



Representative Bob Herron
State Capitol, Room 406
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

January 22, 2015

Waq'aa Representative Bob Herron,

On behalf of the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Yupiit Piciryarait Museum, I would like to welcome you back to office. As a member of your district, the Yupiit Piciryarait Museum provides a valuable service to the community.

Quyana for supporting our 2015 Museum Alaska advocacy priorities by carrying House Bill 52, "an act establishing a museum construction grant program in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development." With this enabling legislation, it will better allow us to maintain our collection of animal hide, gut skin, wood and ivory objects that are in danger of permanent damage from the lack of humidity control in our museum. In addition, we are working towards building a repository in our community, to better serve our tribes who want us to maintain their collection close to home, in a world-class facility large enough to hold the thousands of objects that are recovered from old settlements in our area.

Museums across the country are playing a key role in education - welcoming 90 million students each year, training teachers, serving homeschoolers, and much more. Museums are also playing a key economic role, spending \$20 billion in communities and supporting 400,000 jobs nationally. Many museums are also offering innovative programming: working with under-served youth, offering programs for families dealing with autism or Alzheimer's, and welcoming military families free of charge.

We would very much like the opportunity to give you and your staff an insider's view of how the Yupiit Piciryarait Museum serves our community. As the only museum in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region, our collection of Yup'ik dolls, masks, grass baskets, hunting implements, clothing and tools are world-class objects that are easily accessible to the people of this region. Our elders wanted a museum to teach our future elders about our Yup'ik culture, and we feel by providing objects close to home, our kids can learn about who they are, how the object was made, and how it was used to help us live in this part of the state for a millennia.

As a member of Museums Alaska, 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. Museums Alaska is committed to preserving the natural and human history of Alaska; improving museums as educational institutions; and promoting the improvement of museums in all areas.

Committed to preserving Alaska's heritage and culture, our 2013 Museum Alaska advocacy priorities not only support existing programs and projects, we are advocating for the future. We support three priorities.

- Complete funding for the State Library Archives and Museums (SLAM) capital project, estimated at an additional \$50 million.

- Increase funding to the legislative budget line item for the Alaska State Museum's Grant-in-Aid program to \$150,000 specifically to be re-granted to Alaska's museums, with an additional \$25,000 to be specifically allocated to the statewide Internship Program.
- Establish a task force for the development of a state funded matching fund program for museum capital projects, similar to what has occurred for library capital projects.

Here in Alaska, Museums and Cultural Centers contribute to our economy and well being through employment and cultural tourism. They educate children and adults and enrich communities. (Your Institution) looks forward to supplying you with more information about our advocacy priorities, our cultural presence and contributions in our community.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Eva Malvich

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