



Fairbanks North Star Borough

MAYOR'S OFFICE

mayor@fnsb.gov
Main: (907) 459-1300

ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Jonathan Kreiss-Tompkins
Alaska State House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 3
Juneau, AK 99801

April 29, 2021

RE: Support for HB192 – Extending ARDOR Sunset

I am writing in support of HB192 to extend the termination date of the Alaska Regional Economic Assistance Program ([AS 44.33.896](#)) from July 1, 2021 to July 1, 2031. These statutes allow for the creation and continued operation of the Alaska Regional Development Organizations (ARDORs), which enable local officials, tribal organizations, and businesses to pool their limited resources to work together on economic infrastructure and workforce development projects, develop public and private partnerships, and provide technical assistance to rural communities that lack broadband service and financial resource availability. ARDORs are non-partisan entities that prepare and implement regional development strategies that incorporate local knowledge to foster responsible and sustainable economic growth.

The ARDOR program was reauthorized for five years in the 2016 legislative session, but funding for the annual ARDOR grants was removed from the FY17 budget. The ARDORs now receive funding through other sources. As such, there is no cost associated with the passage of HB192.

Each of the nine designated ARDORS are uniquely set up to best address their region's needs. In the FNSB, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) serves as the Interior Alaska ARDOR, which is housed in the Mayor's Office. My role as staff to Mayor Ward and the EDC is to execute economic development strategies, connect with other economic development organizations locally and statewide, and coordinate with the other ARDORS across the state. Most recently, ARDORS played a critical role in the success of the AK CARES program as they helped market the program, as well as provide technical assistance for those applying for funds.

Thank you for your support of this important program.

Sincerely,

Brittany Smart

Special Assistant to the Mayor | Economic Development

cc: Members of the Interior Delegation

