



Representative Alan Austerman

House Majority Leader

Alaska State Legislature

Sponsor Statement for House Bill 290: Endow Alaska Grant Fund

The purpose of the Endow Alaska program is to provide dollar for dollar challenge funds to support growth of community foundations around Alaska. Community foundations, through endowed funds, can support a breadth of social and cultural objectives in any community, and provide perpetual revenue streams one-time gifts. Research and practice show that matching funds—also known as challenge grants—make a meaningful difference in motivating donors. They have long been a cornerstone of fundraising strategies to enhance community giving.

HB 290 envisions an annual grant to a “lead philanthropic organization,” defined as a statewide organization that adheres to nationally recognized standards for charitable foundations. Under the program the lead philanthropic organization would, in turn, offer challenge grants to community foundations to help spur local philanthropy with a 1-to-1 match for every dollar raised. The result is that state dollars would leverage local giving, for a triple benefit: growing a culture of philanthropy in Alaska communities; improving communities’ self-reliance as a result; and creating a mechanism whereby single-year state appropriations can create perpetual financial tools to benefit to Alaskans.

Through HB 290, existing community foundations will have the opportunity to build their asset base and local support, and communities without existing foundations will have a valuable tool for getting endowed funds in place to support local priorities. Existing Alaska community foundations are numerous and spread throughout the state.

- Chilkat Valley Community Foundation (Haines/Klukwan)
- Jessica Stevens Community Foundation (Talkeetna and Upper Susitna Region)
- Kenai Peninsula Community Foundation
- Petersburg Community Foundation
- Seward Community Foundation
- The Homer Foundation
- The Juneau Community Foundation
- Arctic Slope Community Foundation (there are separate funds for each Arctic Slope community, as well)
- Chugiak/Eagle River Foundation
- Bethel Community Services Foundation
- North Star Community Foundation (Fairbanks area)

There are also another half-dozen communities in Alaska that are currently, actively exploring the establishment of local community foundations.

~ Representing Alaska State House District 36 ~

Akhiok | Igiugig | Iliamna | Karluk | Kodiak | Kokhanok | Larsen Bay | Levelock
Newhalen | Nondalton | Old Harbor | Ouzinkie | Pedro Bay | Port Alsworth | Port Lions

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