

Doniece Gott

From: Casie Warner <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2023 5:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: FY24 Operating Budget

Senate Finance Committee,

Alaska is currently facing a significant child care capacity shortage, which is expected to have a massive impact on the state's fiscal future. It is imperative that action is taken during this legislative session to address this issue and help boost the supply of child care services. This will enable parents to return to work, thereby driving economic growth and moving us closer to full employment.

As you prepare to vote on the passage of the FY24 Operating Budget, we urge you to support budget amendments that allocate funding for child care. Your support for this critical initiative will have a positive impact on the lives of Alaskan families and will play a crucial role in securing a better future for our state.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Casie Warner

[REDACTED]

Seward AK

99664

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Senators that make up the Finance Committee,

My name is Sharlay Mamoe. I am the executive director of the Petersburg Children's Center; however, I am writing to testify on my own behalf. I am writing to ask that you all consider putting more funds to the childcare grant in the amount of 15 million dollars and raise the cap to \$500 per child. If more funding is put toward the childcare grant the staff at the Petersburg Children's Center would be much better compensated, allowing us to hire more staff and allow more people to get to work.

I have been associated with the early childcare industry since 2015 when I came back to Alaska with my family for work and I put my daughter in care; I distinctly remember the director at the time telling me I got lucky that I was able to immediately enroll my daughter, and that typically families stay on the waitlist for a few years. I then became the president of the board of directors. During my years as a board member, I wanted the compensation for my daughter's caregivers to be higher as their work is so important; being brain builders.

In 2018 I had decided to make a career change and then became the executive director of the Petersburg Children's Center; I have since been working hard to try to get my staff the compensation they deserve. I truly believe that our career is super important; it is only second to the work of a parent in the child's life; research proves this point. In my five years of working at the Petersburg Children's Center I have had turnover just as everyone else has, and almost EVERY time the staff member found a higher paying job. Childcare staff cannot make enough money to properly care for their family with the wages we are offering, and we cannot offer higher wages without pricing out the parents.

Our staff are currently being paid \$13.00 an hour starting; a local cannery in my town is paying \$18.06. \$18.06 to clean a fish versus \$13.00 to build the brains of the children in our care and allowing their parents to work. As a result of the cannery paying so much, I am losing staff to work at the plant this summer; this staffing loss scares me for the families we provide care for because we may have to close classrooms leaving families without care. This loss in staffing also puts undue pressure and stress onto an already stressed staff, and could lead to more staff loss, and perhaps even a closure of the entire center, God forbid.

Losing staff from not paying them enough is incredibly stressful because I am not able to fix the problem without consequence. I believe I am right where I need to be in life. I love my career choice; I love the children I care for; however, I am very tired of watching them cry when their caregiver leaves, and my staff being stressed from being so short staffed. I am extremely tired of being extremely stressed all the time by toxic stress if you will. I truly believe that if the childcare grant is funded with the \$15 million dollars and the childcare cap is \$500 childcare staff will see an immediate increase in their pay which would be a wonderful first step to showing the childcare staff that they are appreciated and essential for Alaska. Thank you for your considerations and time to read this letter.

Doniece Gott

From: Blythe Marston <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, April 15, 2023 9:20 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Funding the Alaska Cultural Trust

Senators,

The State of Alaska has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen the cultural vibrancy of its communities and provide for diverse economic development.

In 2021, based on the work the legislature had previously funded for determining how to encourage private funding for the arts, the Alaska State Council on the Arts reviewed, discussed, and approved Developing a Cultural Trust for Alaskans.

Last year, based on that work and with donations from individuals and entities, the Alaska Community Foundation formed the Alaska Cultural Trust. WESTAF committed funding for a staff position to help the Trust grow. These are partnering matches already achieved. Other state cultural trusts' successes indicate the need for a solid corpus from which to grow a strong and effective cultural trust as a private institution that sustains arts, culture and economic development.

Alaska has done the work to analyze, prepare, and open a cultural trust. Doing so creates the opportunity for the State of Alaska to invest, ensuring that Alaska has a partner in the private sector to support the arts, culture, and future economic development through both.

