



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 23-19

- TITLE:** SUPPORTING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP LEGISLATION FOR ELECTRONICS RECYCLING AND REMOVAL FROM COMMUNITY LANDFILLS
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its membership includes 179 federally recognized tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 10 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The proliferation of electronic devices in our society has led to a significant increase in electronic waste (e-waste), posing a growing environmental and public health concern; and
- WHEREAS:** E-waste contains hazardous materials such as lead, mercury, and cadmium that can leach into soil and water sources, and emit into the air when burned, posing a serious threat to the environment and public health when improperly disposed of; and
- WHEREAS:** The heavy plastic encasing electronics, when crushed and burned in landfills, emit cancer-causing dioxins into the air, posing a serious threat to public health and the environment; and
- WHEREAS:** Most rural Alaska Native communities have smaller, Class III landfills, which are unlined, unregulated, and burn trash to reduce mass, therefore allowing more of the harmful electronic toxins into the environment when crushed and burned; and
- WHEREAS:** The safe and responsible management of electronics is essential to protect our environment, conserve valuable resources, and reduce the carbon footprint associated with electronic products; and
- WHEREAS:** 25 other states and many other countries have recognized the importance of addressing e-waste through the implementation of product stewardship programs, which shift the responsibility for the proper recycling and end-disposal of e-waste from consumers to the manufacturers of electronic devices; and
- WHEREAS:** Product stewardship legislation for electronics has proven to be an effective and sustainable approach in over 25 states, helping to divert e-waste from landfills,

promote recycling, and reduce the harmful environmental impacts associated with improper disposal; and

WHEREAS: By introducing product stewardship legislation for e-waste, communities can incentivize manufacturers to design products with greater consideration for their end-of-life management, encourage the responsible recycling and disposal of e-waste, and reduce the financial burden on local governments and taxpayers for e-waste management.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives urge the Alaska State Legislature to introduce and pass comprehensive product stewardship legislation for e-waste in Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the delegates of the 2023 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives request the AFN Legislative and Litigation Committee assist in drafting product steward legislation that is specific to rural Alaska to ensure that manufacturers' responsibility for the collection and proper recycling and disposal of their electronic products is not passed on to communities and that this legislation require and promote public awareness and education about the importance of recycling e-waste.

SUBMITTED BY: THE AFN COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALASKA NATIVES

COMMITTEE ACTION: DO PASS

BOARD ACTION: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: ADOPTED ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023

**Alaska Chapter SWANA
Resolution 2023-01**

**Supporting the Concept of a
Statewide Electronics Product Stewardship Program**

Whereas, solid waste management is an essential public service that protects human health and the environment, and municipalities around the state providing this service are facing budget deficits.

Whereas, the estimated 3 million pounds of electronic wastes that Alaskans discard annually contribute to deficits through requiring specialized management and/or hastening the need for landfill closure and new landfill construction.

Whereas, electronics contain toxic chemicals harmful to human health and subsistence resources, such as heavy metals and these chemicals leach out of landfilled electronics, and may eventually enter groundwater or ocean waters.

Whereas, due to engineering and economy of scale considerations, rural and hub landfills, serving about one-third of all Alaskans, are under regulations unique to Alaska and are not designed to contain or treat this leachate, engendering an immediate potential for chemicals to enter nearby lands and waters that may be used for subsistence or household drinking water.

Whereas, regional landfills with leachate collection systems in Alaska's urban areas are under increasing pressure to meet stringent leachate pretreatment and discharge permit requirements.

Whereas, scientific studies have found that landfill workers are at increased health risk due to exposure to heavy metals associated with landfill particulate matter and electronics are a significant source of these metals.

Whereas, at least 30 rural landfills are within 100 feet of a primary water body and about three-quarters are within one mile of homes, and these landfills are often not consolidated or covered, and commonly use burning without emissions treatment to manage waste streams, residents can potentially be exposed to product chemicals that cause health impacts.

Whereas, recycling electronics results in these chemicals being used instead to make new products, and 27 states use Product Stewardship laws that result in electronic manufacturers paying all or part of their recycling costs without an associated increase in the price paid for electronics in those states because the recycling costs are recouped via market sales globally.

Whereas a program can be developed in Alaska that does not tax or charge users, and does not emplace an administrative burden on Alaska retailers.

Whereas Alaska residents also deserve to benefit from a shared disposal cost set by the market, and increased recycling and backhaul opportunities can create local jobs and revenue for the municipalities, recyclers, and the transportation industry.

