



Greater Sitka Arts Council

To: Representative Carolyn Hall
Alaska State Capitol Room 434

February 27, 2026

On behalf of the Greater Sitka Arts Council (GSAC), I am writing in support of HB 221, establishing June 21st as Arts and Culture Day in Alaska.

GSAC is a nonprofit that believes the arts are an essential part of any vibrant community. We provide and support the arts in Sitka through programming, education, and advocacy. Our programs include the Sitka Wearable Art Show, a multidisciplinary production that draws regional audiences and supports local artists and businesses, Sitka Porch Fest, a free city-wide outdoor festival that activates neighborhoods and increases foot traffic for local businesses, and Sitka Art Walks, seasonal downtown events that connect residents and visitors with local artists and retailers.

GSAC also serves as an umbrella organization for several local arts groups, providing insurance, fiscal oversight, tax assistance, and licensing support that allows volunteer-led programs to operate sustainably. These include the Sitka Monthly Grind, a community variety show presented eight times each year, Sitka Community Theater, which produces three major theatrical productions annually, and Sitka Strings, which offers affordable violin instruction to local youth. GSAC also collaborates with community partners to expand access to arts programming throughout Sitka.

Alaska has a deep and enduring connection to art and culture. Across the state, we recognize the contributions of Indigenous cultures as well as the many cultures that have shaped Alaska into what it is today. In the small town of Sitka, a person can attend at least one arts or cultural event nearly every week of the year. This is also true of many communities across Alaska, both large and small.

Creating Alaska Arts and Culture Day is more than symbolic. Studies show that participation in the arts supports improved well-being and strengthens communities. The arts also contribute economically to the vitality of each community. By recognizing the richness of our culture and artistic expression, we encourage engagement with local artists and arts organizations for the benefit of all Alaskans.

Designating June 21st as Alaska Arts and Culture Day promises to uplift our communities and instill pride in one of the state's most valuable resources. Choosing the longest day of the year is a meaningful way to highlight how Alaska shines in both its arts and its culture. GSAC supports HB 221 as it moves through the 2026 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Jordan

Bobbi Jordan,

Board Secretary, Greater Sitka Arts Council

sitkaartscouncil.org
thinkarthinksitka@gmail.com

PO Box 564, Sitka, AK 99835 |

To Representative Carolyn Hall

Alaska State Capitol Room 434

On behalf of the Palmer Arts Council, I am writing in support of HB 221, establishing June 21st as Arts and Culture Day in Alaska.

The Palmer Arts Council is a nonprofit organization that supports the arts in our wider Palmer community. We have been an organization for 25 years, offering opportunities in arts education and performance.

I am sure you are aware of the amazing phenomenon which is Alaska's unique arts & culture. From the earliest Native Alaskan dancers and mask-makers to today's painters, writers, and performers, Alaska has served as a muse and inspiration to people in and outside our state's boundaries. From our history, it makes sense that Alaska should formally honor our rich cultural and artistic heritage with the dedication of an Arts and Culture Day.

Alaskan Arts & Culture Day though is not just symbolic. Many studies link artistic expression and participation in community groups to improved well-being. By regularly recognizing the richness of our culture and art, we encourage engagement with local arts and arts organizations that can similarly improve the well-being of Alaskan communities.

Designating June 21st Alaska Arts and Culture Day promises to uplift our communities and instill pride in one of state's most valuable resources. To honor such a day on the summer solstice- a time of celebration in our state seems only too appropriate. We enthusiastically support HB 221 as it moves through the 2026 session.

Sincerely,

Meggie Aube-Trammell, PAC Managing Director



Nome Arts Council
208 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 233
Nome, AK 99762
Find us on Facebook!

February 9, 2026

The Honorable Carolyn Hall
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol, Room 434
Juneau AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hall:

I am writing on behalf of the Nome Arts Council to express our strong support of HB 221, establishing June 21st as Arts and Culture Day in Alaska. In the early 1970s, a group of Nome residents formed an organization dedicated to promoting the performing arts in the schools, the community and the region. The Nome Arts Council was incorporated in May 1973 and has operated continuously since then. We were honored with a citation by the Alaska Legislature on April 12, 2023, in recognition of its fifty years of service to the Norton Sound region.

The heart and soul of the Nome Arts Council's work is creating opportunities for local artists of all disciplines and backgrounds to showcase and develop their talents. These venues have included open mic nights and folk festivals, many theater productions, an annual fine arts show, an annual contest to gather winning photos used to illustrate a calendar, writers' nights, storytelling events, a film festival, community choral concerts, recording of albums featuring Nome musicians, cabaret events, and snow sculpting competitions. In some cases, guest conductors and coaches are brought to Nome to support local artist events.

