

Board of Regents' Office
Phone: (907) 450-8010
Fax: (907) 450-8012
EMAIL: sybor@alaska.edu
www.alaska.edu/bor/

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
MAILROOM



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202 Butrovich Building
910 Yukon Drive
P.O. Box 755300
Fairbanks, AK 99775-5300

June 15, 2009

Dear Governor Palin and State of Alaska Legislators,

The united leadership of the University of Alaska system seeks your assistance to remedy the financial injury caused to the State of Alaska's University system by the recent Alaska Supreme Court March 13, 2009, decision, *Southeast Alaska Conservation Council v State of Alaska and University of Alaska*. In this decision, the Alaska Supreme Court voided the Alaska Legislature's action in passing the 2005 University Land Grant Bill. The court held unconstitutional the restriction that any proceeds of the land must be placed into the University Endowment Trust Fund, and surmised that the legislature would not have intended to grant the land without that restriction. The court, therefore, invalidated the whole act except for the part establishing a research forest.

A great state needs a great university system. A great university system must have adequate resources sufficient to meet its responsibilities. A more woeful history of a land-grant college could hardly be found. The University of Alaska is a land-grant college without the land.

The State of Alaska's University system has been waiting almost 100 years with no appreciable land. For an interesting and concise account of this baneful history we would direct you to "A Land Grant College Without the Land: A History of the University of Alaska's Federal Land Grant"; a brief 20 page report by Terrence M. Cole, which we can provide to you upon request.

The united leadership of the University of Alaska system is requesting that in your capacity as the governing leadership of the State of Alaska, as Governor and Legislators, that you correct the court's conjecture that the legislature would not want the University to have the land that the legislature granted to it. We respectfully request your support for advancing higher education in the State of Alaska by reconveying these lands to the University of Alaska at the earliest possible opportunity without the dedicated funds clause that the Alaska Supreme Court found to be offensive to our State Constitution.

We the undersigned, the leadership of the University of Alaska system, thank you for your support of higher education in the State of Alaska.

Cynthia Henry, Chair
Board of Regents

Mark Hamilton, President
University of Alaska