Now, therefore be it resolved, that the Alaska Chapter of SWANA supports the concept of a Statewide Electronics Product Stewardship Program to reduce public health risks, and reduce local government budget deficits, with the understanding that support of a specific bill will require review of final language.

APPROVED BY THE ALASKA CHAPTER OF SWANA ON THE 20th DAY OF JANUARY 2023.

Passed via motion/membership vote at annual meeting on January 20, 2023

Resolution #2025-03

A resolution supporting a Statewide Electronics Product Stewardship Program.

WHEREAS, waste management is an essential government service provided by local governments to protect public health, control blight, and provide quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Alaskans generate over 15 million pounds annually of spent electronics that require expensive and specialized waste management resources and incur a significant future municipal cost through hastened need for capital funding of landfill closure and new site planning; and

WHEREAS, electronics contain toxic chemicals harmful to human health and subsistence resources, such as lead, cadmium, mercury, flame retardants, and PFAS, and these chemicals leach out as the landfilled electronics age, potentially flowing to nearby land, creeks, ponds, rivers, and bays that provide drinking water and important subsistence resources; and

WHEREAS, Class II and III rural landfills serve a third of all Alaskans, are unique to Alaska due to engineering and economy of scale considerations and are not designed to contain this leachate; and

WHEREAS, at least 150 communities are within one mile of their Class III landfill, where burning waste in passive steel containers called burnboxes is a common least-cost waste management strategy through which residents can be exposed to product chemicals; and

WHEREAS, electronics are proposed to be listed as a hazardous waste under the pending State of Alaska Hazardous Waste Program, potentially increasing the cost of electronics disposal; and

WHEREAS, 27 states have Product Stewardship laws that result in electronics manufacturers paying for all or part of their state's electronics recycling with residents in those states experiencing no associated increase in the cost for their electronics; and

WHEREAS, a Statewide Electronics Product Stewardship Program can be implemented without the levy of fees, taxes, or Alaska retail business burden; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska can develop a Product Stewardship program without administrative cost to the State, and municipalities are not beholden to participate in, or administer, the Program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska Municipal League supports a comprehensive statewide Product Stewardship Program for electronic recycling to substantially reduce local and regional government waste management costs as well as public health risks to their constituency.

Adopted by the majority of AML members at the Annual Business Meeting, December 13, 2024.



"Working Together To Keep Our Coastal and Nelson Island Consortium Villages and Environment Clean..."

Chefornak Traditional Council
Nelson Island Consortium
P.O. Box 127
Chefornak, Ak 99561
PH: (907) 867-8316

Date: January 31, 2025

RE: SB 61

To Whom It May Concern,

The Chefornak Traditional Council is a federally recognized tribe located at the Yukon Kuskokwim region of coastal southwest Alaska. We have a population of 517 people with a medium household income of \$47,500 with a total of 90 households. Chefornak is only accessible by air or barge, and there is no road system.

The Chefornak Traditional Council is writing this support letter for Senate Bill 61 (SB161) and the creation of a system that will help our tribal community deal with the growing problem of electronic waste. Our tribal community has an unlined Class III landfill, so we have been trying to find ways to remove electronic waste materials from the landfill and backhaul them to a designated place for proper recycling. We are staying vigilant of what goes into our landfill because we rely on subsistence cultural food. Over the past years, we have been collecting, storing, and applying for funds to backhaul (electronic waste to Seattle, WA by barge and it is expensive to do so. Electronic waste does not belong in rural Alaska as it accumulates annually and relying of federal funds to backhaul them is not a sustainable way to recycle them properly. We did apply and are awarded an EPA Solid Waste Infrastructure Recycling (SWIFR) grant to backhaul materials for 3-years but is not a sustainable way to continue applying for funds especially when those funds are exhausted at end of its grant year. Therefore, the Chefornak Traditional Council supports Senate Bill 175 and the creation of establishing manufacturers to take care of the end of the life of e-waste.

Alaska needs product stewardship and SB 175. Do not let electronic waste accumulate on rural Alaska's unlined landfills. Please help us find a solution on solid waste management for electronic waste and let us keep Alaska beautifully pristine by passing this bill!

