



2.6.17

Senator Gary Stevens
Alaska State Capitol
Room 429 Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SB7

Senator Stevens,

I write to thank you for your sponsorship and support of SB7, the Museum Construction Grant Program. Since 1976 my professional career has provided me direct involvement with the initiation, development and technical support of museums and cultural centers across Alaska. The long term value of these institutions cannot be overstated.

In community after community the implementation of a formal facility to hold, in the public trust, the collective history of that region and peoples has shown me how effective and productive state and local governmental support combined with local initiative can be. These are not just buildings. The facilities embody the spirit of the communities they serve and constantly reinvigorate the essential community dialog of understanding the past and present.

The secondary benefits of these institutions is the economic development the initial project can provide but more importantly the long term activity that will grow up around the institution. Whether that be tourism, arts and crafts, careers within the professions that serve museums and cultural centers or educational partnerships these facilities become, especially in rural areas, focal points for creating opportunities. We need these opportunities now more than ever.

Thank you for your continued support of museums and cultural centers and your sponsorship of SB7.

Respectfully

R.Banghart

CC:
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Click Bishop
Representative Justin Parish
Representative Dan Ortiz