

From: Charlie Lean <[REDACTED]>

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Dear Senator Kaufman and Representative Rauscher,

I am writing to express my support for reestablishing CACFA and extending its sunset date to June of 2031. Of course, I hope for a level of funding that will allow CACFA be fully functional during the extension. As a member for over ten years, let me explain why the State needs CACFA.

CACFA is an advisory group not a regulatory body. Our members are chosen for their knowledge of both federal and Alaskan legislation. We have personal experience in access and land use issues. Our executive directors have been of the highest quality with a level of dedication to the state few could equal. During my tenure, we have fielded questions of what actions did CACFA take? The answer is often our advice or our coaching. We are known for pointed questions of agency personnel which examine their authority or motivations. This is intended as constructive criticism and too often it must be repeated to overcome bureaucratic momentum. Our members do turnover due to frustration or just the toll of time. This leads to constant renewal, which brings new ideas, energy and internal examination of purpose. All healthy things.

Our Primary purposes as I see them:

- Education on law regarding access and land use. We are one of the few places where an Alaskan can speak with the Committee or the Director for help dealing with their issue. We produce an annual report to the Governor and Legislature. We frequently have legislators, besides our members, attend our meetings. We frequently have attendees from the AG's office or other department staff attending to learn as well as testify.
- We serve as watchdogs on active issues or new issues. This is related to the education function just mentioned. If we find something out-of-hand we have raised the alarms.
- We are the keeper of the toolbox. The Director's office has the most complete searchable record of the Statehood Act, FLMPA, ANSCA, ANILCA and other records of law in this field.
- We serve as a sounding board for the public, and agencies as they work through their ideas. There is no other forum that does that.

To provide this level of service there must be an adequate budget to fund the program. We have found three meetings per year are needed. This allows public participation in the cities of Juneau, Anchorage and Fairbanks. It also is necessary to allow the members to process the numerous plans and federal actions that stack up during longer periods of time. We have enjoyed two dedicated Executive Directors in my time. This quality of employee needs to be adequately salaried. An assistant for the director is needed to handle time consuming but important work supporting the committee or director. More recently the use of interns or clerks was very useful in addressing specific projects (digitizing written records and annotating them). The short-term employees benefit the state not only in addressing workload but by familiarization of future employees with the laws of land use in multiple agencies. The State never had much depth in this field and now there is a crisis in staffing as older employees time out.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Charles Lean, CACFA
Nome, Alaska