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ualocal367.org
STANDARD FOR EXCELLENCE

To: Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Chair

From: United Association of Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 367

RE: Support of Senate Bill 159 – STEP Grant Funding Increase

Dear Chair Bjorkman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the United Association of Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 367, I write to express our strong support for Senate Bill 159, which proposes an increase in STEP (State Training & Employment Program) grant funding.

As an Alaska-based Local of the United Association (UA), we represent skilled tradespeople throughout Southcentral Alaska. These individuals have either completed or are actively enrolled in our Federally Registered and nationally recognized apprenticeship training program.

Local 367 has a proud and longstanding tradition of preparing Alaskans for high-quality careers in the pipe trades. While the majority of funding for our apprenticeship program is provided through member contributions as part of our negotiated agreements, the STEP program has been a crucial partner in expanding training opportunities to a broader segment of our community.

Thanks to the STEP program, Local 367 has been able to:


- Increase our pool of qualified instructors,
- Acquire additional hands-on tools and materials,
- Enhance and develop new training devices and instructional modules.

With Alaska's construction economy on the rebound, the timing of the proposed STEP grant increase could not be better. Additional funding will enable programs like ours to grow in step with industry demand, while apprentice utilization requirements will ensure that investments translate into a stronger, homegrown workforce for years to come.

We respectfully urge your support for SB 159 to help build and sustain a robust pipeline of skilled tradespeople in Alaska.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Aaron Plikat