



505 W. Northern Lights; Suite 205, Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: (907) 222-7714; Fax: (907) 222-7715

info@akaction.org; www.akaction.org

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 19<sup>th</sup> 2012

Contact:

Lisa Wade, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, (907) 982-7541

Heidi Zimmer, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, (907) 306-8498

## **Mat-Su Residents Outraged at Assembly Vote to Ignore Public Health**

**Palmer, AK-** Last night, the Matanuska Susitna Borough Assembly ignored dozens of local health professionals, coalition partners and concerned citizens asking them to pass resolution No. 12-108 that would require a Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment for the three proposed coal mines in the borough. Despite eloquent support from the overwhelming majority of public testimony, the assembly voted (4-2) to postpone the resolution indefinitely. The current permitting process for coal mines is not obligated to consider the health and safety risks we will face in our communities from coal mining and transportation. Doctors, nurses and community health leaders list their top concerns: coal dust, water quality degradation and road safety.

### **Statement from Lisa Wade, Health and Social Services Director for Chickaloon Village Traditional Council**

"Health Impact Assessments are being used around the world as a tool to aid decision makers in evaluating risks. In communities like ours, facing 20,000 acres of coal development, these studies are even more critical. This vote against studying the health impacts of these mines was a vote for ignorance."

### **Statement from Andrea Grohall, Local Nurse and Mat Valley Coalition Supporter**

"As a mom raising a family next to Wishbone Hill, and also as a professional nurse, I am concerned about the health problems coal mines may bring to my community. I want to see a full Health Impact Assessment for all of these coal mine proposals, and I want these health assessments to be taken seriously."

###