



April 21, 2021

Dear Chair Kreiss-Tomkins, Vice chair Claman, and members of House State Affairs Committee,

Fairbanks Native Association strongly supports HB123—an act providing for State recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes. As you already know, Fairbanks Native Association is Interior Alaska's first civil rights organization. FNA's programs have expanded to serve all of Alaska's residents and helped countless people find new jobs, maintain sobriety, celebrate their culture, and receive an education. In our role of uplifting Alaska Native people of the Interior and all Alaska, we ask that you support HB123.

Recognition is an important step in strengthening the partnership between the State of Alaska and Alaska Native tribes. By recognizing and enhancing the capacity of Alaska Native tribes to continue their longstanding tradition of providing vital resources to the state of Alaska we begin the process of healing and we reinforce our working relationships.

In 1970, President Nixon, in his special message on Indian affairs to the United States Congress, recognized the contribution of the Indian in America as:

"A record also of endurance, of survival, of adaptation and creativity in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It is a record of enormous contributions to this country—to its art and culture, to its strength and spirit, to its sense of history and its sense of purpose. It is long past the time that the Indian policies of the Federal government began to recognize and build upon the capacities and insights of the Indian people."

The Alaska Legislature can choose to recognize those capacities and honor the enormous contributions of Alaska Natives. HB123 marks the path toward bringing future resources and prosperity to all Alaskans through a strengthened partnership with Alaska Tribes. We encourage the Committee to bring this important legislation for a vote before the House of Representatives. We appreciate your leadership and we stand ready to help in any way possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Ginnis'.

Steve Ginnis,

Executive Director