



March 6, 2026

Representative Neal Foster  
Alaska State Legislature  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 511  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

## **RE: Support for Senate Bill 64: Elections**

Dear Representative Foster:

Calista Corporation (Calista) is encouraging your support for Senate Bill 64: Elections. The legislation will greatly improve access to voting for Alaskans across the State.

The Calista has over 39,000 Alaska Native Shareholders of Central Yup'ik and Athabascan descent, with many of our Shareholders living in the Calista Region to maintain our traditional way of life. The Region is home to approximately 27,000 residents spanning across the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers and Bering Sea coast in Southwest Alaska, only accessible by boat or plane. There are 48 permanent communities, 8 seasonal communities, 56 Tribal Nations, 45 Alaska Native village corporations, and various nonprofits that serve the Region.

We are a strong advocate for equitable voting rights for all Alaskans, no matter where they live. Our Region has encountered many challenges when it comes to voting: some communities are left without in-person voting locations, ballots are late or do not arrive at all to communities, the ballots also may not make it to be counted on time, and some may not regularly operate postal services. There needs to be substantial election reforms to mitigate many of the issues our communities encounter during each election cycle.

Election reforms that Calista supports include:

- **Rural Liaison Position:** this new key position at the Division of Elections will support rural Alaska voters that continuously face voting challenges such as identifying and recruiting election workers, language barriers, mitigate rejected ballots, limited postal services, and more. Yugtun (the Yup'ik language), according to the 2006-2010 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, is the second-most common Native language in the entire country. This position will be vital in mitigating the language barrier that many of our resident's face when participating in elections.
- **Ballot Curing:** some mistakes happen, especially with our state's election system—but these ballots should have an opportunity to be corrected, not thrown out. More than 30 states allow ballot curing to correct ballot mistakes. We need



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to allow ballot curing so that Alaskan voices are heard and can participate in our election system.

- **Pre-Paid Postage:** providing prepaid postage would help ensure ballots reach the Division of Elections and mitigate voters from forgoing participation in the election process. It is challenging when our communities may not have regular postal service and cannot access postage to participate in the elections—a reoccurring theme for rural Alaska.
- **Removal of Witness Signature:** the most common reason for ballot rejection is the lack of a witness signature, even though the Division of Elections states that they do not verify signatures. In the 2024 general election, 512 ballots were rejected based on improper witness signatures. This impedes Alaskans' voices from being heard and participating in the election process.
- **Permanent Absentee Voting:** allowing Alaskans the option to receive an absentee ballot by mail each year rather than filling out the application annually would remove some of the barriers for Alaskans to participate in the election process. There are already many hurdles that rural Alaska residents must overcome to vote, this reform can help to make access to voting more attainable.

Calista appreciates your support for SB64.

Quyana—*Thank you* in Yugtun, the Yup'ik language.

**CALISTA CORPORATION**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Guy".

Andrew Guy  
President and CEO