Sincerely,

Desiree Dock, NIC Coordinator



January 31, 2025

Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

I am writing this letter to affirm the Copper River Native Association Tribal Health Consortium's (CRNA) support for Senate Bill 61. SB 61 introduces the practice of product stewardship to electronic devices sold in Alaska and creates a manufacturer funded system for collecting and recycling electronic devices. This is really needed in Alaska. Landfills in our communities are unlined and electronics end up in them. Our communities are concerned about contaminants from electronics such as lead, mercury, and cadmium ending up in our land and waterways. The financial burden of transporting electronics for safe recycling/disposal is placed on our communities. A Product Stewardship program in Alaska would reduce that burden. Many other states already have Product Stewardship and it makes sense to have it in Alaska.

CRNA is located in the beautiful Copper River Basin, home of our people, the Ahtna. We are approximately 150 miles east of Anchorage in a region encompassing approximately 23,000 square miles. We deliver a variety of programs and services that promote the wellness of the people who call the Copper River Basin home. We support SB 61 and would like to see it passed – it would help our communities and communities across Alaska.

Sincerely,

Sarah Daszkiewicz

Sarah Daszkiewicz
Environmental Coordinator
Tribal Community Services
Copper River Native Association



Native Village of St. Michael

**Box 59050 - St. Michael, Alaska 99659
(907) 923-2304/2405 Fax: (907) 923-2406**

3 February 2025

To: Senate Resources Committee

Re: Support for SB 61

Dear Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

The Native Village of St. Michael supports Senate Bill 61. Our community and other rural communities in Alaska need a system that will help with the ever-increasing problem of electronics waste that piles up in our landfills. St. Michael is located on the east coast of St. Michael Island in Norton Sound. It lies 125 miles southeast of Nome and 48 miles southeast of Unalakleet. The Yupik speaking Village of Saint Michael is a federally recognized Alaska Native Tribe. The Saint Michael economy is based on subsistence food harvests and gatherings, the traditional mainstay of village life. Local residents rely on seasonal commercial herring fishing, reindeer herding and subsistence seasonal food harvest. Subsistence activities include fishing, hunting, gathering driftwood, tundra plants, greens, and kelp. There are currently 446 people, living in Saint Michael of which 97% are Yupik.

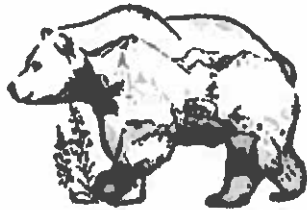
It is very expensive for us to get spent electronics out of our community for proper recycling/disposal. If we can't get them out, or afford to get them out, they will end up in an unlined landfill where burning also occurs. We are concerned about the health effects from electronics that end up in our landfill and impacts to residents and subsistence resources. Product stewardship is a program where the manufacturer of an electronic device assumes financial responsibility on a life-cycle basis for that device. We need this in Alaska and SB 61 will help get us there and reduce the financial burden on rural communities across the state for dealing with spent electronics.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa Kobuk'.

Theresa Kobuk
Tribal President

Cc:file



ALUTIIQ TRIBE OF OLD HARBOR

PO Box 62, Old Harbor AK 99643
Phone: (907)286-2215 Fax (907)286-2350
Website: Alutiiqtribeoh.org

SB 61 Electronic Device Recycling Letter of Support

Date: February 13th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor would like to offer this letter of support for Senate Bill 61 (SB 61) and the creation of a system that will help our community deal with the growing problem of electronic waste. The Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor (ATOH) is a federally recognized tribe located on Kodiak Island, 70 air miles southwest of the main city of Kodiak. We are a traditional Sugpiaq community that relies on a subsistence lifestyle.

Our community members require access to proper disposal and recycling of e-waste to prevent them from going to the landfill. Currently we have a staging facility where our community members drop e-waste to be properly packaged and shipped out but at a cost to our community. With this product stewardship it will help make removing these e-waste materials from our community much more manageable. If we don't have a proper disposal or recovery avenue for these e-waste products it can release contaminants into our water and the air, impacting our residents and our subsistence resources.

Alaska needs product stewardship and SB 61 to allow communities, such as ours, to deal with the electronic waste that has been overwhelming our solid waste programs. Please help us protect our community members and our subsistence lifestyle by passing SB 61.

On behalf of the Alutiiq Tribe of Old Harbor this letter is in support of SB 61,

Sincerely
Tribal Chief – Jeff Peterson

"Old Harbor is a community based in rich traditions that come together to celebrate its people, culture, and heritage. We demonstrate this through our language, arts, traditional dancers and spiritual history and our respect for the Elders and honoring of our children."

