



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH

144 North Binkley Street • Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7520
Toll-free within the Borough: 1-800-478-4441 Ext. 2150
PHONE: (907) 714-2150 • **FAX:** (907) 714-2377
www.mayor.kenai.ak.us

Mike Navarre
Borough Mayor

February 2, 2017

Senator Shelley Hughes
State Capitol Room 125
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Alaska SB 6 Commercialization of Industrial Hemp

Dear Senator Hughes:

As the Mayor of the Kenai Peninsula Borough I am writing to express my support for Alaska SB6, the commercialization of Industrial Hemp (IH). Adopting legislation authorizing IH is consistent with the actions of the majority of state governments in the US. At least sixteen states have legalized commercial IH production, and 20 have authorized research and pilot programs. IH presents many potential benefits for the state of Alaska and I believe allowing its commercialization is in the best interests of the state and its residents.

Industrial Hemp insulation may help address problems with both affordable housing and the rising cost of energy in the state. The use of IH in home construction and insulation has the potential to significantly mitigate waste related energy consumption, lower heating costs substantially due to its high insulation value, and serve as a construction alternative for drywall, OSB plywood, house wrap, and fiberglass insulation. Additionally, these plant fiber technologies may be a viable alternative to polypropylene products and chemical dispersants used in oil spills and other bioremediation efforts. IH also has potential applications as a cash crop.

Jack Bennett, the leader of Arctic Green Response Technologies, has worked extensively to identify and communicate the potential economic and environmental benefits of IH production to communities and stakeholders throughout the Alaska. Jack is presently building a model home using IH insulation to present to rural Alaskan communities.

After studying the challenges facing rural Alaska and exploring the potential benefits of IH production, Jack presented IH as a strategy to improve housing affordability in Alaska to 200 tribes represented at the Alaska Rural Energy Conference. He has also met with the Prince William Sound Citizens Advisory Board in Cordova and the Regional Response Team in Nome to discuss the potential applications of IH as green response technology for bioremediation

efforts. Jack has also discussed the application of IH agriculture as a cash crop with Governor Walker, and worked with US Senator Lisa Murkowski to set up a workshop with Oil Response Teams at the Kenai Economic Development District.

I support the passage of SB6 allowing for commercialization of Industrial Hemp. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Navarre". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mike Navarre
Mayor