



P.O. Box 50 Dillingham, Alaska 99576 Phone (907) 842-5956
Fax (907) 842-2784 TTY Phone (907) 842-6541

January 5, 2011

Rep. Bryce Edgmon
Alaska State Capitol, Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Proposed Revisions to Sec. 18.56.810:
Senior Citizens Housing Development

Dear Rep. Edgmon:

Bristol Bay Housing Authority (BBHA) supports a proposed statutory amendment which would provide for the direct eligibility of Alaska housing authorities under the AHFC Senior Citizens Housing Development Fund Program. As you are aware, BBHA is one of 14 state chartered regional housing authorities who are members of the Association of Alaska Housing Authorities (AAHA).

The program was created to provide funding to assist organizations attempting to develop senior citizen housing. Acquisition, rehabilitation, accessibility modification and new construction of senior housing as well as pre-development activities are all eligible for grant awards.

Although Alaska's regional housing authorities are some of the most experienced and qualified housing developers in the state, current statutory language limits program eligibility to municipalities or public or private nonprofit corporations designated as tax exempt under 26 U.S.C. 501©(3) and (4) (Internal Revenue Code of 1954). Regional housing authorities do not meet this technical definition and are thus unable to directly access this particular program as a resource to address increasing senior housing needs throughout the state. In the past, AHFC has interpreted the regulations to define Housing Authorities as eligible applicants and recipients of such funds. However, after a AG opinion on the topic, AHFC has reversed that interpretation of eligibility of Housing Authorities to directly participate in the program. BBHA strongly supports the proposal by AAHA to add regional housing authorities, as defined under AS 18.55.996, to the specified eligible entities which can apply for and receive these funds.

Thank you for sponsoring legislation which would provide for the requested statutory change. We appreciate your efforts to assist in this matter. Please contact me for any further information you may need on this issue.

Sincerely,


Dave McClure
Executive Director
Bristol Bay Housing Authority

Cc: Heather Arnett, AAHA Statewide Administrator