

AMENDMENT

Offered in: Senate Finance
To: SB26

By: Senator Olson

Amendment #2

Agency:
Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

Project:
Northwest Arctic Borough – Kivalina Evacuation and Access Road (HD 40)

Amount:
\$2,500,000

Funding Source:
General Funds (fund code 1104)

Explanation:

Kivalina is a traditional village lying precariously on a low-lying barrier island between the Chukchi Sea and Kivalina Lagoon. The community of Kivalina will have to be relocated due to significant erosion. In recent years, the fall storms hit before the shore ice has formed leaving the shorefront unprotected and resulting in unprecedented erosion. Each year it seems that the storms and the erosion get worse. In the interim, a series of mitigation measures have been constructed to protect the community to the extent possible, but the community is still not safe and the erosion is still occurring. A state study on climate change and a federal study on erosion both recognized the serious erosion issues the Kivalina community faces.

Currently, the only way to leave the village is by plane or boat. Both of these means of escape would be dangerous, if not impossible, during a large ocean storm. Compounding the situation is the fact that the community is in a remote area making it difficult if not impossible for outside help to reach the community in time for a successful rescue mission. The community must have a way to safely evacuate on their own, the evacuation road meets this need. Funding for this project is time sensitive: Kivalina has had three emergency evacuations in the past five years, two to the school for local sheltering and one out of the village entirely.

The community has identified high ground near Kisimigiuktuk Hill for the construction of a new school. The site is approximately eight miles inland from the existing community. There is currently no road access to the new school site which will obviously be needed. The proposed road will serve as both an evacuation road and as an access road to the new school from the village. The US Army Corps of Engineers has done some initial field work and testing of the soil. DOWL has recently been hired to provide project management services. Work by both entities will continue next summer, listed below are some of the milestones already achieved on this project:

- 2005 Kivalina Evacuation Road Feasibility Study.
- 2010 Kivalina Consensus Building Project.
- 2012 \$2.5 Million Legislative Request Awarded.
- 2013 Community Selects Location for Lagoon Crossing.
- 2014 Kivalina Reconnaissance Study Complete.
- 2014 Alternatives and Chosen Route Identified.
- 2014 Causeway Field work, Corps of Engineers.
- 2014 \$4,600,400 Kivalina School Construction Grant Fund.
- 2014 Project Management Services Contract Awarded to DOWL.

This continued funding will provide for the work to continue on the design and permitting of the road.

An evacuation road is necessary to ensure the safety of our Kivalina residents. This request is clearly a life, health and safety issue.