



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
STATE LEGISLATURE

Rep. Chuck Kopp

Rep.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov

House District 24

Klatt Road – Oceanview – Southport – Bayshore

House Bill 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes

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Alaska Oil and Gas Association



121 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 207
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2035
Phone: (907) 272-1481 Fax: (907) 279-8114
Email: info@aoga.org

March 10, 2020

Representative Chuck Kopp
Alaska State Capitol
120 4th Street, Room 216
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: House Bill 221, State Recognition of Tribes

Dear Representative Kopp:

Thank you for reaching out regarding House Bill 221, State Recognition of Tribes. You have asked if the Alaska Oil and Gas Association has any concerns with the bill as currently written. This letter serves as our response.

Upon thorough legal analysis and after verifying with our membership, AOGA has found nothing of concern in the bill language of House Bill 221 (version S). Alaska Native tribes referenced in the bill are currently recognized by the United States government under federal Indian law. Furthermore, nothing in this legislation appears to relinquish the State of Alaska's authority over particular lands, peoples, or activities, or create any additional burdens on the State or private industry.

Operating in some of the most remote areas of the State, Alaska's oil and gas industry has long recognized and worked in partnership with Alaska Native tribes. Our members hold great respect for Alaska's first people, and through continued responsible resource development, charitable giving, educational support, and environmental stewardship, look forward to continuing strong partnerships with Alaska Native communities for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Moriarty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kara" being more prominent.

Kara Moriarty
President/CEO
Alaska Oil and Gas Association

To: Representative Chuck Kopp

Re: ANDVSA Support for HB 221 31-LS1321\S

Date: March 17, 2020

Greetings,

We are writing in support of HB 221 to provide state recognition of federally recognized tribes.

There are 573 federally recognized Tribes in the United States, with 229 in Alaska. This bill will provide formal recognition by the State of Alaska to our already federally recognized Tribes, acknowledging Tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and self-governance. This means Tribes will be recognized in shaping their own forms of government, determining Tribal membership, taxation, property, and conduct.

HB 221 will strengthen the precedent for government-to-government relationships between the State of Alaska and Alaska Tribes. This is an opportunity for Alaska to more effectively address our most pressing issues, such as housing and homelessness, community and generational healing, as well as our recent public health epidemic.

Thank you,



Carmen Lowry

Executive Director

Cc: Sponsor Representatives: Edgmon, Ortiz, Story, Fields, Kreiss-Tomkins, Foster, Hannan, Claman, Zulkosky, LeDoux, Lincoln, Spohnholz, Hopkins, Johnston, Tarr, Tuck, Stutes, Josephson, Drummond

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR | Bethel TWC | Cordova CFRC | Craig HOPE | Dillingham SAFE | Fairbanks IAC
Haines Becky's Place | Homer SPHH | Juneau AWARE | Kenai LeeShore Center | Ketchikan WISH
Kodiak KWRCC | Kotzebue MFCC | Nome BSWG | Petersburg WAVE | Seward SeaView Community Services
Sitka SAFV | Unalaska USAFV | Utqiagvik AWIC | Valdez AVV



Alaska Native Health Board

THE VOICE OF ALASKA TRIBAL HEALTH SINCE 1968

☎ 907.562.6006 📠 907.563.2001 • 4000 Ambassador Drive, Suite 101 • Anchorage, Alaska 99508 • www.anhb.org

March 11, 2020

The Honorable Charles “Chuck” Kopp
Chairman
Committee on Rules
Alaska House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol Room 216
Juneau, AK 99801
Via Email: Representative.Chuck.Kopp@akleg.gov

RE: House Bill 221, State Recognition of Tribes

Dear Chairman Kopp,

The Alaska Native Health Board¹ strongly supports HB 221—an act providing for State recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes. HB 221 establishes formal state policy that the state’s indigenous peoples have their own governments and that the government of the State of Alaska will no longer deny their existence. This is an important step in strengthening the partnership between the State of Alaska and Alaska Native tribes. HB 221 recognizes and enhances the capacity of Alaska Native tribes to continue their longstanding tradition of providing vital resources to the state of Alaska.

In 1970, President Nixon, in his special message on Indian affairs to the United States Congress, recognized the contribution of the Indian in America as:

“A record also of endurance, of survival, of adaptation and creativity in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It is a record of enormous contributions to this country—to its art and culture, to its strength and spirit, to its sense of history and its sense of purpose. It is long past the time that the Indian policies of the Federal government began to recognize and build upon the capacities and insights of the Indian people.”

The Alaska Legislature can choose to recognize those capacities and honor the enormous contributions of Alaska Natives. HB 221 marks the trail toward bringing future resources and prosperity to all Alaskans through a strengthened partnership with Alaska Tribes. We encourage the Committee to bring this important legislation for a vote before the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Andrew Jimmie
Chairman
Alaska Native Health Board

¹ ANHB was established in 1968 with the purpose of promoting the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and cultural well-being and pride of Alaska Native people. ANHB is the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues and is the advocacy organization for the Alaska Tribal Health System, which is comprised of tribal health programs that serve all of the 229 tribes and over 177,000 Alaska Natives and American Indians (AN/AI) throughout the state. As the statewide tribal health advocacy organization, ANHB helps Alaska’s tribes and tribal programs achieve effective consultation and communication with state and federal agencies on matters of mutual concern.

