

Hello Mr. Lamkin,

March 3, 2022

I am Anita Laulainen. I am the winner of the inaugural Alaska Artistic License Plate Competition. In 2017, at the time of winning, I was a senior at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Winning the competition was an incredible experience. As a soon-to-be college graduate, I intended to stay in Alaska to find a position as a designer in Anchorage. To have just been awarded this honor, especially within Alaska, gave my portfolio a prestigious item to present at interviews. The cash prize was a great benefit as well, as it contributed to the purchase of new art supplies and technology to continue creating art.

The greatest benefit, however, has been keeping the rights to the art featured on the plate. At the time of winning, I was informed I retained the rights, but did not know what this truly meant. Years passed, and as the plate became more popular, I began to witness numerous items featuring the design with someone else's copyright appear on shelves in Walmart, and other sellers doing something similar online. I realized then that if I wanted to maintain ownership of the design I had to be proactive about producing my own merchandise and preventing others from using my art without my permission.

Following this decision then led to months of effort and work to formally register the design with the US Copyright office, research and strategize how to approach individuals and companies producing items with the design without my permission, and then how I myself could eventually create a partnership with a manufacturer or marketing company to create my own merchandise. I did all of this on my own, using my own money to pay fees.

Fast forwarding to present day, I have established a partnership with a local marketing company to produce a number of items featuring the license plate design, with my copyright clearly marked on each item. They have partnerships with local stores that sell souvenirs-like tourist shops, local Walmarts and local Targets-and I receive quarterly royalty checks based on these sales. I also purchase stock directly from them to sell on my own personal website. Additionally, I am working directly with them to design even more items that will be manufactured and produced featuring the license plate art.

Witnessing the sheer amount of local Alaskans who have purchased the plate and being able to sell items featuring the design has been a tremendously rewarding experience. I am still in awe to this day of the popularity of the design and still cannot fully comprehend how much of an impact this license plate has had throughout the state and the attention it has given to the local art community. This honor has also led to additional art and design opportunities that would not have come about had I not won this competition. I can say with confidence that it will continue to have a positive impact on my career and business ventures for years to come.

With that said, I am fully in support of SB71 so that the Artistic License Plate Program can continue to support and lift local artists-both in terms of advancing their careers and businesses and by putting a spotlight on the local artist community.

Thank you,

Anita

Anita Laulainen

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3/28/21

Senator Gary Stevens
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Senator Stevens,

I am a 44-year Alaska resident who has worked in the arts in Alaska during all those years, and who served on the Alaska State Council on the Arts at the pleasure of eight Alaska Governors between 1983 and 2019. I am writing to thank you for your introduction of and support for SB 71, providing several very straightforward but highly important changes and clarifications that will enable the Alaska State Council on the Arts to even better perform its duties as Alaska's officially designated State Arts Agency.

As your Sponsor Statement and Sectional Analysis, as well as previous testimony in support of the bill have made clear, SB 71 will enable ASCA to reduce its demand on Undesignated General Funds through a modest charge on its license plates supporting the arts—currently the most popular plate selected by Alaskans. It will give ASCA the right to conduct a statewide competition for a new plate at a time of their discretion every four years or more, and provide modest remuneration for the artist whose design is selected. These changes are entirely consistent with ASCA's efforts to reduce its dependence on Undesignated General Funds and maintain this highly visible and successful program.

In a similar way, exclusion of private foundation funds that have and will in the future be secured by ASCA--currently more than 50% of the agency's operating budget--from the Executive Budget Act, will greatly reassure those and future private foundations eager to support ASCA's work, and help insure the ongoing health of the agency in the future.

The clarification to ASCA's authority to deal with disposition of artworks in State buildings as those buildings age and are replaced is absolutely essential to the long-term preservation of this tremendous cultural resource, and the clarification of ASCA's access to legal counsel is important as well, as we learned in previous distressed budget years.

SB 71 is a cleanly, clearly, effectively constructed bill that provides key clarifications and minor changes consistent with ASCA's continuing ability to effectively do its work for all Alaskans. Thank you again for your introduction of and support for it.

Sincerely,

Kesler Woodward
Vice-President, Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation

780 Merlin Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Tim Lamkin

From: Charlotte Fox <cafox@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 7:25 AM
To: Tim Lamkin
Cc: Charlotte Fox; sandcastle@ascalaska.net
Subject: Support for SB 71

Dear Senator Stevens,

I applaud you for sponsoring this piece of legislation that will provide the Alaska State Council on the Arts much needed authority to manage its programs and become even more self supporting through the modest license plate surcharge.

This legislation also clarifies ASCA's critical role as the public agency responsible for managing public art. This clarification is long overdue.

Please let me know if there is anything further I can do on ASCA's behalf to help SB 71 succeed during this legislative session.

And thank you for your continuing support of ASCA's work.

Best to you,

Charlotte Fox
Executive Director
Alaska State Council on the Arts 2001-2012

Charlotte Fox
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907-903-0450



March 8, 2021

Senator Gary Stevens
State Capitol Room 103
Juneau AK 99801
senator.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

Re: Support for Senate Bill 71

Dear Senator Stevens,

The Kodiak Arts Council supports SB 71 and its provisions pertaining to the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA).

As you know ASCA provides many essential services to local arts organizations and artists throughout Alaska including technical support, professional development, resource sharing, and grant programs leveraging public and private dollars. I am restraining my desire to fill pages of narrative with praise for ASCA staff and their work to strengthen the Alaska arts economy, support arts opportunities in Alaska communities, and help ensure all students have access to a culturally-responsive and arts-rich public education. To be brief and clear: we appreciate this work to strengthen ASCA's capacity and support all components of the legislation as written.

Sincerely,

Katie Oliver
Executive Director