



HAINES BOROUGH, ALASKA
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March 16, 2010

The Honorable Representative Bill Thomas
Alaska State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: CSHB 273

Dear Representative Thomas:

The Haines Borough appreciates your efforts to correct an inequity regarding municipal land grants afforded to boroughs upon incorporation. This amendment will address two shortcomings. Haines was one of the first areas of the state surveyed (due to its rich resources). This resulted in a severe limitation of the total VUU (vacant, unappropriated, unreserved) lands available for conveyance under AS.29.65.010. The former Third-class Haines Borough received the smallest entitlement of any borough in the state.

With encouragement from the State and approval of its citizens, the Third-class borough was dissolved and a new home-rule borough incorporated in October 2002. This new municipality, incorporated after July 1, 1978 per AS.29.65.030, should have been considered for an entitlement of 10% of VUU lands within the boundaries of the municipality. This was not done and the Haines Borough is not requesting that full entitlement that perhaps is due under the law.

The Haines Borough has identified through its public process 1,809 acres of VUU land it would respectfully request under an amendment to HB 273. The bulk of these lands are contiguous to lands already selected by the borough that surround vital watershed and economic resources in Excursion Inlet. All of these parcels have been identified by AKDNR as available for selection by the borough.

On March 9, 2010, the Haines Borough Assembly unanimously approved the selection of these lands and respectfully requests passage of this amendment on behalf of the Haines Borough.

Thank you,

Janice Hill, Mayor
Haines Borough, Alaska

Cc: Senator Albert Kookesh