

April 6, 2015

**Senator Anna MacKinnon
Senate Finance Committee Chair**

Re: Support of UA Engineering Initiative in FY16 State Capital Budget (SB 26)

Dear Senator Anna MacKinnon:

The purpose of this letter is to ask for the Alaska State Legislature's support of continued funding to complete the University of Alaska Fairbanks College of Engineering and Mines Engineering Learning and Innovation Facility. While the state revenue picture has certainly changed over the past six months, the need to finish the UAF CEM facility is still necessary. We appreciate all you are doing to balance the state budget at a very difficult time indeed. It is understood that state dollars are scarce right now, yet if construction is stopped, it will cost more over time to complete this facility.

The balance to complete the CEM Facility is \$31.3 million. While we understand the fiscal position you face, we also know it will cost more to complete the structure the longer this is delayed. Please consider including \$10 million in the FY16 capital budget to continue the construction of this important and necessary facility. Such a funding level will keep the project from being shut down and causing contractor re-bidding and/or remobilization, and it will allow for the completion of two badly needed large classrooms for the University and for the College of Engineering and Mines.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

**Sincerely,
Gene Strid, PE
VP, CTO, GCI Wireless Services**