



ALASKA
NATIVE
HERITAGE
CENTER

Alaska House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs
Alaska State House of Representatives

To the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs,

The Alaska Native Heritage Center (ANHC) is pleased to provide this letter of support for the passing of Alaska House Joint Resolution (HJR) 17 referencing H.R 7227-Truth and Healing Commission on Boarding School Policies Act of 2024 Bill. Within the State of Alaska, the boarding school, which were both ecclesiastically and federal operated, were created to forcefully assimilate, many times forcibly removed, Alaska Native children for assimilative purposes. The destruction of cultural identity is one of many realities from the boarding school era which still effect the Alaska Native population today and is revealed in such statistics as the suicide rate amongst the Indigenous population.

ANHC is a statewide 501(c)(3) educational and cultural organization located in Anchorage, Alaska, whose mission is to preserve and strengthen the traditions, languages, and art of Alaska's Native peoples through statewide collaboration, celebration, and education. Following ANHC's vision for "Thriving Alaska Native peoples and cultures respected and valued," we have implemented a robust research program titled *Lach'qu Sukdu*. As ANHC is the cultural representative of all Native peoples of Alaska, this program has focused on detailing the history and impact of both government-run and church-run Boarding Schools.

Although this history walks with all Alaska Natives, the call to healing is the reason why this work is so important. Yet, in order to understand the role of healing, we must first understand the truth of this history.

In line with ANHC's work and vision, we fully support the passing of HJR17.

Quyana,

Emily Edenshaw, PhD abd
President/CEO of the Alaska Native Heritage Center