



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Office of the Mayor

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March 24, 2021

Submitted Via email

Representative Robert Meyers, Chair
Senate Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 3
Juneau Alaska, 99801

Re: Support for SB 105 – Road Service Area Consolidation

Dear members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

Thank you for sponsoring SB105, "An Act relating to road service area consolidation," to help the Fairbanks North Star Borough consolidate RSAs (RSAs) when two or more RSA boards request to do so.

The first FNSB RSA was established in 1965, with the last RSA being established in 2002. To date, FNSB has 103 RSAs, each with their own commission that meet no less than twice per year, with at least one meeting monthly. While other second-class boroughs have RSAs, no other has even close to the same number as FNSB. Matanuska-Susitna Borough is the closest with 16 RSAs, while Ketchikan Borough has nine, Kodiak Borough has four, and Kenai Borough has one.

Consolidation of RSAs would result in greater efficiencies with potentially better prices from the 13 contractors servicing the roads. Additionally, both the contractors and FNSB would require less staff time for contract administration. Consolidation may also result in an adjustment of the current maintenance structure from a "call out basis" for routine maintenance to a performance-based structure while allowing for increased on-site presence by FNSB staff.

Currently, elections are required for consolidation of two or more RSAs, if voters reside in the existing RSA. The process to do so includes holding an open house; approval of the election ordinance from the borough assembly, which authorizes an election for each RSA consolidating; and an election for each RSA wanting to consolidate, where registered voters who reside within the RSA can cast their vote. Consolidation under current law would be a substantial process and holding an election for each RSA that needed to be consolidated would be difficult at best.

Every RSA could benefit from consolidation. For example, an area that has a very low number of residents who pay taxes towards their maintenance but who are unable to adequately fund even basic maintenance due to the small budget could consolidate into a larger RSA. By consolidating, the residents would still contribute equally to the service area but would see a benefit with being able to afford basic regular maintenance.

Passage of the proposed legislation would reduce the administrative burden of consolidation and help the FNSB provide the best possible service to our RSAs and their commissions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryce J Ward', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bryce J Ward
FNSB Mayor