

**State of Alaska Legislature
House Economic Development, Tourism and Arctic Policy
Joint with Senate Arctic Committee
Hearing**

**October 2, 2015 (Friday)
1-4pm**

Teleconference Testimony

by

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On

**Alaska Arctic Policy Commission
Implementation Plan
Line of Effort #3, Recommendations 3A-3H**

Good afternoon.

My name is Vivian Korthuis. I am the Vice President of Community Services for the Association of Village Council Presidents serving the 56 Tribes in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony on these specific recommendations in Line Effort # 3 – Support Healthy Communities.

The Arctic is our homeland. The AVCP Region is the Arctic. Our villages are the Arctic. Our people live in the Arctic. Everything we do in our region-is Arctic. The food we eat from the land, air and sea is Arctic. Our families and our children are Arctic families. Our past and our future is Arctic. We are not going anywhere because this is our home. We have a vested interest and an obligation to speak to and be involved, in every aspect, of any discussion about us, for us, and for our future.

The role of the tribes and tribal organizations is key to the Arctic. AVCP and the 56 Tribes in the YK Delta have a role in any discussions about our homeland. Healthy Communities is a goal that every one of the villages in the AVCP region is working towards. We know we will not reach this goal alone.

AVCP has specific programs, such as the Healthy Families Program, which originates from our region and people that need to be supported and expanded because ultimately, we are all working towards making a better future for all our children. This is an example, specifically, of how AVCP wants to “implement” an Arctic Strategy. There are many other examples of what AVCP can share, if given the opportunity.

The following AVCP recommendations speak to Line Efforts 3 (a) to 3 (h) specifically. Each of these specific recommendations can no doubt be expanded upon. We also know that these are not the only things that can be implemented in our villages. I encourage this committee to have discussions with and obtain direct leadership from all the Tribes in our region because it will only make the implementation of these strategies stronger.

Line Effort	Alaska Arctic Policy Implementation Plan Recommendation	Association of Village Council Presidents Recommendation
3 (a)	Foster the delivery of reliable and affordable in-home water, sewer, and sanitation services in all rural Arctic Communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Holistic Approach to Sustainable Northern Communities by matching funds of \$450,000 to the Cold Climate Housing Research Center (CCHRC). 2. State of Alaska Departments are requested to participate in Holistic Approach Model. 3. Request Letter of Commitment from DEC and DCCED Departments to the Holistic Approach Model.
3 (b)	Reduce power and heating costs in rural Alaska Arctic communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support CCHRC Integrated Truss Method of Construction which will reduce power and heating costs in rural Alaska. 2. Support the Yukon Kuskokwim Energy Freight Corridor Project. 3. There are 3,000 homes on the YK Delta that need immediate replacement. Support AVCP Pilot Project with CCHRC utilizing the integrated truss system.
3 (c)	Support long-term strategic planning efforts that utilize past achievements, leverage existing methods and strengthen local planning that assess and directs economic, community and infrastructure development, as well as environmental protection and human safety.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AVCP has a Resource Center where partners such as USDA, EDA, DOE, CCHRC, and others have signed an MOA to work together to support communities in the region to plan, develop and implement projects. Need State of Alaska Agencies participation in Resource Center by MOA or direct funding agreement. 2. AVCP projects are developed with partnerships. The Western Alaska Emergency Response Center Project needs the support and commitment from State of Alaska

		<p>and Federal Government to succeed. There is no Emergency Response Center along the Bering Sea Coast and this project would create one.</p> <p>3. The Village Public Safety Officer Program needs to be expanded to meet the goal of having a public safety presence in every village.</p>
3 (d)	Anticipate, evaluate and respond to risks from climate change related to erosion and community infrastructure and services; and support community efforts to adapt and relocate when necessary.	<p>1. Support community efforts in relocation.</p> <p>2. Utilize traditional knowledge and research in community planning.</p>
3 (e)	Develop and support public education and outreach efforts that (a) enhance the understanding of conservation of Arctic biodiversity and sustainable use of biological resources and management of natural resources and (b) promote public participation in development of fish and wildlife management plans within existing management systems and policies.	<p>1. AVCP villages need to be involved in Co-Management of resources.</p> <p>2. We also need to be involved in any mitigation related to food security.</p>
3 (f)	Enforce measures that protect and help further understanding of the food security of Arctic peoples and communities.	<p>1. Utilize traditional knowledge and research.</p>
3 (g)	Identify and promote industry, community and state practices that promote sustainability of subsistence resources while protecting against undue Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings and broad-brush critical habitat designations.	<p>1. AVCP is the lead tribal advocate for all subsistence initiatives for our people. We ask that we have a place at the table where all resources in our region are discussed including protection and mitigation plans that may negatively affect food/subsistence resources.</p>
3 (h)	Create workforce development programs to prepare Arctic residents to participate in all aspects and phases of Arctic development.	<p>1. Support the creation of a Tribal Employment Center at AVCP.</p> <p>2. Support the Regional Aviation Airframe and Power Plant and Flight School.</p> <p>3. Assist and support in creating Career Pathways Program at AVCP for specific industry jobs.</p>

Thank you.