

U.S. gold coins to be minted, says Senate

Washington, D.C.—The U.S. Senate on Thursday approved legislation which will initiate the minting of U.S. gold coins and stimulate the American gold mining industry.

Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski, a co-sponsor of the Gold Bullion Coin Act of 1985, said the legislation would work in conjunction with the President's proposed ban on the importation of the South African Krugerrand gold coins to provide investors with an American alternative to the Krugerrand.

"But more importantly, this will provide a much needed boost to our nation's gold mining industry by mandating that all of the gold come from domestic mines," Murkowski said. "Alaska's gold mining industry suffered a 15 percent decline in gold production last year—primarily because of the drop in the world gold price.

"However, this legislation can turn the gold market around. By minting gold bullion coins, a stronger market and higher prices should develop. This translates into a healthier gold mining industry for Alaska and more jobs for our residents."

Murkowski noted that 175,000 ounces of gold valued at \$63 million was produced in Alaska in 1984, creating 1,700 jobs among the 280 placer mines throughout the state.

The 1984 gold production was second only to sand and gravel in total value of minerals produced in Alaska. The legislation authorizes the minting of:

- A \$50 gold coin that is 32.7 millimeters in diameter, weighs 33.9 grams and contains one troy ounce of fine gold;
- A \$25 gold coin that is 27 millimeters in diameter, weighs 16.9 grams and contains one-half troy ounce of fine gold;
- A \$10 gold coin that is 22 millimeters in diameter, weighs 8.4 grams and contains one-quarter troy ounce of fine gold;
- A \$5 gold coin that is 16.5 millimeters in diameter, weighs 3.3 grams and contains one-tenth troy ounce of gold.

The legislation now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.