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April 6, 2018

Senate Finance Committee  
House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

I am writing in regard to SB116 and HB233: companion legislation that, if passed, will extend Alaska's Education Tax Credit until January 1, 2025. I urge you to take the measures necessary to extend this tax credit that provides a benefit to industry, research and education institutions, the development of Alaska's workforce, and Alaskan coastal communities in general.

The Education Tax Credit program is a great incentive that allows industry and educational institutions to implement programs of mutual benefit. The Education Tax Credit program is a way for corporations to invest in programs that are critical to creating Alaskan opportunities to excel in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics-rich environments (STEM), which we all know will benefit the economy of Alaska writ large.

Developing a qualified workforce that is committed to the advancement of Alaska's industries depends on the experiential learning opportunities provided by educational institutions such as the Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC). PWSSC provides high quality, hands-on science and engineering programming to over 40% of the students in the Cordova City School District—a district that, despite having 64% of its student body qualify for free or reduced lunch—regularly beats the average scores in the state in all formally measured areas of instruction. I truly believe it is due to the high-quality science education partnership we have established with the community that Cordova's youth can excel in science education.

In Cordova, the Science Center has offered nearly three decades of science programs largely free of cost. Where has it gotten us? Former Cordova public school students have grown up to be people that work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, who work for Federal agencies that manage natural resources in the Arctic and on the Yukon-Kuskowkim Delta, who



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have PhDs and become scientists that manage fisheries and ecosystems for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Juneau, who pursue graduate degrees Outside and bring their skills back to bear on Alaska's natural resources, who work for the processing and aquaculture industries.

Imagine if we could tell corporate partners that their contributions to our mission-driven work were supported by an Education Tax Credit. It benefits education and communities in Alaska in both measurable and immeasurable ways, while benefiting workforce development for those same industries as well as newly expanding industries, such as the mariculture industry for which the Governor has supported renewed focus. Although the state's ability to support Alaskan communities has changed, the Education Tax Credit incentivizes industry to continue to invest in our communities in robust ways.

Thank you for taking seriously the opportunity to extend this tax credit until 2025, and to continue including the eligibility of non-profit 501c3 research and education institutions such as the Prince William Sound Science Center as eligible recipient institutions.

Sincerely,

Katrina Hoffman  
President & CEO  
Prince William Sound Science Center  
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