



**ALASKA FEDERATION
OF NATIVES**

March 16th, 2012

The Honorable Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 532
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of the Alaska Federation of Natives we would like to state our support for Senate Bill 221 to allocate 100 percent of the money collected by the existing alcohol tax to the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment and Prevention Fund. It is clear that you recognize the negative effect of alcohol and drug addiction on the health and safety of Alaska Natives and you are actively seeking solutions that will reduce that impact.

We advocate for this bill on behalf of our membership wishes for a healthy future for all of Alaska. AFN represents 230 villages, through themselves or the 11 Regional Non-profits, and 12 Regional ANSCA corporations that are also members.

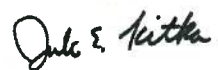
Senate Bill 221 is in alignment with AFN's commitment to ensuring healthier Alaska Natives. Many of the health challenges facing Alaska Natives are tied to behavioral health conditions; chief among these is substance abuse.

- 1 in 11 Alaska Native deaths is alcohol-induced
- Alcohol was the fourth leading cause of death from 1993 to 2002 (Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics)
- Alcohol contributed to 85% of reported domestic violence cases and 80% of reported sexual assault cases between 2000-2003 (ISER, Status of Alaska Native Report, 2004)

Senate Bill 221 will help us fulfill our mission by allocating nearly 40 million dollars for substance abuse treatment and prevention services statewide. These programs continue to be underfunded leaving desperate individuals to continue the costly and tragic cycle of addiction.

Should you have any questions about our position, please feel free to contact me at (907) 274-3611.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie E. Kitka". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Kitka, President

Alaska Federation of Natives

