



# Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

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## *Administration Fumbles Gas Pipeline Proposal* *Democrats decry demise of MidAmerican negotiations*

JUNEAU – Democratic legislators today expressed disappointment over the breakdown of natural gas pipeline negotiations between Governor Frank Murkowski and MidAmerican Holdings Company.

MidAmerican is an attractive partner, said Democrats. First, as an independent pipeline company, they have no conflicts of interest or monopoly issues on the North Slope. Second, MidAmerican has deep enough pockets to build a multi-billion dollar project. Third, they have significant pipeline construction experience. Fourth, the company was willing to forge partnerships with Alaskan entities. And fifth, MidAmerican was aggressive about building the project right away.

“We can spare no effort in moving the gas pipeline ahead,” explained House Democratic Leader Ethan Berkowitz (D-Anchorage). “Resource development will remain the backbone of our economy for years to come.”

“They tried to open a new store in a company town,” said Representative Eric Croft (D-Anchorage).

“Warren Buffett, one of the principals behind MidAmerican, understands business,” said Representative David Guttenberg (D-Fairbanks). “And when he says there’s potential in Alaska, we can expect other advantages as other businesses look north. But when he says you can’t do business with this administration, what kind of message does this send to the rest of the world?”

Democrats said they remain committed to bringing Alaska’s natural gas to market and today supported efforts in the House of Representatives to immediately create a special committee on natural gas pipeline negotiations.

“We have a responsibility to review any final negotiation,” said House Democratic Whip Beth Kerttula (D-Juneau). “But more importantly we have a responsibility to the people of Alaska to not only understand these negotiations, but to be sure they are in our best interest. A legislative committee modeled along the lines of the BP/Arco merger committee is absolutely necessary.”

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Sen. Bettye Davis, Sen. Johnny Ellis, Sen. Kim Elton, Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Sen. Hollis French, Sen. Gretchen Guess, Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, Sen. Donny Olson, Rep. Ethan Berkowitz, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Eric Croft, Rep. Les Gara, Rep. Max Gruenberg, Rep. David Guttenberg, Rep. Reggie Joule, Rep. Mary Kapsner, Rep. Beth Kerttula, Rep. Albert Kookesh, Rep. Carl Moses