

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING
COUNCIL of ALASKA



Honorable Representative Charisse Millett
Alaska State Capitol
Room 403
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Honorable Representative Millett,

The Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska (SILC) is pleased to support the Employment First Initiative. This initiative will help people with disabilities find, gain, and keep a job in the community which will benefit the individual, the community, and the state as a whole.

The SILC is an independent nonprofit whose board is appointed by the Governor. Our board, under the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, must have people with disabilities as the majority and is responsible for the writing, implementation, and evaluation of the State Plan for Independent Living. In doing such, we work closely with other disability boards and the Centers for Independent Living to ensure that Alaskans with disabilities are able to live as independently as possible throughout their lives.

As such, we consider "employment to be the truest expression of independent living." It allows individuals to earn an income. That income helps individuals become less dependent on public benefits. Additionally, employment offers the individual the chance to learn new skills, gain self-confidence, and creates a community of friends and colleagues. The benefits of work cannot be underestimated.

We are enthusiastic supporters of opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be part of mainstream society and employment certainly is a vehicle for inclusion. Thank you for the work you are doing to help individuals with disabilities live independently.

Sincerely,

Anthony J. Cravalho
Chair