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February 28, 2020

Representative Adam Wool
Capitol Building, Room 501
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Wool:

Thank you for introducing House Bill 235 to reauthorize the Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP). The University of Alaska (UA) strongly supports the legislation and the continuation of TVEP's current statutory framework. Doing so will enhance workforce development in Alaska and advance UA's mission as the most comprehensive provider of career and technical education in the state.

The Legislature established TVEP in 2000 drawing from a portion of the Unemployment Insurance receipts collected by the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The program, managed by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, delivers grants to ten statewide and regional training providers for career and technical education. Without reauthorization this important program will sunset at the end of the current fiscal year.

UA manages our TVEP funding through a robust, competitive internal RFP process. This targets funding for high-demand and regional job training statewide. We are Alaska's largest provider of workforce training with a statewide reach that stretches from Ketchikan to Kotzebue, across 16 campuses, as well as targeted rural sites and online training options. Our internal process for using TVEP funds strategically responds to industry-specific workforce needs. TVEP is used as a short-term funding source to initiate or enhance training programs and to upgrade equipment and technology to maintain industry standards. We require proposals demonstrate the ability to garner matching funds and a plan for maintaining the program beyond TVEP funding. UA uses TVEP funding to put Alaskans to work, and our costs per student is one of the most efficient amongst funding recipients.

The University has achieved great accomplishments in workforce development through TVEP and partnerships with stakeholders and industry. These include tripling the number of nurses produced in Alaska, doubling the number of UA engineering graduates, providing dual credit for thousands of high school students, and training Alaskans for jobs in industries such as oil & gas, mining and maritime. UA has also expanded opportunities for students to attain occupational endorsements, certificates, and is connecting apprenticeships and competency-based training to degree programs.

A good example of UA's success meeting industry workforce needs is in the areas of maritime, seafood and fisheries. In 2019, the Alaska Research Consortium surveyed seafood industry employers to identify training needed to develop their workforce. Their survey identified a wide range of skill sets and competencies including Refrigeration, Occupation Safety & Health,

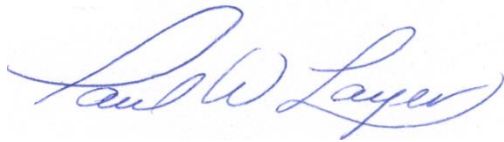
CPR/First Aid, Quality Control, Hazardous Waste and Control Management, Basic Firefighting, Commercial Driver's Licensing and others. UA delivers in all of these subject areas across multiple locations and formats statewide. TVEP has specifically allowed UA to tailor innovative programs for the seafood industry based at the Kodiak Seafood Marine Science Center to train the next generation workforce and allow Alaskans to advance their careers in this important industry. We also collaborate with the Alaska Vocational and Technical Center (AVTEC), a TVEP recipient, to offer additional training in support of seafood processing.

As the Legislature considers reauthorizing TVEP, we strongly encourage you to retain the current framework for the program that is set in statute. The University supports a clean reauthorization of the existing program, recipients and distribution amounts. This will provide stability and allow recipients to continue strategic partnerships to meet Alaska's workforce needs.

The University of Alaska provides 92% of all postsecondary education in Alaska, and we are the most comprehensive provider of workforce training. For twenty years, TVEP has substantially enhanced our workforce development programs in all regions of Alaska. We strongly encourage legislators to extend this program and the important work it allows for in the area of career and technical education.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let our Government Relations staff know if we can answer any question or provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Paul W. Layer, PhD
Vice President for Academics, Students & Research
University of Alaska

cc

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Teri Cothren, Assoc. VP Workforce Programs