

Grant-in-Aid Program Support



The Statewide Museum Association

www.museumsalaska.org | PO Box 80641, Fairbanks, AK 99708 | (907) 306-3109 | director@museumsalaska.org

April 5, 2018

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of Museums Alaska, the statewide association of museum professionals, we strongly urge you to restore funding of the Alaska State Museums' Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program. This modest program has existed for 36 years and has helped many Alaskan museums preserve their collections, develop and update exhibitions, and professionalize. Museums without resources cannot adequately protect Alaska's cultural and historical heritage, so the loss of the GIA program would threaten Alaska's heritage statewide and our unique Alaskan story. Most Alaskan museums are located in remote areas, work from limited budgets, and rely on grant funding for critical projects. Elimination of federal funding for museums (through IMLS) has been proposed by the current administration; loss of state GIA funding for Alaskan museums would be devastating.

Museums are economic drivers. Seventy-six percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more on average than other leisure travelers (Mandala Research, 2013). Alaska hosts over two million tourists annually, and a large proportion of these visitors actively seek out museums during their stays. U.S. museums return an average of five dollars to their respective state economies for every dollar in government money received (Americans for the Arts, 2015). Therefore, GIA funding should be considered an interest-bearing investment in the Alaskan economy as a whole. When times are challenging, museums are needed more than ever. They provide free and low-cost programming to members of the public of all ages. They provide opportunities to take in culture and beauty. They are places to learn, explore, and grow.

The Alaska State Museums were recognized earlier this year by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) with a National Medal recognizing the museum's extraordinary and innovative approach to public service and community outreach. The GIA program is a key feature of this award-winning outreach.

We hope this letter has informed and helped convince you that the Alaska State Museums' Grant-In-Aid (GIA) program is a vital part of the social and cultural life of the communities it serves across the great state of Alaska.

Sincerely,
Museums Alaska Board of Directors

Doniece Gott

From: Ariel Rolfe <arielerolfe@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2018 9:22 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Grand in Aid Program

To the Finance Committee:

I am writing you today to show my support of the Grant-In-Aid program for museums. I am an exhibit designer/fabricator that works for a small company in Juneau. I have worked on projects funded, at least in part, by the GIA program all over the state and have seen, first-hand, the positive impact it has had on museums and heritage centers. From Togiak to Palmer to Juneau (and many of the in-betweens), I have been able to help organizations start planning for a more strategic future as a learning and cultural institution. In fact, many of the projects I work on could not have happened without the GIA program. And, without these kinds of projects, institutions would not be able to make progressive steps into growing their infrastructure and therefore filling their role in their communities as the vitally important cultural center they should be.

When times are challenging, museums are needed more than ever. They provide free and low-cost programming to members of the public of all ages. They provide opportunities to take in culture and beauty. They are places to learn, explore, and grow. The value of these services to the public cannot be measured in dollars, but rather in the value they add to the lives of those who visit. Museums matter.

Elimination of federal funding for museums (through IMLS) has been proposed by the current administration; loss of state GIA funding for museums would be devastating.

U.S. museums return an average of five dollars to their respective state economies for every dollar in government money received (Americans for the Arts, 2015). Therefore, GIA funding should be considered an interest-bearing investment in the Alaskan economy as a whole.

I hope this letter has helped inform and convince you that the Alaska State Museums' Grant-In-Aid (GIA) program is a vital part of the social and cultural life of the communities it serves across the great state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Ariel Rolfe

Museums · exhibit design | fabrication | installation
907 419 0829 : arielrolfe.com : exhibitak.com

Heather Beggs
4625 Natalie Circle
Homer, AK 99603

Sen. Gary Stevens
Senate Finance Committee
State Capitol Rm 409
Juneau, AK 99801

April 5, 2018

RE: Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Program

Dear Sen. Stevens,

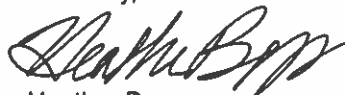
I am writing to urge you to support continued funding of the Alaska State Museums' Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program, which has been eliminated in the Governor's proposed FY19 budget (see House amendment that reinstated funding, but removed by Senate currently). The GIA program provides essential funding to numerous museums across Alaska. Cutting this program is not an efficiency cut but rather a cut that would have a lasting impact on the ability of museums to deliver services in Alaska. In my prior role as Executive Director of Museums Alaska, the state's professional association for museums, I recognized GIA as a unique funding opportunity serving all Alaska museums, big and small.

As you know, the Pratt Museum in Homer, as well as all museums in Kodiak, have benefited greatly from the GIA program, often using the grant as a match for garnering greater support from multiple sources. Like most Alaskan museums, museums in your district work from a limited budget and rely on grant funding for critical projects. Loss of state GIA funding for museums would be devastating. If this program is eliminated, the likelihood of it being reinstated is extremely low.

Although modest in size, Alaskan museums are important economic drivers within their communities. They employ local people, purchase goods and services from within our communities, and promote their regions and the state. 76 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more on average than other leisure travelers (Mandala Research, 2013). U.S. museums return an average of five dollars to their respective state economies for every dollar in government money received (Americans for the Arts, 2015). Not only would a cut to this important source of funding be inefficient, but it would have a negative economic impact on the state.

