From: Charity Carmody
To: Stedman, Bert K (LAA); Giessel, Cathy (LAA); Kelly, Pete (LAA); Stoltze, Bill (LAA); Ellis, Johnny (LAA)
Subject: Governor"s Adoption Bill HB 200/SB 112
Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 10:30:01 AM
Importance: High

Dear Senators –

I am writing you in support of House Bill 200/Senate Bill 112. I believe this to be a very important piece of legislation at this time. As you know, our child welfare system is in crisis. There are more children in the custody of the state than ever. Roughly 60% of these children are Alaska native. The reality of the situation is that we do not have enough foster and adoptive homes to adequately place these children.

I am the President and Founder of Beacon Hill. We are a foster care and adoption community resource center based in Anchorage. We provide many services to families involved in foster care and work hard to promote adoption for legally free children in our state. Without a doubt, one of the most grievous situations we come across is when an Alaska native child has a family or tribal member that wants to adopt them and yet they are subjected to bureaucracy and further trauma.

As a state and community, we are continuing to suffer from the consequences of our actions prior to ICWA. We must work diligently to remove barriers for Alaska Native families to be able to adopt. I believe that this bill is a good start in promoting permanency, preserving culture, and honoring the traditions of our land and Native people.

I urge you to pass this bill. If you would like to talk with me, I would be honored. Thank you for your taking the time to read this, for your service to our state and for caring about our children.

Charity Carmody, President
Beacon Hill
Serving Alaska's foster children and those at risk of going into foster care through the love of Christ.
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