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NEWS RELEASE: [Alaska Community Action on Toxics](#) and Mothers stand up against mercury

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Mothers and Others Against Mercury call for the Alaska Mental Health Trust to divest from coal

Public health and safety concerns are brought to the board's attention – yet they still pursue their toxic agenda

Anchorage, AK – The Alaska Mental Health Trust continues to lease coal resources to the highest bidder in spite of public health concerns around coal development in Alaska communities. On Wednesday September 4th, Mothers and others against mercury and coal development in Alaska will have a stroller brigade to the Alaska Mental Health Trust (AMHT) board meeting at the AMHT headquarters from Tikishla Park in Anchorage beginning at 3 pm. Participants in the stroller brigade will deliver petitions and provide testimony about the public health threats of coal mining and combustion in Alaska.

Lisa Wade, a mother, and Chickaloon Village Tribal citizen, tribal council member, and Health and Social Services Director for Chickaloon Village Traditional Council states: “These coal mines threaten the health of our children, our salmon, our water and air quality, our traditions, and our way of life.”

“Numerous peer-reviewed studies in medical journals show that coal mining and transportation-related air and water pollution are associated with a range of serious health problems, including cardiovascular disease, lung disease, cancer, stroke, heart attacks, diabetes, asthma, and cognitive degeneration. The risks to public health should be fully assessed and considered by the regulatory agencies before any large coal mine is permitted in Alaska.” ~ [Alaska Community Action on Toxics, Coal and Public Health: A health bulletin for health care professionals, May 2013](#), <http://www.akaction.org/akhealth/?p=473>

Last week, an important study was released showing that the mercury found in Pacific ocean fish have a fingerprint from coal plants in Asia. (<http://www.akaction.org/akhealth/facts/#journal>) The proposed coal mines in Alaska would export the coal to Asia. The group is calling for a stop to coal development in Alaska because it would result in severe local impacts to the environment and health. Coal exported to Asia would be combusted to generate energy and result in mercury and other harmful air emissions that will have local as well as transboundary effects.

3:00 pm, Mothers Against Mercury picnic at Tikishla Park, Anchorage

4:15 pm, Stroller Brigade to Alaska Mental Health Trust along the park trail

4:30 pm, gathering in front of the Alaska Mental Health Trust building

4:40 pm, Public testimony at the Alaska Mental Health Trust board meeting

Available for Interviews:

Lisa Wade, Health and Social Services Director, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, lisaw@chickaloon.org, 907-982-7541

Pamela K. Miller, Executive Director, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, pamela@akaction.org, 907-222-7714, or 907-242-9991

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Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT) is a statewide non-profit public interest environmental health research and advocacy organization dedicated to protecting environmental health and achieving environmental justice. The mission of Alaska Community Action on Toxics is: *to assure justice by advocating for environmental and community health. We believe that everyone has a right to clean air, clean water and toxic-free food.* We work to stop the production, proliferation, and release of toxic chemicals that may harm human health or the environment. For more information, please call 907-222-7714 or visit www.akaction.org.