



**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC**

August 26, 2025

The Honorable Scott Kawasaki  
The Honorable Adam Gray  
Co-Chairs, Joint Armed Services Committee  
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Chairs Kawasaki, Gray, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on federal priorities, recent accomplishments, and upcoming opportunities affecting Alaska's defense posture, maritime safety, natural resources, and economic growth. Alaska is America's strategic frontier, and my work in Congress has focused on strengthening Arctic sovereignty, modernizing the Coast Guard, supporting our service members and veterans, unlocking our state's resource potential, and securing investments that keep Alaska competitive and secure.

On my very first day in office, I introduced two critical pieces of legislation – H.R. 42, the Alaska Native Settlement Trust Eligibility Act, and H.R. 43, the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2025, carrying forward bipartisan, longstanding priorities. Both measures passed the House in February by wide margins, the first bills passed through the House by a freshman member in the 119th Congress and subsequently cleared the Senate. On July 7, 2025, President Trump signed H.R. 42 and H.R. 43 into law, ensuring Native settlement trust distributions do not jeopardize access to federal assistance for elderly or disabled Alaskans, and restoring control over trust lands to Native Village Corporations.

In March, the House passed H.R. 1368, the DOE and NASA Interagency Research Coordination Act, fostering stronger collaboration between energy and space agencies. This bipartisan legislation reflects Alaska's interest in technology development, research synergies, and leadership in sustainable energy innovation. Then, in mid-July, the House passed H.R. 410, the Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Extension Act of 2025. This extends the allowable application window for land allotments from five years to ten, offering Alaska Native Vietnam veterans more time to claim land, a meaningful step to honor their service and heritage.

In the Republican-led Congress, we successfully passed H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed into law by President Trump. This sweeping reconciliation package includes historic investments in the Coast Guard, energy access, rural infrastructure, and economic security.

OBBBA represents one of the most consequential victories for Alaska in decades. At its core, the legislation unlocks resource opportunities that will shape Alaska's economy for a generation. OBBBA mandates multiple lease sales that could open approximately 30 million acres for oil and gas exploration and development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's Coastal Plain, Cook Inlet, and the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska over the next decade. Notably, the bill also increases Alaska's share of royalty revenue from the leases from 50 to 70 percent, effective beginning in 2034, thereby ensuring a significantly greater return to the state. This change alone represents billions of dollars in potential revenue over the coming years.

OBBBA also modernizes the permitting process by streamlining environmental reviews and offering a fee-based option that can reduce NEPA timelines by nearly half. These reforms reduce uncertainty, allowing oil, gas, and critical mineral projects to advance more predictably and attract private capital.

The benefits extend well beyond hydrocarbons – OBBBA directs \$5 billion toward critical mineral development, positioning Alaska's mineral-rich regions, such as the Ambler district, as vital suppliers for defense and energy technologies. It further supports long-term timber harvests in areas like the Tongass National Forest, sustaining jobs in communities that rely on forestry. Together, these provisions diversify Alaska's resource economy and invest in the resources needed for critical national defense technologies.

Overall, the economic implications for Alaska from the OBBBA are profound. With guaranteed lease sales, lower development costs, higher state revenue shares, and streamlined permitting, Alaska is poised to attract billions of dollars in new investment, create thousands of good-paying jobs, and expand infrastructure to support both industry, local communities, and national defense. This legislation also strengthens Alaska's role as a strategic energy hub for the nation, while reinforcing fiscal stability for the state through reliable revenue from resource development.

While these wins position Alaska on a stronger footing, I remain mindful of the significant challenges and responsibilities we face. From a defense perspective, Alaska remains America's forward operating frontier in the Indo-Pacific and the Arctic. We host the nation's most advanced missile defense systems at Fort Greely and Clear Space Force Station, and Alaska's strategic location is essential to both homeland security and deterrence abroad. I am committed to ensuring continued federal investment in the infrastructure, training environments, and quality-of-life improvements necessary to sustain our service members and their families.

Additionally, I am focused on improving the Coast Guard's ability to meet the growing demands of Arctic operations. While OBBBA and the Coast Guard Authorization Act represent significant progress, the Service must still overcome gaps in icebreaking capacity, shoreside infrastructure, and family support at remote stations. The recent commissioning of the USCGC Storis in Juneau,

the first polar icebreaker added to our fleet in more than a quarter-century, is a signal that the United States is present, is prepared, and is prioritizing the Arctic. Alaska cannot afford to fall behind as Russia and China expand their Arctic presence; I will continue to advocate for investments that close those capability gaps and enhance Alaska's strategic value in the Arctic.

While high energy costs and limited rural infrastructure continue to challenge our communities, I believe we have an opportunity to overcome these challenges. By expanding rural microgrids, improving broadband connectivity, investing in transportation across the state, and developing our natural resources, we can not only enhance quality of life in Alaska, but also strengthen economic opportunities and military readiness throughout the state. These initiatives are not just about infrastructure; they are about building resilient communities, a robust economy, and strengthening our national defense.

Looking forward, I am confident in Alaska's unique role as both a resource powerhouse and America's Arctic frontier. With continued federal partnership, we can secure our position as the nation's frontline for the Arctic, and provide critical minerals, abundant energy, and unmatched strategic value for the nation.

Thank you for your leadership on behalf of our state. I look forward to working with the Joint Armed Services Committee where applicable to advance shared priorities, seize the incredible opportunities before us, and deliver lasting results for Alaska and for our nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Nicholas J. Begich III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nicholas" and last name "Begich" being more prominent, and "III" written as a smaller suffix.

Nicholas J. Begich III  
Congressman for All Alaska