Please support the Alaska Cultural Trust CAPSIS request for at least \$1 Million as a 10% seed and partnering support that will encourage philanthropic and private donations in support of Alaska's cultural heritage. Doing so at this critical juncture will have a resounding and lasting impact for Alaska, its culture, and its economy.

- The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that in 2020, during the pandemic, cultural production accounted for \$1.3 Billion and 2.6% of the Alaska economy. However, Alaskan employment in this sector was particularly devastated during the pandemic, decreasing at a rate of 11% between 2019 and 2020 while overall state employment decreased by 7%. In the event of future unforeseen events or disasters that deeply impact the culture sector, an Alaska Cultural Trust will be positioned as an additional resource for immediate and long-term recovery to ensure Alaska's cultural assets are protected.
- Alaska's culture is integral to its economic diversity. Data cited above, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, shows that the culture is a significant part of Alaska's economy with an impact larger than both the utilities industries and agriculture and forestry industries. Alaska is recognized as a national cultural leader, a magnet for artists and art enthusiasts, and cultural assets create destinations for tourists. A robust culture sector will leverage and attract parallel industries with jobs that provide a sustainable economic engine for Alaska. Those effects can be seen at the community level, as local arts activity boosts revenues for restaurants, retailers, transportation providers and many other businesses.
- Because of our culture and history Alaska's communities can continue to be successful, dynamic, and attractive places to live, work, play and raise our families. They also connect Alaskans to one another, which has taken on extra importance following the pandemic.
- Alaska should ensure that it provides world class quality cultural experiences in every corner of the state, today and for the future. A public private partnership supported by the state would ensure that every borough has access to the

benefits of the cultural support that rural communities are not left behind.

- Culture is critical to education, success in school and workforce preparation. Engaging in and cultural activities develops resilient, creative minds that maximize new opportunities and find solutions to life's challenges.
- Equity in the disbursement of funds to rural Alaska is a goal of the Trust. Alaska is comprised of many disparate geographic regions which face barriers in resources that cultural bearers deserve. Marketing and providing access to resources for all Alaskans is a key strategy of the Trust.
- Culture embodies Alaskan pride and defines who we are. Alaska is a place where people, citizens, and visitors alike are transformed by the quality of their experiences. As a result, culture should be visible as essential to our community, connecting people of all ages and cultures, fostering understanding and respect among ourselves, with others, and with place.

A State investment now will significantly advance Alaska as a highly desirable place to live and work, create economic opportunities within the State, and globally position Alaska as a place that values its cultural and historic heritage.

By partnering with those individuals and entities that have already provided start-up seed money and funded Alaska Cultural Trust staff, the State of Alaska can significantly: 1) advance culture as a much needed private-public partnership for community and economic development, 2) cultivate a vibrant nonprofit culture network characterized by financially sustainable organizations flexible enough to respond to needs of diverse individual communities, and 3) champion private investment that advance Alaskan culture and historic preservation. Please vote in favor of providing the partnering seed money to develop a private funding arm for Alaska's arts and culture.

Thank you,
Blythe Marston

Blythe Marston
3001 McCollie Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99517
(907) 244-9163

Doniece Gott

From: Chris GCI [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 3:43 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: asia@bunnellarts.org; andrea.noble@alaska.gov; Anastasia Hoffman
Subject: Alaska Cultural Trust

I urge your support and approval of a funding request now before you for the Alaska Cultural Trust in the amount of \$1,000,000.00

The Alaska Cultural Trust was recently created under the auspices of the Alaska Arts and Cultural Foundation, a board on which I have served since its inception. AACF administers several special purpose funds, including one established after the death of my late wife, Margaret Nick Cooke. The Alaska Cultural Trust will have a different purpose, to promote, protect and preserve the unique, varied and vital cultures of Alaska.