Alaska should honor its rich cultural and artistic heritage by dedicating a specific day to the recognition of Alaska's unique arts and culture-- from traditional dance, carving, mask-making, sewing and weaving to contemporary disciplines and media. The success and longevity of the Nome Arts Council demonstrates the importance on an individual and community level of engagement in the arts. Designation of an Alaska Arts and Culture Day would extend these benefits to communities throughout the State, to the benefit of all of our residents and those fortunate enough to visit and experience our rich heritage. We enthusiastically support HB 221 as it moves through the 2026 session.

Sincerely,

Margaret Thomas, Vice-President

Mission: The Nome Arts Council nurtures arts and artists and facilitates and promotes events and programs for the benefit of the community of Nome.

Board: Marguerite La Riviere, President; Margaret Thomas, Vice-President; Jenefer Bell, Secretary; Robert Ryan, Treasurer, Tori Crawford, Rachel Finney, Kenneth Hughes, Richard Sargent, Tim Lemaire, Veronica Alviso, Lisa Leeper and Angela Gorn.



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February 17, 2026

Dear Members of the 34th Alaska State Legislature,

In partnership with arts and cultural organizations, artists, culture bearers, and community leaders across the state, we write to express strong support for HB 221, to establish June 21 annually as "Alaska Arts and Culture Day."

Establishing June 21 as Alaska Arts and Culture Day represents a meaningful statewide commitment to recognizing and celebrating our state's vast creative and cultural practices, characteristics that are core to Alaskan identity. From Indigenous traditions that have sustained communities for millennia to contemporary artistic expression shaping our future, Alaska's arts and culture sector reflects the depth, diversity, and resilience of our people.

Designating an official day of recognition creates an annual opportunity to elevate this work in communities large and small. It encourages schools, municipalities, Tribes, nonprofits, and businesses to highlight local artists and cultural traditions, strengthening public awareness and civic pride. It also affirms the essential role arts and culture play in education, community well-being, and economic vitality throughout our state.

June 21, the summer solstice, holds special meaning in Alaska as a day defined by light, gathering, and shared experience. It is a fitting and symbolic time to honor the artists, storytellers, culture bearers, and creative organizations who help illuminate and connect our communities year-round.

Importantly, this designation carries *no* fiscal impact while offering *significant public benefit*. By passing HB 221, the Legislature signals clear support for Alaska's distinctive cultural legacy and reinforces the value of creativity as a cornerstone of our state's past, future, identity, and collective success.

Alaska's cultural and creative heritage is one of our state's most significant and enduring assets. Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership in strengthening and celebrating the future of arts and culture in Alaska through support of HB 221.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jess Peña", written in a cursive style.

Jess Peña
Executive Director
Fairbanks Arts Association



February 26, 2026

Representative Carolyn Hall
Alaska State Capitol Room 434
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Carolyn Hall,

I write today on behalf of the Kodiak Arts Council, the local arts agency for Kodiak Island, in support of HB 221, establishing June 21st as Arts and Culture Day in Alaska.

The Kodiak Arts Council is a multi-disciplinary local arts agency with strong programming in performing arts, visual arts, and arts education. Our programs focus on offering participatory experiences in diverse art forms and in cultivating the talent of community members.

As you are aware, Alaska has amazing and unique arts & culture. From the living cultures of Alaska's First People to artistic endeavors of recent transplants, Alaska serves as a muse and inspiration. It makes sense that Alaska should formally honor this rich cultural and artistic heritage with the dedication of an Arts and Culture Day.

Far from just being symbolic, and Arts and Culture Day will foster well-being and a sense of connectedness among Alaskans. Numerous studies link artistic expression and participation in community groups to improved well-being. Art nurtures creativity, fuels economic development, and brings new ideas to life. A statewide day of celebration of arts and culture provides an opportunity for community based arts activities and recognition of the talent and innovation of artists who reside in our state.

Designating June 21 st Alaska Arts and Culture Day promises to uplift our communities and instill pride in one of state's most valuable resources. To honor such a day on the summer solstice- a time of celebration in our state seems only too appropriate. We enthusiastically support HB 221 as it moves through the 2026 session.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion about the future Arts and Culture Day in Alaska. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Molly Miller
Executive Director
Kodiak Arts Council

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