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## Alaska Telecom Association

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February 13, 2026

Representative Kevin McCabe  
State Capitol, Room 13  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

### **Re: Support for House Bill 220 – Easements and Rights-of-Way in State Parks**

Dear Representative McCabe,

On behalf of the Alaska Telecom Association (ATA), which represents Alaska's telecommunications providers serving communities across the state, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 220.

Reliable, affordable broadband and telecommunications services are essential to Alaska's economic development, public safety, education, healthcare, and overall quality of life. House Bill 220 addresses one of the most significant barriers to deployment by clarifying and improving the process for obtaining easements and rights-of-way within state park units for public utility infrastructure. This legislation provides greater certainty and predictability for providers seeking to invest in critical telecommunications infrastructure.

Importantly, HB 220 strikes the appropriate balance between infrastructure development and environmental stewardship. The bill maintains strong protections for park resources and requires that easements be granted only when they are in the public interest and comply with applicable law. At the same time, it ensures that responsible projects are not subject to unnecessary delay or uncertainty.

For many Alaska communities, particularly those in rural and remote areas, access to state lands and corridors is often the only feasible path for extending fiber, microwave, and other broadband facilities. Without reasonable and timely access to these corridors, communities may remain unserved or underserved, limiting economic opportunity and access to essential services.

The Alaska Broadband Office is expecting final approval for the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program which is expected to provide over \$600 million in grants for new broadband deployment. HB20 will help smooth the path for this critical new infrastructure.

ATA's member companies are committed to working collaboratively with state agencies, local governments, and communities to deploy infrastructure responsibly and in a manner that respects Alaska's unique environment. House Bill 220 supports this collaborative approach by creating a transparent, consistent, and workable framework for infrastructure access.

For these reasons, the Alaska Telecom Association strongly urges your support for HB 220. This legislation will help accelerate broadband deployment, reduce regulatory uncertainty, and help ensure that Alaskans, regardless of where they live, have access to reliable, modern communications services.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to strengthening Alaska's telecommunications infrastructure. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we may provide additional information.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine O'Connor  
Executive Director  
Alaska Telecom Association