



Governor Michael J. Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

September 13, 2019

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dan Sullivan
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Don Young
United States Congress
2314 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Young:

I write today to request your support for, and assistance on, the University of Alaska's efforts to fulfill its historic federal land grants. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is working closely with the University and the Department of the Interior to facilitate the University's land grant efforts, and I am committed to taking all actions necessary to make this effort a success.

During my campaign for Governor, I made the commitment to "grow the economy and put Alaskans back to work" and to "enhance and develop our natural resources." Fulfilling the University's long-standing land grants will be a significant step toward meeting these two commitments. The placement of productive lands into active management would generate recurring revenues to support the University; which is exactly what Congress intended in the creation of land grant universities.

The University of Alaska is in a difficult situation with respect to its historical land grants. The original grants of federal lands to the University were only partially fulfilled prior to the enactment of the Alaska Statehood Act. In the Statehood Act, Congress repealed prior federal grants to the University, opting instead to authorize a general block grant of 103 million acres to the State. The State has made several attempts to provide a land endowment to the University and fulfill the spirit of the pre-statehood federal grants. The most recent attempt by the State was determined, by the Alaska Supreme Court, to violate the "anti-dedication" clause in Article 9, Section 7, of the Alaska Constitution. Thus, the State acting alone, is unable to fulfill the University's land grants.

Senator Lisa Murkowski, Senator Dan Sullivan, Congressman Don Young

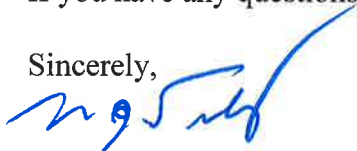
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I believe the University, and the Department of the Interior, with the support and assistance of the Congressional Delegation, may be able to craft a solution to solve this long-standing problem. You have my commitment that my administration will dedicate the time and resources necessary to pursue this solution.

If you have any questions, please contact Kip Knudson at kip.knudson@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Dunleavy
Governor