



SITKA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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March 15, 2023

Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska State Senate
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Rebecca Himschoot
Alaska House of Representatives
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for SB77/HB84-Municipal Property Tax Exemption/Tax Blighted Property

Dear Senator Stedman and Representative Himschoot:

I reach out today in support of Senate Bill 77 and House bill 84 that will provide a noteworthy new tool to communities across Alaska to increase economic growth and job creation. By allowing local municipalities to adopt new provisions to their respective municipal code to fully exempt property taxes for economic development purposes we together can achieve this goal. Additionally, SB77 will provide local communities the ability to approve new powers to tax blighted properties that otherwise are causing deflation to the property values in their area and are detrimental to attracting new investors and essential workforce to the community.

As the Executive Director of the Sitka Economic Development Association (SEDA), it has become increasingly more obvious that we have a housing shortage in Alaska. We believe this bill will give local cities the ability to motivate owners of blighted properties to re-develop them. I am confident passage of this bill will help stimulate housing and economic development projects locally and around the state. SB77 is a significant step towards improving the competitiveness of Alaskan communities in attracting and supporting new investments that will grow the availability of necessary new housing, as well as investments in new commercial and industrial development that are essential to the future growth and success of communities across Alaska.

I encourage the members of the Alaska Legislature to support the successful passage of this imperative legislation for the future economic growth of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Garry White
Executive
Director