The Alaska Cultural Trust was created with donations from several individuals (and I believe I made the largest individual donation). With support this year from the Legislature, the ACT will be able to access funding from a variety of public and private sources which will, over time, greatly expand the corpus of the trust and become a resource for the support of arts and cultural efforts throughout the state for the benefit of all Alaskans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christopher Cooke
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK 99502
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

Doniece Gott

From: April Counciller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 1:07 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alutiiq Museum CAPSIS Request; Renovation

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to seek your support for the Alutiiq Heritage Foundation (aka, Alutiiq Museum) CAPSIS request for gap funding for our renovation & expansion project. This project has received funding from the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council, Rasmuson Foundation, Koniag, the Kodiak Area Native Association, and Institute for Museum & Library Services, among others. Despite the high level of support, rising construction costs have challenged the project which breaks ground in just a few months in July 2023. Scope reductions have helped reduce the project budget, but a 3.1M gap still remains.

This renovation and expansion is critical for the Alutiiq Museum's work in Kodiak. New exhibits and a larger store will help increase our economic impact through tourism and artist sales, and a classroom will provide much-requested space for trainings and workshops. Increased collections storage will help our nationally-accredited and Alaska State certified repository care for the many collections we hold in trust - including numerous State-owned collections.

This is a difficult budget year, but I hope that you will support this project which will mean so much to the community of Kodiak and the surrounding rural villages in our service area.

Respectfully Yours,
April Counciller



April G.L. Counciller, Ph.D
Executive Director
Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository
ph: 844•425•8844 fx: 866•335•7767
<http://alutiiqmuseum.org>

Doniece Gott

From: April Counciller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 10:47 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska Cultural trust

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing today to ask for you to support the CAPSIS request for seed funding of the Alaska Cultural Trust.

I am a member of the Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation, and a nonprofit arts leader in my community, so I have been closely following the progress to establish this trust for over a decade.

The establishment of the Alaska Cultural trust will help sustain Alaska's cultural heritage and languages in both rural and urban areas. It will provide grants to Alaskan artists and organizations to preserve and elevate the rich and varied art and culture we enjoy in Alaska. This sector has significant benefit to Alaskan residents and also attracts more visitors to our State.

I recognize that the budget is tight this year, but I urge you to assign a \$1M appropriation so that this fund can begin securing matching funding from federal and private sources.

Thank you for your consideration,
April Counciller



April G.L. Counciller, Ph.D
Executive Director
Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository
ph: 844•425•8844 fx: 866•335•7767
<http://alutiiqmuseum.org>

Doniece Gott

From: joan Clover 
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 9:37 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Alaska Legal Services

Legislators: I have volunteered with Alaska Legal Services for many years and have seen their services and personnel up close. They are professional and committed. Most important for your consideration however, is that Alaskans without financial resources--and without Alaska Legal Services--would be without recourse and guidance in so many situations. I volunteer in Family Law issues, divorce, custody, guardianship, Child Support Services, ect., in other words, very personal and very important everyday problems that Alaskans face. Without Alaska Legal Services these people would be lost. We, volunteer attorneys, can only volunteer when the structure is there to assist us and facilitate our efforts. Funding for Alaska Legal Services is absolutely necessary if the promise of "equal justice under the law," a foundation of our democracy is to be truth.

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Joan Clover

Doniece Gott

From: Randi Sweet <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 9:46 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Senior and Disability Services Grants (DOH/SDS) Please support the Governor proposed \$1,498,200

The number of older Alaskans is increasing. Keeping Seniors/Elders in their homes and communities is what they want and is the least expensive option vs. institutional care which is a higher cost to the State of Alaska.

The services grants contribute to the safety net for Seniors/Elders including meals (Meals on Wheels and congregate meals); transportation for shopping and appointments; household assistance, health promotion, adult day programs (helps with individual socialization and respite for their families). These grants also help fund the Independent Living Centers and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers.

Please fund the grants to help Seniors/Elders, their families and their communities.