I know you understand the value of museums to communities and their importance to education, as places to learn, explore, and grow. I hope you'll work to preserve the Alaska State Museums' Grant-In-Aid program as a vital part of the social and cultural life of the communities it serves across Alaska. Because this program has such a vital statewide impact, I wanted to call it to your attention.

Sincerely,



Heather Beggs

April 5, 2018

Senator Shelley Hughes
600 E. Railroad Ave
Wasilla AK, 99654

RE: Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Program

Dear Senator Hughes,

I am writing to urge you to support continued funding of the Alaska State Museums' Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program, which has been eliminated in the Governor's proposed FY 2019 budget. The GIA program provides essential funding to numerous museums across Alaska. I previously was employed with the Palmer Museum of History and Art, and have worked with the Colony House Museum and am currently with Chickaloon Village Tribal Council, all of whom have benefited (both directly and indirectly) greatly from the GIA program.

As the current Secretary for Museums Alaska, I have seen the GIA program allow the Colony House Museum to start cataloguing and storing their collections according to museum standards, the Palmer Museum of History and Art to purchase three permanent collection display cases that increase its capacity to protect its artifacts and purchase temporary display panels and pedestals that have allowed it to expand its temporary exhibit program to increase engagement with its visitors. The GIA program has also allowed the Palmer Museum of History and Art to develop partner programming with Chickaloon Native Village that allows our local residents and visitors to learn the history and culture of the local Ahtna people.

Like most Alaskan museums, the small museums in the Palmer region work from a limited budget and rely on grant funding for critical projects. Elimination of federal funding for museums (through IMLS) has been proposed by the current administration; loss of state GIA funding for museums would be devastating. I am concerned that if this program is eliminated, the likelihood of it being reinstated is extremely low.

Although modest in size, the Palmer region's small museums are an economic driver within the community. They employ local people, purchase goods and services from within our community, and promote the region. Seventy-six percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more on average than other leisure travelers (Mandala Research, 2013). The Palmer Museum of History and Art alone serves approximately 25,000 visitors per year, including 485 school children. The GIA program has helped them serve these visitors at the highest standard possible.

U.S. museums return an average of five dollars to their respective state economies for every dollar in government money received (Americans for the Arts, 2015). Therefore, GIA

funding should be considered an interest-bearing investment in the Alaskan economy as a whole.

When times are challenging, museums are needed more than ever. They provide free and low-cost programming to members of the public of all ages. They provide opportunities to take in culture and beauty. They are places to learn, explore, and grow. The value of these services to the public cannot be measured in dollars, but rather in the value they add to the lives of those who visit. Museums matter.

I hope this letter has helped inform and convince you that the Alaska State Museums' Grant-In-Aid (GIA) program is a vital part of the social and cultural life of the communities it serves across the great state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Selena Ortega-Chiolero
Cultural Development Assistant
Environmental Stewardship, Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
Na'dini aa Na' Hwt'aene Ughedze' Xuk'anotta Nene'
(Nurture the Land and People) Project

Doniece Gott

From: Rosemary Carlton <rosemarycarlton46@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2018 6:39 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Grants in Aid

Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum

104 College Dr., Sitka, AK 99835 907-747-6233
Fax: 907-747-3004 e-mail: friendsofsjm@gmail.com

***Mission Statement:** The Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum is dedicated to supporting the Sheldon Jackson Museum and its unique Alaska Native ethnographic collection through advocacy, acquisition and educational programming.*

April 5, 2018

RE: Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Program

Dear Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to urge you to support continued funding of the Alaska State Museums' Grant-in-Aid (GIA) program, which has been eliminated in the Governor's proposed FY 2019 budget. The GIA program provides essential funding to numerous museums across Alaska. I volunteer at the Sheldon Jackson Museum and was an employee there for 25 years, I know how much museums around the state benefit from this program.

Most Alaskan museums, work from a limited budget and rely on grant funding for critical projects. Elimination of federal funding for museums (through IMLS) has been proposed by the current administration; loss of state GIA funding for museums would be devastating. Alaska institutions are concerned that if this program is eliminated, the likelihood of it being reinstated is extremely low.

Museums, no matter their size are an economic driver within their communities. Locals are employed they, purchase goods and services from within our communities, and promote the region. Seventy-six percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural or heritage activities such as visiting museums. These travelers spend 60 percent more on average than other leisure travelers (Mandala Research, 2013). The GIA program has helped museums serve these visitors at the highest standard possible.

U.S. museums return an average of five dollars to their respective state economies for every dollar in government money received (Americans for the Arts, 2015). Therefore, GIA funding should be considered an interest-bearing investment in the overall Alaskan economy.

When times are challenging, museums are needed more than ever. They provide free and low-cost programming to members of the public of all ages. They provide opportunities to take in culture, heritage and beauty. They are places to learn, explore, and grow and *they preserve and protect the collections which sustain the history and culture of our state*. The value of these services to the public cannot be measured in dollars, but rather in the value they add to the lives of those who visit now and in the future.

I hope this letter has helped inform and convince you that the Alaska State Museums' Grant-In-Aid (GIA) program is a vital part of the social and cultural life of the communities it serves across the great state of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Carlton
President, Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum