



KAWERAK, INC. • P.O. Box 948 • Nome, AK 99762



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ST. MICHAEL
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UNALAKLEET
WALES
WHITE MOUNTAIN

March 9, 2017

Alice Bioff
P.O. Box 862
Nome, Alaska 99762

Public Testimony Given to the House Education Committee

HB137 - Alaska State Council on the Arts Restructuring Initiative

Position: **SUPPORT**

Dear Honorable Committee Chair and Committee members,

My name is Alice Bioff, resident of Nome, Alaska, currently employed at Kawerak, Inc. and an Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) council member. Thank you all for the opportunity to testify in support of HB137. I am testifying today in my capacity as an ASCA council member. I am a tribal member of the Native Village of Koyuk, and grew up there and in Nome. My family and I have lived in Nome for the last 17 years. For much of that time, I have been employed by Kawerak, Inc., the regional Native non-profit consortium of tribes for the Bering Strait region, as a Business Planning Specialist.

Through our work here at Kawerak, I am honored and privileged to work with artist entrepreneurs within our communities. We provide direct technical assistance offering tools and resources to assist artists continue their work so that they can sustain themselves, their families and their communities. It is through this work that I have seen firsthand how important it is for these artists who live in communities with very few resources and infrastructure, to grow their businesses through opportunities such as those that become available through ASCA and others.

Artist Entrepreneurs are economic development drivers in their communities and the Alaska State Council on the Arts supports these communities through their work and advocacy. With their partnerships, resources and programs, we see a bright future and growth opportunity to support all artists across the State.

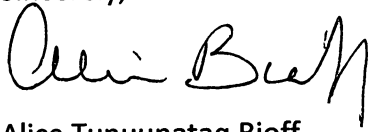
Through the restructuring initiative, we see ASCA services continued and strengthened to support the artists through improved ability to react to funding opportunities and

better represent, support and advance the artists by offering the tools and services needed to strengthen an already existing and important economy. This is critical to strengthening and sustaining our rural communities in this fiscally challenging time.

HB137 streamlines the process ASCA will use to present opportunities to artists all over Alaska, including those artists we have worked with for years here in the Bering Strait region. From my perspective, this will be a great benefit for all artists including those in rural Alaska.

Thank you for this opportunity, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at, (907) - 443- 4366 or email me at bp.spec@kawerak.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Bioff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alice" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bioff".

Alice Tunuunataq Bioff
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