

January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011

Representative Les Gara  
State of Alaska  
State Capitol, Room 500  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Gara:

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) – Alaska Chapter, a membership organization that represents over 500 social workers across the State of Alaska, supports The Alaska Foster Family Protection Act.

The mission of NASW is to enhance the effective functioning and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its work and through its advocacy. The Alaska Foster Family Projection act upholds this mission by ensuring that Alaska's most vulnerable children can more easily transition into safe and permanent homes. The increase in the number of rural foster care placements is especially crucial so youth in rural Alaska can continue to live in their home communities. Research demonstrates that youth from rural communities, and specifically Alaska Native youth, have more promising futures when they are able to maintain connection with their communities and tribes.

Thank you for your consistent attention to child welfare issues in Alaska. We look forward to working with you on behalf of children and families in our state.

Sincerely,



Meg Loomis, MSW  
Executive Director