Thank you,

Randi Sweet
Seldovia AK

Doniece Gott

From: Nina Faust [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 6:44 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Budget

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members:

I hold out hope that the Senate will move in a direction that will provide enough money to bring our education system back up to snuff to serve the people of this state in a quality way. Please raise the BSA to a higher level, \$1300 or more, to address the urgent needs of school districts across the State. From what I am reading and learning from teachers in the classrooms, our schools are in crisis! There are schools that cannot get qualified teachers to fill positions, maintenance has been deferred so long some schools have dangerous situations. Districts are now cutting programs like theater and pools that are not really frills when you look at how important they are to communities, to teaching the whole student, and to those who are not so academically motivated. Adequate education is not only constitutionally required, it saves us money in the long run by averting problems with students who may fall through the cracks in a crumbling education system.

Do not waste our money on taking over the 404 Primacy section. This is no more than a move to subvert the oversight of the Clean Water Act so that the State can approve projects like the Pebble mine that the majority of Alaskans do not want. Renewable resources, such as our salmon runs and clean water, will not be served well by having the State waste its scarce money on a program already funded by the Federal government. It will cost vastly more than the initial \$5 million and probably result in a lot more lawsuits to stop unsuitable development. Put that money instead into a proven program that will benefit the State and its people, the Renewable Energy Fund. That will move us in a more sustainable direction and avoid the hidden costs not reflected in this unwise move to take over the 404 Primacy section.

Capital Projects—I am not in favor of funding a mega harbor in Homer. This project has been hastily pushed at a size that could overwhelm this community and possibly cost so much that the community will be unable to pay for its maintenance and operation down the road.

Do not spend down the Constitutional Reserve by borrowing the amount necessary to pay for an oversized PFD. Go with a modest PFD just over \$1000 and use the rest to fund needed state services.

The Public Assistance cuts that will reduce programs that feed hungry kids should be restored. Funding to senior centers, disability services, medicaid, and other programs that support the needy should be maintained and in many cases increased.

I hope the Senate will be the body that stands firmly to fully fund education, public services, transportation, safety, and the health of communities. We cannot continue to fund huge PFDs at the expense of the public services that make this state a great place to live. We have seen how detrimental past fiscal policies have been to our communities, our schools, our health care system, our ferry system, child care, elder care. The population flight from the state and the difficulty in finding workers and housing for summer workers, all point to the need to once again invest in the state to rebuild what is crumbling before our very eyes. State income tax, tax on e-cigarettes, taxes on out-of-state workers and businesses, closing the gap on oil taxes, and other means of bringing in dependable and predictable revenues will all help balance the budget. It is time to finally build a sustainable income for the state that will not deplete our savings. Please stay the course of a smaller PFD, fund the programs we need, and develop sustainable revenue sources.

Respectfully,

Doniece Gott

From: Carrie Nash [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2023 9:32 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: HB41 Funding for disability support services in Medicaid budget

Hello!

I would like to thank the Senate Finance Committee for considering the needs of disabled Alaskans and their caregivers.

I am asking you all to support the \$15M increment of funding for one year of the DD sustainability program. While my disabled adult daughter was successful in receiving Medicaid funding for basic and much-needed support services, many very disabled Alaskans spend over 52 months on the waitlist for services very foundational to quality of life and good health. My daughter benefits every day from her Medicaid waiver services. I am hoping that every disabled Alaskan who needs these services can receive funding and not be subject to the luck of the draw.

Thank you for your work in making this happen for Alaskans with disabilities.

Sincerely,
Carrie Nash, Fairbanks

--
Carrie Nash
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Doniece Gott

From: Robbi Mixon <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 5:11 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Testimony- Senate Finance Committee

Hello, my name is Robbi Mixon and I'm writing on behalf of the Alaska Food Policy Council, a statewide organization whose goal is to create a healthier, more secure, and more self-reliant Alaska by improving our food system. We are based in Homer, Alaska.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony to the Senate Finance Committee.

The inclusion of funding to upgrade the antiquated technology and database system and to hire more staff and IT workers at the Department of Health will help us get through the SNAP backlog and prevent it from happening again.

Thanks to the Legislature for passing the fast-track amended supplemental budget including funding for technology and staff at the Department of Health.

A huge thank you to the Department of Health and the Governor for immediate relief funding- this was much needed and is appreciated.

