



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Alaska Student Loan Corporation

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

P.O. Box 110505
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0505
Phone: (907) 465-6740
Fax: (907) 465-3293
acpe.alaska.gov

February 24, 2014

The Honorable Anna Fairclough
State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Letter of Support for SJR 23

Dear Senator Fairclough,

In my capacity as the Alaska Student Loan Corporation's (ASLC) Executive Officer and as Executive Director of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE), I am writing to express support for SJR 23 – a proposal to permit the issuance of state debt to finance Alaska education loans.

The State of Alaska has a long-standing tradition, for more than forty years, of supporting residents in their pursuit of postsecondary education and training with robust state education loan programs. In 1988, to relieve the state general fund of the annual costs of these programs, the Legislature created ASLC as an enterprise agency of the state with the authority to issue revenue bonds in the financial markets to fund loans and agency operations. While for most of the intervening years this structure has been an effective means of aiding students and their families, changes to the financial markets in the wake of the 2008 market collapse necessitated program modifications that, in turn, have negatively impacted the cost and availability of state loans.

In light of the rising costs of postsecondary education and its increasing importance to Alaskans' ability to fill the high skill, high wage jobs in Alaska's economy, it is now more important than ever that state residents have access to low-cost education funding resources.

SJR 23 provides an opportunity through which ASLC could leverage the State of Alaska's outstanding credit to achieve the lowest possible costs of financing for state education loans and make loans more widely available. This approach to funding education loans is the most efficient, long-term means to ensuring this valued program continues to be available for the next generation of Alaskans.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring Alaskans have an opportunity to pursue their educational goals and for your leadership in sponsoring SJR 23.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane Barrans".

Diane Barrans
Executive Officer/Director