

March 8, 2015

Representative Herron  
Alaska State Capitol  
Room 406  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Herron:

I am writing to ask that you **support HB52, establishing a museum construction grant program**. This bill provides the structure for establishing a systematic approach to prioritizing museum capital project funding requests in the state. There are many museums in Alaska that are either currently involved in a construction project or will be in the next five years – Valdez Museum and Historical Archives is no exception.

Museums and cultural organizations in Alaska are a critical part of the educational and economic infrastructure, spurring tourism and partnering with schools to teach the local curriculum. Museums contribute to our economy and wellbeing in so many ways. Some examples: employing Alaskans in stable year-round jobs, spending (>\$23,553,294), hosting more than 600,000 visitors and importantly serving as an educational conduit for over 36,290 school children annually.

Despite this vital role of museums, our facilities and collections are at risk through decreasing federal, local and charitable giving. As collection grow and visitation increases, the pressure on our aging infrastructure must be managed. The Valdez Museum and Historical Archive is no stranger to this trend. We are presently evaluating a new structure and have the approvals of our City Council and Leadership to evaluate possibilities. The City has given us money for a feasibility study and a Building Committee of interested citizens has been formed. Community support is strong, but there is not enough money to build a museum on goodwill nor private donations.

**I urge you to support HB52, establishing a museum construction grant program**, so that museums throughout the state of Alaska may continue to serve their communities. Help us make this bill a reality, let your leadership voice speak up for Alaska's museums! Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara L. Bigelow', is written over a large, loopy circular flourish.

Barbara L. Bigelow  
Valdez Museum and Historical Archives Board Member  
PO Box 912, Valdez, Alaska 99901 (907) 821-1990

# MUSEUMS ALASKA

Museums and Cultural Centers are anchor institutions in Alaskan communities of every size.

They contribute to our economy and wellbeing through employment, cultural tourism and educational programs.



Anchorage Museum

# 260

Alaskans Employed by Museums

# \$23,553,294

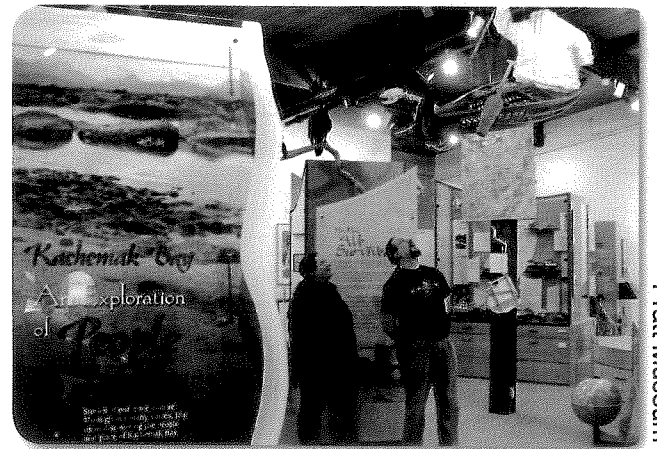
Spent Annually in Alaska by Museums

Sheldon Jackson Museum



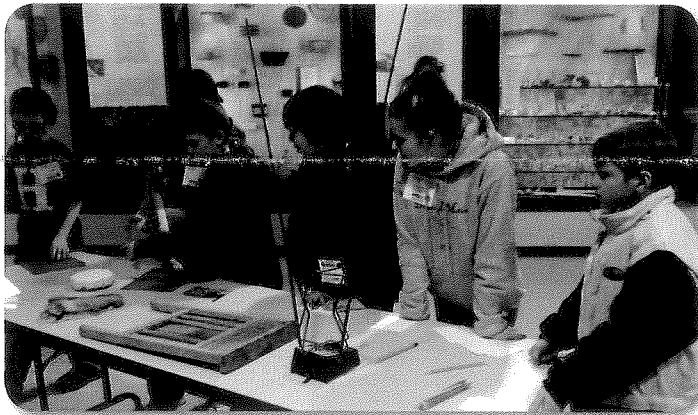
# 624,695

Annual Visitors to Alaskan Museums



Pratt Museum

Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum



# 36,290

School Children Served Annually by Museum Educational Programs

# 33

Museums plan major renovation or construction projects in the next five

40 of the 50 Museums and Cultural Centers in Alaska took part in this survey.