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF
ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

ARCTIC SLOPE
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

BRISTOL BAY AREA
HEALTH CORPORATION

CHICKALOON VILLAGE
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

CHUGACHMIUT

COPPER RIVER
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN
TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

EASTERN ALEUTIAN TRIBES

KARLUK IRA
TRIBAL COUNCIL

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE

KETCHIKAN
INDIAN COMMUNITY

KODIAK AREA
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

MANILLAQ ASSOCIATION

METLAKATLA INDIAN
COMMUNITY

MT. SANFORD
TRIBAL CONSORTIUM

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF EKLUTNA

NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF TYONEK

NINILCHIK
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION

SELDOVIA VILLAGE TRIBE

SOUTHCENTRAL
FOUNDATION

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

YAKUTAT TLINGIT TRIBE

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
HEALTH CORPORATION

VALDEZ NATIVE TRIBE



March 12, 2020

[Sent Via Electronic Mail]
Representative Knopp
State Capitol Room 410
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Support for House Bill 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes

Dear Representative Knopp,

The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) writes to express our support for House Bill 221, An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes.

AFN is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Our membership includes 175 federally recognized tribes, 155 village corporations, 11 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs. AFN's mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

As such, AFN appreciates and recognize the important step forward that you have taken with the introduction of HB 221. Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized Tribes with a formal relationship with the U.S. Federal Government, but not with the State of Alaska. The lack of this formal recognition has created barriers for Alaska tribes when it comes to providing important services and support, including public safety, economic development, and the overall relationship with the State of Alaska. H.B. 211 is a step in the right directions and will help build a stronger relationship between Alaska's tribal governments and the State of Alaska.

Thank you for your leadership in helping create better opportunities for Alaska Natives peoples. If you have questions regarding this letter, please call me at AFN at 907-274-3611.

Sincerely,

Julie Kitka
President

cc: Representative Bryce Edgmon
Senator Cathy Giessel

Chairman
Richard Peterson



ALASKA TRIBAL UNITY

122 1ST AVE SUITE 600 · FAIRBANKS, AK 99701

Executive Director
Will Mayo



February 21, 2020

Representative Harriet Drummond, Co-Chair
Representative Sara Hannan, Co-Chair
House Community & Regional Affairs
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Co-Chairs,

The Alaska Tribal Unity (ATU) supports HB 221 *An Act providing for state recognition of federally recognized tribes*, in which the State of Alaska legislature is seeking to recognize Alaska Native tribes through State statute.

The Alaska Tribal Unity was established in November 2016 as an assembly of tribes for the purpose of developing a unified voice to advocate on important issues that affect Alaska tribes. The mission of Alaska Tribal Unity is to develop a tribal alliance committed to enhancing and protecting sovereignty, self determination, and quality of life for Alaska Natives through advocacy with a unified voice.

Tribes are the traditional governing nations of the Indigenous people of Alaska and enjoy a robust federal relationship with the U.S. government. Historically, the State of Alaska ignored federal preemptive law regarding the status of Alaska Tribes. In 1999, the Alaska Supreme Court case *John v. Baker* ruled that federal recognition of tribes in Alaska exists. SB 221 will further affirm through statute the state recognition of the 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska.

Baasee',

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Will Mayo".

Will Mayo
Executive Director





February 6, 2020

Representative Chuck Kopp
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kopp,

Copper River Native Association strongly supports Alaska House Bill 221—An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes.

House Bill 221 establishes formal state policy that the state's indigenous peoples have their own governments and that the government of the state of Alaska will no longer deny their existence.

This is an important step in strengthening the partnership between the Alaska state government and Alaska Native tribes. House Bill 221 recognizes and enhances the capacity of Alaska tribes to continue their longstanding tradition of providing vital resources to the state of Alaska.

In 1970, President Nixon, in his special message on Indian affairs to the United States Congress, recognized the contribution of the Indian in America as:

"A record also of endurance, of survival, of adaptation and creativity in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It is a record of enormous contributions to this country—to its art and culture, to its strength and spirit, to its sense of history and its sense of purpose. It is long past the time that the Indian policies of the Federal government began to recognize and build upon the capacities and insights of the Indian people."

Fifty years later, the Legislature of the State of Alaska faces the opportunity to honor the enormous contributions of Alaska Natives. In passing House Bill 221, the state of Alaska will mark the trail toward bringing future resources and prosperity to all Alaskans through a strengthened partnership with the tribes of Alaska.

Thank you for sponsoring House Bill 221,

Charlene Nollner
President, Copper River Native Association



February 18, 2020

Rep. Chuck Kopp
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Rep. Kopp,

We write to express our strong support and appreciation for House Bill 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes.

Alaska Native people have lived on these lands since time immemorial. Tribal governments have held a special recognition and place in Alaska as sovereign governments providing important services and support, including public safety, economic development, and protectors of our lands and water, all efforts that continue to serve Tribal citizens today.

Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized Tribes. This formal relationship was established with the federal government; however, no formal recognition by the state of Alaska has taken place. We appreciate and recognize the important step that HB 221 takes to correct this wrong and formally recognize Alaska's federally recognized Tribes.

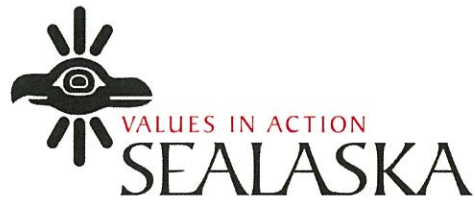
For many years, and even today, trauma has been inflicted on Native people many times over with the lack of respect and lack of recognition of our sovereign status. The fact that the state of Alaska does not recognize Tribes continues to be a point of contention and trauma. Tribes and Native people bring many contributions to our state, including millions of dollars for healthcare through Indian Health Services and education dollars through Head Start. Our Native cultures are filled with a rich history and there is no Alaska without the Indigenous people who have called these lands home for thousands of years. It is time that the state government formally recognize the first people of this land and I hope this Legislature and Governor will agree.

HB 221 is a step that needs to be taken to help begin the process to bring healing and recognition that will open more opportunities to better working relationships between Tribal and state governments. We appreciate your leadership and we stand ready to help in any way possible.

Gunalchéesh/Háw'aa/Quyana/Mahsi'/Baassee'/Maasee'/Dogedinh/Thank you,

Kendra Kloster

Kendra Kloster
Executive Director
Native Peoples Action



March 6, 2020

-Transmitted via email-

Representative Kopp
Alaska State Capitol Rm 13
Juneau, AK 99801
Rep.chuck.kopp@akleg.gov

RE: HB 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes

Representative Kopp:

Thank you for sponsoring HB 221 “An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes”. Please accept this letter in support of the bill.

Our 229 tribes have done pretty well over the last sixty years without statutory recognition from the State of Alaska. Clearly, they do not need the recognition. This legislation is, however, good for the State of Alaska. We all have a shared interest in safe communities, great schools and strong economies, especially in our rural communities.

Tribal powers do not stem from a grant of authority from the United States or the State of Alaska. Tribal authority stems from inherent powers that were never relinquished. This has been a basic tenet of Federal Indian Law for a long time. State acknowledgement will help mitigate unnecessary, often straight racist, policy arguments targeting Alaska’s first people. The beauty in the acknowledgement is the fact that it is not premised on race. It is premised on a political status that pre-dates statehood, gold mines, etc...

Some of us have been here a long time. Some of us aren’t going anywhere because we are so connected to this place. We look forward to working with you to do right by our grandchildren.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Nelson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Nelson
Chairman
joe.nelson@sealaska.com



February 5, 2020

The Honorable Chuck Kopp
Alaska State Representative District 24
Capitol Bldg, Rm 216
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Sitka Tribe of Alaska Support for House Bill 221 - "An Act providing for state recognition of federally recognized tribes; and providing for an effective date"

Dear Representative Kopp:

Sitka Tribe of Alaska is a federally recognized tribal government located in Sitka Alaska with approximately 4,400 enrolled citizens. I am writing to express appreciation that you have introduced House Bill 221, which will provide State recognition for federally recognized Tribes with an immediate effective date.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska is pleased to see you have acknowledged the need for this recognition with HB221. Tribes have been in existence in Alaska from time immemorial, and as you know, formal recognition by the State of Alaska of this existence (by passage of your bill) has been a long time coming. Though State recognition isn't needed for tribes to exist and thrive, that acknowledgement will help in the relationships the State has with tribes in Alaska.

Once again, thank you, Representative Kopp. After passage of this important bill, we would encourage legislators to work with the governor to establish an executive order mandating the State government agencies consult with tribes in areas that impact tribes. Please keep us apprised of the status of this as it moves forward. Should it pass, STA would love to be present as it is signed by the governor.

Sincerely,

Kathy Hope Erickson
Chairman



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Office of the President • Edward K. Thomas Building
9097 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

February 7, 2020

Representative Kopp
Alaska State Capitol Rm 13
Juneau, AK 99801
Rep.chuck.kopp@akleg.gov

RE: HB 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes

On behalf of Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida), I write in strong support of HB 221 – An Act Providing for State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes. Tlingit & Haida is the largest tribe in Alaska, with over 31,000 enrolled Tribal Citizens.

Alaska Tribes have been active partners with the state to address many issues in our communities – from public safety to temporary assistance for needy families to natural resources. This bill (HB221) will show that the state formally recognizes our inherent authority to serve our citizens and further strengthen that partnership.

Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized Tribes. This is a formal trust relationship between the federal government and tribal governments that is repeatedly upheld by US Supreme Court. Through this government to government relationship, Alaska Tribes are able to administer highly sophisticated programs through contracts and compacts and to truly exercise their inherent sovereignty.

Again, I write in strong support of HB 221 – State Recognition of Federally Recognized Tribes. Gunalchéesh/ Háw'aa, thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions or need more information, please feel free to contact me at: rpeterson@ccthita-nsn.gov or (800)344-1432.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Peterson,
President