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**Sent:** Tuesday, February 4, 2020 10:05 AM  
**To:** Senate State Affairs <[SenateStateAffairs@akleg.gov](mailto:SenateStateAffairs@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** SB 144 to ESTABLISH JUNE 7 AS WALTER HARPER DAY

My name is Johanna Harper, I live in Anchorage, but was born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska. I am Walter Harper's great-niece, the granddaughter of Walter's older brother, Sam Harper. I am writing in support of SB 144 to ESTABLISH JUNE 7 AS WALTER HARPER DAY. As you know, June 7<sup>th</sup> was the day Archdeacon Hudson Stuck's and Harry Karstens' climbing party reached the summit of Denali in 1913.

In his Sponsor Statement, Senator Click Bishop presented a thorough yet concise framework for Walter Harper's story, so I won't take up space with repetition. In addition, Senator Bishop references author Mary Ehrlander and her book, *Walter Harper—Alaska Native Son*. The book paints such a vivid historical portrait of the times that it is easy to imagine Walter as a teenager, navigating two separate cultures: his father's Western culture and his mother's Athabascan culture. I am sure it wasn't easy for Walter; in fact, his older brothers were not as successful in navigating between cultures. Yet Walter found a way to take the best of both worlds and move forward. In reading Mary Ehrlander's book, it seems apparent that attitude and perseverance are key components to accomplishing that feat.

As young people today are bombarded with change, technology and associated opportunities and/or challenges, I see Walter's story as a touchstone to show that it is possible to embrace two cultures. I feel that commemorating June 7<sup>th</sup> as Walter Harper Day will bring his story more to the forefront and possibly inspire young people (including young-at-heart) who find themselves facing similar struggles.

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