



March 7, 2017

Honorable Ivy Sponholz
Chair, House Health and Social Services Committee
State Capital Room 421
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Doyon support for HB 118, Compensation for Wrongful Conviction

Dear Chairwoman Spohnholz,

This letter is a written statement of support on behalf of the Doyon, Limited Board of Directors, our employees, and shareholders for HB 118, "An Act relating to compensation for wrongful conviction and imprisonment."

Doyon is one of the thirteen Native regional corporations established by Congress under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. Doyon's mission is to promote the economic and social well-being of our present and future shareholders, to strengthen their Native way of life, and to protect and enhance our land and resources.

Just over a year ago, Doyon celebrated with Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Interior Alaska Native community the release of Marvin Roberts, George Frese, Eugene Vent and Kevin Pease from incarceration. These men, known as the Fairbanks Four maintained their innocence for 19 years and were partially vindicated after a five week trial when the State of Alaska traded the keys to their jail cells for the release of any civil liability in the prosecution and investigation of their cases.

The State also did not provide these men with any type of reparation to transition back into daily life; and the Fairbanks Four were left with the shirts on their backs to reintegrate into our Alaskan community. Despite their proven innocence, the difficulty of reentering society is profound for the wrongfully convicted; the failure to compensate them adds insult to injury.

Doyon asserts that the State of Alaska has an obligation to provide compassionate assistance to the wrongfully convicted, and HB 118 would take a step in the right direction. Thank you for your consideration of this bill, and for the work you do on behalf of Alaska. If you have any questions regarding Doyon's support for HB 118, please contact our office at 907-459-2092.

Sincerely,

Aaron M. Schutt
President and CEO
Doyon, Limited