



Celebrating the Western Imagination through the Arts

February 28, 2017

Senator Shelley Hughes
Chair
Senate Education Committee
Alaska State Senate

Dear Senator Hughes,

I would like to strongly endorse SB66, a bill related to the restructuring of the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA). WESTAF (the Western States Arts Federation) has worked with the Council for many years, and finds its initiative to restructure to be exemplary and likely a model for state arts agencies around the nation.

SB66 is desirable because it does a number of things:

- The bill allows the ASCA to become more entrepreneurial and to deploy its resources in a way that will garner increased benefits for all Alaskans.
- The bill will help the Council continue to expand its relationship with the Rasmuson Foundation. That relationship allows for the regranteeing of Rasmuson funds through the Council. This activity is a tremendous advantage to Alaskans; however, in order to maintain the relationship, the flexibility SB66 provides is needed.
- The bill (SB66) opens up pathways to enhance the Council's funding that do not currently exist. In Alaska's current difficult budget situation, having such pathways is essential for the arts, especially the economic force of the arts in Alaska to not lose ground during a time of economic stress.

Our organization seeks to make state arts agencies more responsive to the public and more entrepreneurial. We believe SB66 creates a framework for this, and we strongly endorse its passage.

Sincerely,

Anthony Radich
Executive Director
WESTAF