I would like to encourage you to embrace long-term efforts to streamline and improve SNAP, such as Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility.

Thank you for your time,
Robbi Mixon

--
Robbi Mixon, Executive Director
Alaska Food Policy Council
director@alaskafoodpolicycouncil.org

[Book some time to chat!](#)

TAKE THE \$5/WEEK ALASKA GROWN CHALLENGE
By spending \$5 a week on Alaska Grown products, you'll help local farmers, boost the local economy, increase Alaska's food security, and eat better too.

Doniece Gott

From: Hannah Hill [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 3:09 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Operating Budget: written testimony
Attachments: Meals.png

Good afternoon Senate Finance Committee -

I wanted to testify on the operating budget & express my support for allocating adequate resources to the Department of Health so they can get through their current backlog & prevent any future such backlogs from happening again.

The SNAP crisis that Alaska faced over the last winter caused enormous harm to our communities. The organization that I run, the Bread Line, in Fairbanks, has seen an unprecedented need at our weekday soup kitchen - higher even than the first year of the pandemic. Every month since October has been a record breaker for our anti-hunger work. The pressure this preventable crisis put on Alaska's charitable network cannot be overstated. After years of meeting incredible need throughout the most serious public health crisis in decades, our own support network - SNAP - failed through longstanding inaction & inattention at the state level.

You have an opportunity now to protect Alaska's most vulnerable populations from unnecessary food insecurity. Including funding to upgrade the astonishingly outdated technology & database system while also hiring more staff & IT workers at the DoH will help Alaska get through this SNAP backlog & prevent another one from happening. Additionally, codifying effective, streamlined SNAP improvements into Alaska's policy - specifically [Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility](#) (Alaska is one of just six states who do not use this system) - will create long term improvements & cost saving measures.

Lastly, I would very much like to thank all the Alaska's Legislative members who worked to pass the fast track amended supplemental budget, which included funding for technology & staff at the DoH. Also, I would like to thank our legislators & the DoH for helping Alaskan anti-hunger nonprofits access immediate relief funding. You made a difference. This was critical support that is so appreciated.

Thank you for your time, your efforts & for allowing my testimony supporting adequate resources to the DoH to protect vulnerable Alaskans from food insecurity.

-Hannah C. Hill
(they/them/theirs)
Executive Director
Bread Line Stone Soup
907.452.1974
breadlineak.org



