



PO Box 101883 Anchorage, AK 99510
www.akarts.org

1/21/16

Dear House State Affairs committee members:

I am writing in enthusiastic support of HB 217, which would create a statewide competition for an Alaskan artist to have his or her artwork featured on a special-issue license plate every four years, celebrating not only the vitality of the arts in Alaska, but the spirit of our great state. This competition will provide artists from all over Alaska the opportunity to submit original designs, and it will enhance public awareness and appreciation of Alaska's extraordinary arts community and artistic traditions. It will provide an everyday reminder for Alaskans that art is not something elitist, but something accessible to everyone, and it will make a chore we all share—purchasing or renewing license plates for our vehicles—an opportunity for fun and celebration.

The method of design selection specified in the bill—winnowing of the entries to a few finalists by a qualified artistic panel, followed by selection of the final winning design by statewide popular vote—will both insure selection of a high quality and meaningful design and enhance public involvement and appreciation.

The four-year run of each license plate design provided for in the bill will provide significant exposure for the selected Alaskan artist and widespread recognition, but also provide for newly-inspired images and fresh opportunities for other artists and renewed public involvement in a timely manner.

The limited-edition plates produced as a result of this competition will not only cover all costs, but provide a modest stream of revenue for the Alaska State Council on the Arts, the state arts agency which exists to foster the development of the arts for all Alaskans through education, partnerships, grants, and services.

The program provided for in this well-crafted bill is a “win” for the arts, for Alaska's artists, and for all Alaskans. Thank you for your support of this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kesler E Woodward". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Kesler Woodward
President, Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation