

## Laura Achee

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**From:** Claire Warncke  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2026 4:41 PM  
**To:** Laura Achee  
**Subject:** HB 26 Senate Transportation Follow-Up

Dear Senate Transportation Committee Members,

Here is the follow-up regarding the hearing for HB 26 in committee on February 26<sup>th</sup>.

As Representative Mina mentioned in committee, tribal entities were included in this bill to ensure the department engages in government-to-government relations when developing statewide transit plans and studying alternative modes of transit. The Department of Transportation & Public Facilities has a Tribal Relations Team which helps the department on tribal government-to-government relationships. You can find an overview of their Tribal Relations Team [here](#), and their DOT&PF's Tribal Consultation Policy [here](#). Additionally, Senator Tobin mentioned in committee that "tribal" is not defined in the bill text.

Here is a definition of tribes which could provide further clarification. The 32<sup>nd</sup> Legislature passed HB 123 into law, which improved Alaska's tribal government-to-government relations by enshrining the state recognition of federally recognized tribes in AS 01.15.100:

### **Recognition of Tribes**

The state recognizes the special and unique relationship between the United States government and federally recognized tribes in the state. The state recognizes all tribes in the state that are federally recognized under 25 U.S.C. 5130 and 5131 Nothing in this section diminishes the United States government's trust responsibility or other obligations to other federally recognized tribes in the state or creates a concurrent trust relationship between the state and federally recognized tribes. In this section, "federally recognized tribe" has the meaning given in AS 23.20.520.

AS 01.15.100 also references two federal codes which define "Indian tribe" and the duty of the Secretary of the Interior to publish an annual list of federally recognized tribes.

Additionally, HB 123 provided a definition of "federally recognized tribe" in AS 23.20.520:

(13) "federally recognized tribe"

(A) means a tribe that is recognized by the United States Secretary of the Interior to exist as an Indian tribe under 25 U.S.C. 5131 (Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994);

(B) includes any subdivision, subsidiary, or business enterprise wholly owned by a federally recognized tribe

If you have further questions, please feel free to reach out to me at [Claire.Warncke@akleg.gov](mailto:Claire.Warncke@akleg.gov).

Sincerely,  
Claire Warncke

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