NATIVE VILLAGE OF KIPNUK
KIPNUK TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
P.O. Box 57 KIPNUK, ALASKA 99614 (907) 896-5515 FAX (907) 896-5240

Date: February 13th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

The Native Village of Kipnuk would like to offer this letter of support for Senate Bill 61(SB 61) and the creation of a system that will help our community deal with the growing problem of electronic waste. The Native Village of Kipnuk is a federally recognized tribe located in Kipnuk, Alaska. Kipnuk is a small community located in the southwestern part of the state of Alaska on the Kugukktlik River.

Our tribal community has an unlined Class III landfill, so we have been trying to find ways to remove electronic waste materials from the landfill and backhaul them to a designated place for proper recycling. Our staff is staying on alert for what goes into our landfill because we rely on subsistence cultural food. We have been collecting, storing, and applying for funds to backhaul electronic waste out of our community and it is expensive to do so, we were able to backhaul multiple Conex worth of e-waste out of our community, but the costs are extremely high that it makes removing majority of our e-waste out of our community that much harder. We want our program to be successful for future generations as this will be beneficial for our community's health and well-being, and we can set an example that even during winter months, we can still provide the services to maintain and manage our solid waste programs and address resilience needs in our community.

Alaska needs product stewardship and SB 61 to allow for communities such as ours to deal with the electronic waste that has been overwhelming our solid waste programs. Please help us protect our community members and our subsistence lifestyle by passing SB 61.

Sincerely,



Tristen Carl
Tribal Administrator

New Koliganek Village Council

P.O. Box 5057

Koliganek, AK 99576

Phone: 907-596-3434 fax: 907-596-3462

February 11, 2025

Re: Support for Senate Bill 61

To the Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

The Native Village of Koliganek would like to offer this letter of support for Senate Bill 61 (SB 61) and the creation of a system that will help our community deal with the growing problem of electronic waste. The Native Village of Koliganek is a federally recognized tribe (NVKC) located on the Nushagak River, 65 miles northeast of Dillingham. We are a traditional Yup'ik community that relies on a subsistence lifestyle.

Our community struggles to properly maintain our landfill and to protect the health of our residents and our subsistence resources. We are underfunded and do not have the solid and hazardous waste infrastructure needed to protect our community from emerging contaminants. This is especially true when it comes to electronic waste. We have seen a huge increase in the amount of electronic waste at our landfill, but we have no proper place to store, dispose, or recycle it. Our landfill is unlined, and we burn our waste material, which can release contaminants into our water and the air, impacting our residents and our subsistence resources.

Alaska needs product stewardship and SB 61 to allow for communities, such as ours, to deal with the electronic waste that has been overwhelming our solid waste programs. Please help us protect our community members and our subsistence lifestyle by passing SB 61.

Sincerely,





City of Gustavus, Alaska
PO Box 1
Gustavus, Alaska 99826
Phone: 907.697.2451
Fax: 907.697.2136

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Bill Wielechowski and Cathy Geissel
Senate Resources Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1185

RE: Support for Senate Bill 61: Electronic Device Recycling

Dear Senators Wielechowski, Geissel and Honorable Members of the Senate Resources Committee,

Gustavus is a small community located off the road system 40 miles west of Juneau, and which also serves as the gateway community for Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.

While we have a strong recycling program, our landfill is not built to accept electronics, lacking a liner or leachate system. There is no easy way to recycle electronics as they do in the Lower 48 and electronic waste is a growing concern because of the expense and limited availability of funds for shipping.

We request your support of SB 61 to help reduce the community health burden faced by rural communities trying to deal with recycling electronics.

Sincerely,

Sally McLaughlin
Mayor, City of Gustavus



ANVIK TRIBAL COUNCIL

PO Box 10

Anvik, AK 99558

Office phone# 907-663-6322 Fax#1866-524-5035

February 14th, 2025

Re: Support for SB 61

Dear Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

The Native Village of Anvik supports Senate Bill 61. Our community and other rural communities in Alaska need a system that will help with the ever-increasing problem of electronics waste that pile up in our landfills. Anvik is a historically Athabascan community at the confluence of the Anvik and Yukon Rivers. The current site of the village of Anvik has a long history as a major settlement on the Yukon due to its centralized location for subsistence activities including fishing, hunting, trapping and gathering. The population of this community has been as high as 6,000 prior to Anglo contact, but now only has a year-round population of less than 100 people. Anvik is not characterized by a mixed subsistence and cash economy. Hunting and gathering still provide the mainstays of the community. Current residents rely heavily on taking fish, migratory birds and small and big game, which is the basis of the local economy. Subsistence resources are critical and all houses participate and rely heavily on the harvesting, consuming or sharing of resources; subsistence is the foundation of the lifestyle and economy in Anvik.

