

4/30/2026

Re: Support for SB 208/HB 296 Agricultural Land Leases

To: Senate Finance Committee
House Resources Committee

Building Alaska's agriculture industry is a direct investment in our state's food security and economic future. While the number of farms in our state is actually on the rise, we are seeing farms being sold for development, with less total acreage of land in farms compared to the early 2000s.

To grow our industry, we need access to land. Because such a small percentage of Alaska is privately owned, public land is the primary vehicle for that growth. Unfortunately, the current leasing process is cumbersome and expensive. Currently, the state treats a farmer looking to lease land with the same regulatory complexity as a mining or oil and gas operation.

In addition to the leasing improvements, designating more lands as Agricultural in area plans will also help allow for ag sales, hopefully replacing many of the acres lost to development.

SB 208/HB 296 creates a clearer, more affordable path to getting state lands into production. It recognizes that agriculture is a unique and vital industry that requires its own streamlined approach.

I urge you to support the expansion of Alaska's farming industry and move SB 208/HB 296 out of committee quickly.

Thank you for your time and your support of Alaska's farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,
Willaim Amberg
Moose Tracks Ranch
Copper Center Alaska.