



February 3, 2017

Hon. Jonathan Kreiss Tompkins
Alaska State House
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kreiss-Tompkins,

The Petersburg Chamber of Commerce Board is writing in support for HB 85 to increase the general land entitlement to the Borough of Petersburg so it will be more closely aligned with 14 of the 18 other Boroughs that have formed across the State of Alaska.

According to ADNIR, the Petersburg Borough's current land entitlement is 1,374 acres – approximately only .07% of the Borough's total land area. Through this same legislative process, other Boroughs have received close to .8% of their total land area. Petersburg's request would not set a precedent as the 14,600 acres would be less than .79% of the total lands within the Borough. It would however move the Petersburg Borough towards more economic self-sufficiency.

In recent years, State land within our Borough has been designated to the Alaska Mental Health Trust, The University of Alaska, and Southeast State Forest; leaving little for the Borough to select for future economic development and planning.

The land entitlement was created for the purpose in which the Municipality is asking: the lands would be used to address the economic, cultural, and resource-based goals of the Borough and its residents.

We understand that in the near future, Municipalities will be responsible to fund more of their own operations, relying less on state and Federal monies. The Borough's request is moving them toward being more self-sufficient and an increased land base is essential in moving the Borough in that direction.

Sincerely,

Seth Srinisheer

Board President

Petersburg Chamber of Commerce

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