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Governor Sean Parnell

STATE OF ALASKA

January 14, 2011

The Honorable Mike Chenault
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Chenault,

It is time now to sustainably fund the performance scholarships we so diligently worked together on last year. Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill renaming the Alaska Merit Scholarship to the Alaska Performance Scholarship; relating to tax credits applicable to contributions for the scholarships; and establishing the Alaska Performance Scholarship investment fund and the Alaska Performance Scholarship award fund. This bill would create funding mechanisms for the Alaska Performance Scholarship that are in accordance with recommendations of the Alaska State Legislature's Joint Higher Education Scholarship Funding Task Force.

The Alaska Performance Scholarship incentivizes Alaska students to take a rigorous curriculum and earn scholarships for post-secondary education. This will lead to increased academic performance in our high schools, increased parental involvement, and increased graduation rates. More students will graduate prepared to enter and complete postsecondary education and training in Alaska. The scholarship helps a variety of students – those who seek career and technical training as well as academic studies – to realize their dreams through their own hard work.

The bill creates an Alaska Performance Scholarship investment fund. The fund would consist of appropriations to the fund, donations to the fund, and income earned on investments of fund assets. Also, the bill would create the Alaska Performance Scholarship award fund to make scholarship awards. The bill would authorize certain tax credits applicable to contributions to the scholarship.

The graduating class of 2011 will be the first students eligible for this opportunity. I urge your prompt and favorable action on this important measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean Parnell".

Sean Parnell
Governor

Enclosure