

Dear Rep. Kawasaki (Scott),

I wanted to write in support of HB 172 for the purposes of industrial hemp production in Alaska. It creates the potential for a market in the state, especially since it would first allow UAF to apply for a pilot study for growing industrial hemp, possibly through USDA NIFA. This in turn would allow for the market framework to be developed and implemented in coordination with industry. With the need to diversify Alaska's revenue stream, this is exactly the direction we should be moving. You may have heard since we reached out to your office today, but Kathryn Dodge and I will be pursuing efforts from the UAF side to seek funding for a pilot study if this is ultimately passed for the state. With our FNSB Assembly hats on, we will also be sending a new resolution through in support of HB 172.

I know you recognize all the potential benefits to industrial hemp, from clothing and textiles to food products, potential livestock feed, bio-fuel, plastics, and many other goods. A market to sell raw materials for processing would be a good short-term solution to help our economy, especially if it allows for sale to entities outside the state that might have the preexisting processing infrastructure. In the long term, we should also look to develop our processing infrastructure in state.

Thank you for co-sponsoring this bill, I think it has real potential for our future viability. We can surely lead the way! Please let me know if there is anything I can do, and I hope you are well in Juneau.

Sincerely yours,

Andrew Gray