



February 24, 2026

Honorable Alaska State Legislature
Judiciary Committee Chair Rep. Andrew Gray
& House Judiciary Committee Members

Re: Opposition to House Bill 136

Dear House Judiciary Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 136 – relating to railroad utility corridors. The Anchorage Park Foundation (APF) is a community-based nonprofit that mobilizes public support and financial resources for Anchorage parks, trails, and recreation.

House Bill 136 would undermine the Alaska Railroad's mandate to preserve the integrity of the railroad utility corridor for the legal public uses of transportation, communication and transmission. The Alaska Railroad successfully fought attempts to privatize the utility corridor in both the District Court and the Ninth Circuit court. The Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

Since 2022, the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and the Anchorage Department of Parks & Recreation have been managing a transportation project on the Alaska Railroad corridor in Anchorage with extensive stakeholder and public engagement. The proposed Fish Creek Trail will use one mile of the public railroad corridor to connect the Fish Creek Trail to the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail to improve safety and accessibility.

For the past 14 years, Anchorage voters have supported bonds to build the Fish Creek Trail in the Alaska Railroad corridor, providing the needed 9% match to leverage federal transportation dollars for this project.

Allowing private uses for public utility corridors would likely interfere with this project to build a safe active transportation connection utilizing the corridor for its intended public use. Please do not allow House Bill 136 to move forward.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Nordlund".

Beth Nordlund

Executive Director, Anchorage Park Foundation. 3201 C Street, Suite 111, Anchorage, AK 99503

Anchorageparkfoundation.org