

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL**

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P.O. BOX 531 (907)-874-2381
Wrangell, AK 99929 FAX (907)-874-3952
www.wrangell.com

April 6, 2017

Senate Finance Committee Cochair Hoffman
Senate Finance Committee Cochair MacKennon
Senate Finance Committee members

Re: SB 23 – Specifically Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Fund

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical investment by the State of Alaska.

The Marine Industries in Wrangell, Alaska is the largest sector employment in our community (2014 *Wrangell by the Numbers, Raincoast Data*) and I am sure the economic dependence is similar in other coastal communities throughout the State. The success of our economies result from or are affected by our marine infrastructure.

The Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Fund Program is one of the critical economic investments that the State of Alaska can make to benefit economic opportunity statewide. The program is a 50/50 matching program, such that each applicant community has to have as much or more commitment in the program than provided by the State. The return on the state's funding assistance is multiplied greatly by the economic revenues generated from harbor users that go not only to the communities, but to their individual businesses with spending power that trickles down through local economies.

The City and Borough of Wrangell supports continued funding of the Municipal Harbor and Facility Grant Fund program at the minimum level of \$5,000,000. Healthy ports help sustain healthy communities.

Sincerely

Carol Rushmore
Interim Borough Manager