



The Statewide Museum Association

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April 3, 2014

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Representative Bob Herron
State Capitol, Room 411
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Herron,

Thank you for your sponsorship of House Bill 333, establishing a museum construction grant program in the Department of Education and Early Development. Museums Alaska stands ready to partner in efforts to ensure that the new grant program effectively assesses needs of museum capital projects statewide.

Museums Alaska, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is the professional association of museums and cultural centers in Alaska. We serve over 100 members, providing an annual conference for professional development, newsletters, advocacy, and a re-grant program by administering two Rasmuson Foundation funds. We partner closely with the Alaska State Museum to expand statewide services to museums and collaborate regularly with the Alaska State Council on the Arts and Alaska Historical Society.

Following the state's model for library construction projects, we support developing a mechanism that provides equitable access to funding through a competitive grant program and statewide ranking of projects. HB 333 accomplishes that mechanism through which future funding may be sought. Even without immediate appropriations into the fund, the mechanism can provide a solid ranking of capital projects to aid in legislative decision-making during the capital budget process, as is currently the case with the library program (AS 14.56.355-56).

Thank you for introducing this important piece of legislation that will allow us to better fund the needs of our aging museums and cultural centers across the state. They are the keepers of our collective history.

Sincerely,

Angela J. Linn, President