is that -- and I think of both the statute and
- 21 the regulation, is that losses not be attributed to
- 22 producing properties unless a producing property
- 23 incurred those -- was responsible for a part of that
- loss; but rather that, for example, if a producer has
- 25 producing properties that are able to absorb some but

- 1 not all of the loss, then only that portion of the
- 2 loss that remains will be attributable to the
- 3 nonproducing lease or property rather than, like, a
- 4 hundred percent of the loss.
- 5 MS. EVANS: Okay. Thank you.
- 6 MR. LARSEN: Yeah, you bet. Thanks.
- 7 So that's all we have from ConocoPhillips
- 8 today. Is there someone else that would like to
- 9 provide testimony?
- 10 MS. MORIARTY: Good morning. For the record,
- 11 my name is Kara Moriarty, and I'm the President and
- 12 CEO of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association.
- John, as you mentioned during the portion
- 14 with ConocoPhillips, we, as AOGA, come between various
- 15 holiday calendars and other activities -- I have a
- 16 board meeting today -- and things of that nature. We
- 17 have not had a chance to rally the troops, if you
- 18 will, to see if we'll be providing any additional
- 19 comments beyond what we did on the discussion draft.
- 20 And so I anticipate -- we know that
- 21 January 26th is the deadline, and I have no doubt that
- 22 we will provide you with extensive comments based
- 23 on -- once we have a chance for all of us to sit down
- 24 and visit. That will probably happen sometime either
- 25 early or late next week.

So I apologize that we don't have our normal 1 2 type of oral comments during your public hearing process like we normally do. It's just a function of 3 people's travel schedules and whatnot. But you can 4 5 expect a full set of AOGA comments by the 26th. And they could be short, but at least we will have had a 6 chance to have got -- had everyone's input, because, 7 as I said, it's always a hundred percent consensus. 8 9 So I don't want to speculate, even based on 10 some initial conversations, and we will provide that viewpoint on behalf of our membership by then. 11 12 MR. LARSEN: Thanks. Thanks, Kara. I 13 appreciate that, and I appreciate AOGA consolidating 14 the comments for us --MS. MORIARTY: Again, no worries. 15 16 MR. LARSEN: -- putting that together. 17 Thanks. 18 Is there anyone else in the conference room 19 here today that would like to provide testimony or 20 comment? Hearing none, I will go once again to the 21 phone lines and see if there's anybody on the 22 23 teleconference who would like to comment on anything they have heard today or on the draft itself. 24 25 Hearing none, thank you everyone again for

- 1 your comments here today. A final reminder that the
- 2 public comment period closes at 4:00 p.m. Friday,
- 3 January 26, 2018.
- 4 The Department will either adopt the proposed
- 5 regulation changes or other provisions dealing with
- 6 the same subject without further notice or decide to
- 7 take no action.
- 8 Once again, comments may be delivered to me
- 9 by e-mail to John.Larsen@Alaska.gov, J-o-h-n, dot,
- 10 L-a-r-s-e-n at Alaska.gov, via fax to 907/269-6644, or
- 11 mailed or delivered to me at 550 West 7th Avenue,
- 12 Suite 500, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.
- The comments will be accumulated and posted
- 14 online on the Tax Division's website at
- 15 www.tax.Alaska.gov. All comments will be considered
- in the final drafting of the regulations proposed for
- 17 adoption by the Commissioner of Revenue. The language
- 18 of the final regulations may be different from that of
- 19 the proposed regulations; therefore, if you believe
- 20 your interests may be affected, you should comment
- 21 during the time allowed.
- 22 Please remember that all comments received
- 23 are public records and available for public
- 24 inspection.
- 25 Thank you again everyone here today for your

participation and interest in these matters. 1 I said that I would be here until 11:00, and so I think that 3 I will remain here and see if anybody shows up to make 4 comment. But the rest of you are free to go. 5 I think we'll pause in the proceeding and go off the record for a while. And if anybody comes back 6 on, then we will take it up after that. 7 8 Thanks and good day. (Off record.) 9 10 MR. LARSEN: This is John Larsen. We're back 11 on record. The time is 11:03. No one has showed up 12 to provide any additional testimony. This hearing is now closed. 13 14 (Proceedings concluded at 11:03 a.m.) 15 -000-16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

1	CERTIFICATE
2	
3	I, GARY BROOKING, Registered Professional
4	Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
5	Alaska, do hereby certify that the foregoing
6	proceedings were taken before me at the time and
7	place herein set forth; that the proceedings were
8	reported stenographically by me and later transcribed
9	by computer transcription; that the foregoing is a
10	true record of the proceedings taken at that time;
11	and that I am not a party to nor have I any
12	interest in the outcome of the action herein
13	contained.
14	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
15	my hand and affixed my seal this 23rd day
16	of January, 2018.
17	has 17 wh
18	TYV
19	GARY BROOKING, RPR
20	My Commission Expires 6/28/2020
21	
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