It is very expensive for us to get spent electronics out of our community for proper recycling/disposal. If we can't get them out, or afford to get them out, they will end up in an unlined landfill where burning also occurs. The overall rate of getting cancer is more than twice as high among non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native people. We are concerned about the health effects from electronics that end up in our landfill and impacts to residents and subsistence resources. Product stewardship is a program where the manufacturer of an electronic device assumes financial responsibility on a life-cycle basis for that device. We need this in Alaska and SB 61 will help get us there and reduce the financial burden on rural communities across the state for dealing with spent electronics.

Regards,

Nathan Elswick

Nathan Elswick- Environmental Director & 2nd Chief

February 14th, 2025

RE: SB61 Support Letter

Dear Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

I am writing this letter to affirm Haines Friends of Recycling (HFR)'s support for Senate Bill 61. HFR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has provided recycling services for Haines, Klukwan, and Chilkat Valley residents and visitors since 1999.

As I'm sure you all are well aware, ewaste contains potentially harmful components that when burnt or left to the elements can leach out and pose a risk to human health and the environment. Both Haines and Klukwan operate class 3 landfills – landfills that are not equipped with the mitigating measures to adequately contain potentially harmful items such as ewaste. Our organization coordinates an annual ewaste recycling event for community members. This has been a long-standing event that our community now anticipates annually. We're proud to say, that since 2007 HFR has been able to ship out nearly 250,000 lbs of ewaste for recycling. However, though HFR provides free recycling services for most items we receive (i.e. cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic bottles), due to the cost of sending out ewaste to be recycled in a responsible manner, HFR charges recycling fees for any ewaste received through our collection event. This \$0.40/lb fee is a major barrier to many families throughout the Chilkat Valley resulting in a significant amount of ewaste either being landfilled, burnt, or continued being in storage.

Enacting a Product Stewardship Program for ewaste would allow HFR to accept ewaste at no cost, increase participation, potentially allow for year-round collection. It would also allow HFR to divert more resources to better manage other hard-to-manage recyclables such as fluorescent lamps, household batteries, scrap metal, and refrigerant containing appliances (i.e. refrigerators & freezers).

HFR respectfully asks for the passage of SB 61 to allow small communities such as Haines and Klukwan to better manage ewaste and keep this potentially harmful waste stream out of our local landfills.

Sincerely,

Melissa Aronson
Board Chair
Haines Friends of Recycling
hainesrecycle@gmail.com
(907)314-2209



A local non-profit that encourages and enables our community to reduce waste and increase recycling.

**Board of
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Burdette
Environmental
Health & Safety Mgr.
Golden Heart Waste
Management

February 14th, 2025

RE: SB61 Support Letter

Dear Honorable members of the Senate Resources Committee,

Green Star of Interior Alaska is a 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission is to encourage and enable the Fairbanks community and Interior Alaska to reduce waste and increase recycling. We do this through numerous programs, but chiefly through providing recycling, including electronic recycling to the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB). Green Star fully supports the passage of Senate Bill 61 that establishes a system of product stewardship for electronic recycling in Alaska. Joining most of the world, half of US states and Canada in this effort, Alaska will benefit greatly from having a regular source of funding to pay for the diversion of electronic waste from our state's landfills and convert it into useful material again.

Our organization has been handling the electronic recycling for the 100,000+ residents of the Fairbanks North Star Borough since 1998. Through tireless fundraising, 1000's of volunteer hours, public contracts paid for by residents' property tax, and grants, we have managed to pay for this recycling and keep over 1000 tons of electronic waste out of landfills around the state. Through our Rural Backhaul program, we have also been recycling electronic waste from 26 communities outside of the Borough who otherwise would have burned that waste in unlined landfills. This bill would establish a program that shifts the financial burden of electronic recycling from the people of Alaska to the manufacturers of these products who profit greatly from their sale. Many of these manufacturers are familiar with product stewardship as they are mandated to provide it in other states and countries.

Green Star's Board of Directors and Management Team implore you to pass this bill and make electronic recycling an integral part of Alaska's infrastructure to keep the heavy metals and toxins found in electronics out of our land, air and water.

Sincerely,

Natalie Mayer
Green Star Board Vice President
natalie@iagreenstar.org
907-322-3124