

April 6, 2015

Senator Anna MacKinnon
Senate Finance Committee Chair
Finance.committee@akleg.gov

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

Dear Senator 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 (CEM) Learning and Innovation Facility.

As a graduate of the UAA School of Engineering and an employer of engineers in Alaska, I cannot overemphasize the need to support facilities necessary to educate future engineers. We have continually been behind the curve, trying to catch up with the demand for engineers in our great state. Not surprisingly, Alaska is not an environment that successfully draws outside engineers into our labor market – at least not for the long-term. I continue to have a difficult time finding engineers to hire.

The need to finish the UAF CEM facility is still necessary, regardless of the current state revenue picture. If construction is halted, it will cost more over time to complete this facility. Please include \$10 million in the FY16 capital budget to continue the construction of this important and necessary facility.

I appreciate all you are doing to balance the state budget. Thank you for taking the time to consider my input on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Steven Kari, P.E.