

2/8/17

**Senator Stevens**  
**Alaska State Capitol**  
**Room 429**  
**Juneau, AK 99801**

**Dear Senator Stevens:**

I am writing today in strong support of SB7, establishing a museum construction grant program for Alaska. As you know, this bill simply provides a framework for establishing a rational, systematic approach to prioritizing capital requests for funding for museum projects statewide.

Museums and cultural organizations in Alaska not only underpin Alaska's educational and cultural infrastructure, but contribute significantly to the state's economy. They currently employ hundreds of Alaskans, host over 600,000 visitors a year, and serve more than 35,000 Alaska school children annually.

Museums and cultural facilities are at risk in Alaska today, with decreasing state, federal, and municipal support and challenges to charitable giving. As cultural collections statewide grow and visitation increases, pressure on the museum infrastructure increases, and access to historical and cultural collections statewide must be managed effectively.

The core mission of museums is education, for Alaskans and visitors. Without proper care and adequate facilities, Alaska's museum collections will not be able to continue to offer robust educational programs in the future. Thank you for sponsoring SB7, which will provide a framework that will enable museums throughout the state of Alaska to continue to serve their communities.

Sincerely,



**Kesler Woodward**  
Vice-Chair, Alaska State Council on the Arts  
President, Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation

cc: Senator Bishop, Senator Egan, Senator Stedman, Representative Parish, Representative Ortiz