Berengia Center

# Economic and Educational Impact of Alaska Museums

Museum/ Cultural Center	Location	Paid Staff	Annual Budget	Annual Visitation	K-12 Visitors	Planned capital project
Alaska Aviation Museum	Anchorage	6	\$ 500,000	25,000	2,800	Yes
Alaska Heritage Museum	Anchorage	2	\$ 12,000	10,500	600	Yes
Alaska Jewish Museum	Anchorage	3	\$ 130,000	2,500	1,200	Yes
Alaska State Museums	Juneau & Sitka	16	\$ 1,832,000	50,537	7,000	Yes
Alaska Veterans Museum	Anchorage	0	\$ 43,000	7,000	633	Yes
Alaska Warbird Museum	Yakutat	0	\$ 50,000	500	N/A	Yes
Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository	Kodiak	11	\$ 1,000,000	8,000	1,000	Yes
Anchorage Museum	Anchorage	62	\$ 9,200,000	179,052	3,251	Yes
Beringia Center of Culture & Science	Nome	3	\$ 175,921	5	104	Yes
C'ek'aedi Hwnax 'Legacy House'	Copper Center	5	\$ 100,000	5,700	150	No
Clausen Memorial Museum	Petersburg	3	\$ 96,211	3,327	260-600	Yes
Cordova Historical Society & Museum	Cordova	4	\$ 125,000	7,500	1,200	Yes
Dorothy G. Page Museum	Vasilla	2	\$ 190,000	9,000	1,000	Yes
Duncan Cottage Museum	Metlakatla	1	\$ 10,000	500	150	Yes
Eagle Historical Society & Museums	Eagle	1	\$ 29,000	450	20	Yes
Elfin Cove Museum	Elfin Cove	1	\$ 250	675	N/A	Yes
Hammer Museum Inc.	Haines	2	\$ 22,000	4,800	20-40	Yes
Ilianka Cultural Center	Cordova	2	\$ 450,830	2,800	200	Yes
Jilikaat Kwaan Cultural Heritage Center	Klukwan	18	\$ 95,200	500	75	Yes
Juneau-Douglas City Museum	Juneau	4	\$ 425,700	11,865	2,862	Yes
Kasilof Regional Historical Museum	Kasilof	0	\$ 9,000	500	60	Yes
Ketchikan Museums	Ketchikan	8	\$ 924,435	57,000	400	Yes
Kodiak Historical Society & Baranov Museum	Kodiak	7	\$ 300,000	10,000	1,000	Yes
Kodiak Maritime Museum	Kodiak	1	\$ 65,000	2,500	25	Yes
Maxine & Jesse Whitney Museum	Valdez	4	\$ 113,000	4,000	500	No
McCarthy Kennicott Historical Museum	McCarthy	2	\$ 2,000	5,000	N/A	Yes
Pioneer Air Museum	Fairbanks	6	\$ 30,000	2,000	120	Yes
Port Alexander Museum	Port Alexander	0	\$ 2,500	100	12	Yes
Pratt Museum	Homer	10	\$ 520,000	25,000	2,500	Yes
Seldovia Museum	Seldovia	1.2	\$ 120,000	4,800	110	No
Seward Community Library & Museum	Seward	4.5	\$ 545,822	6,865	458	No
Sheldon Museum & Cultural Center	Haines	7	\$ 330,000	12,000	1,400	Yes
Skagway Museum	Skagway	4	\$ 215,000	24,000	1,000	Yes
Talkeetna Historical Society & Museum	Talkeetna	2	\$ 90,000	14,000	120	Yes
Tochak Historical Society & Museum	McGrath	0	0	500	200	No
UA Museum of the North	Fairbanks	36	\$4,300,000	90,000	3,500	Yes
Valdez Museum & Historical Archive	Valdez	8	\$ 731,336	20,000	1,500	Yes
Wickersham House Museum	Fairbanks	6	\$ 12,000	11,800	N/A	No
Wrangell Museum	Wrangell	6	\$ 231,000	3,600	200	No
Yupit Picinyarait Museum	Bethel	2	\$ 130,000	1,500	300	Yes

Museums Alaska is a statewide association of Alaska's museum professionals and volunteers. Our mission is to provide opportunities for improvement of museum and culture center services in Alaska and to enhance public understanding of the purposes and functions of Alaska's museums and culture centers. [www.museumsalaska.org](http://www.museumsalaska.org)