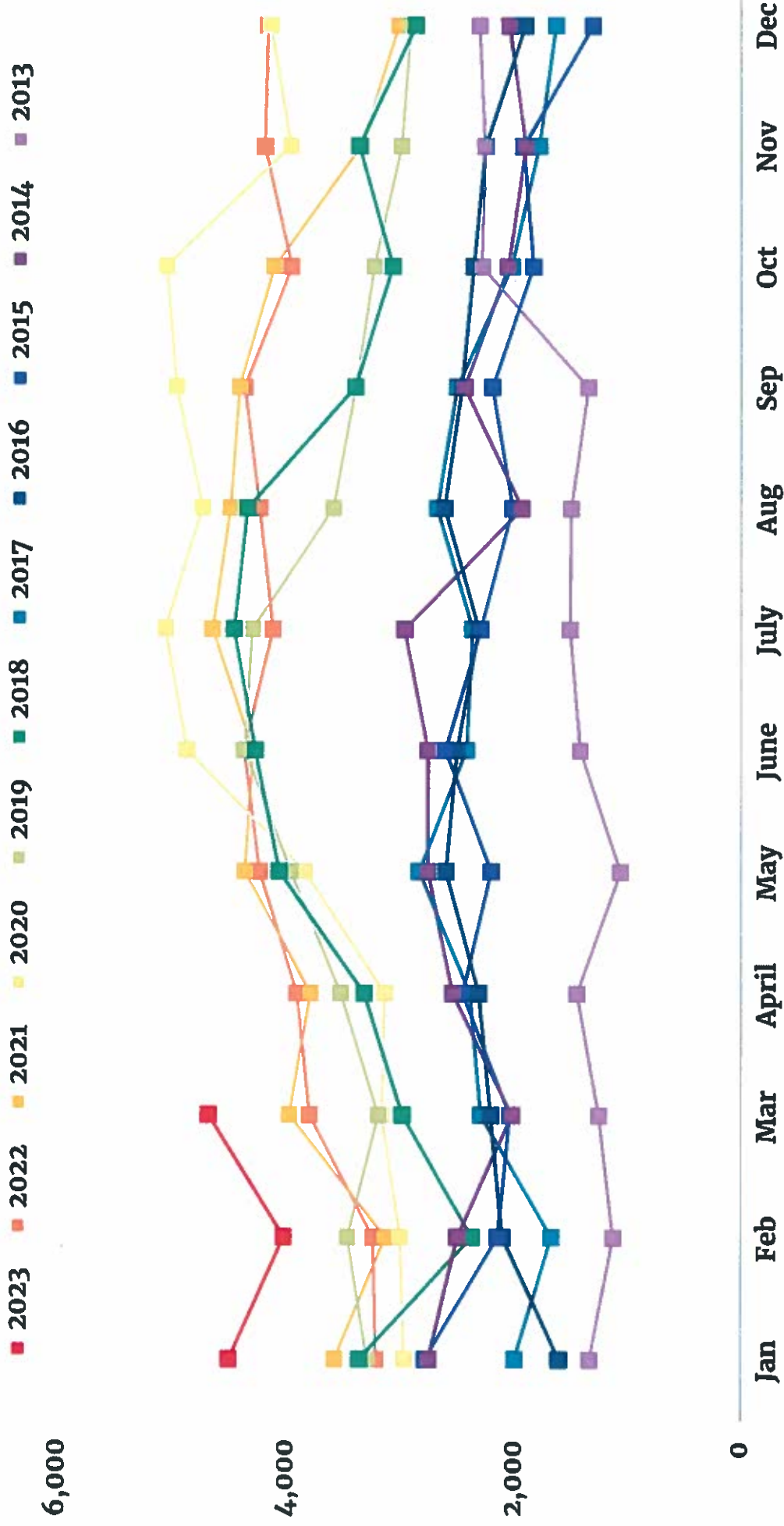
Hunger is every day

[please help support the Bread Line](#)

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he Bread Line operates in the traditional & unceded territory of the Lower Tanana Dene' peoples. We recognize the sovereignty of Indigenous Alaskans & are thankful for their leadership & ongoing stewardship in caring for this beautiful place

Stone Soup Meals: 2013-2023



The Bread Line's soup kitchen - the Stone Soup Cafe - serves free, chef prepared meals Monday - Friday 7:30 to 9:30AM @ 507 Gaffney Rd. Fairbanks, Alaska

Doniece Gott

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 4:02 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Support for Allocating budget to hire staff/ IT workers

Ephraim 'Butch' Palmero
Executive Director
Nome Community Center, Nome AK

Our current intake of clients in our Food bank have increased (Monthly new applications from 11 families to 27 families) more than doubled!

The average number of households we served usually 66-67 per month now 156!

We advocate these elements today!

- The inclusion of funding to upgrade the antiquated technology and database system and to hire more staff and IT workers at the Department of Health will help us get through the SNAP backlog and prevent it from happening again.
- Thanks to the Legislature for passing the fast track amended supplemental budget including funding for technology and staff at the Department of Health
- Thanks to the Department of Health and the Governor for immediate relief funding- this was much needed and is appreciated.
- Encouragement to embrace long-term efforts to streamline and improve SNAP, such as Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility.

With kind regards;
Butch Palmero

Ephraim Palmero, MD
Executive Director
www.nomecc.org



We are concerned citizens of Alaska. I am writing to you today out of concern for the Renewable Energy Fund. As I'm sure you are aware, the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) has been an important and effective tool for supporting Alaskan utilities to switch to affordable, clean, renewable energy since 2008. Since its inception, the REF has invested \$282 million, resulting in 95+ operational projects, \$158M in matching funds, and offsetting 30 million gallons of diesel annually equal to roughly \$180,000,000 saved for rural communities and 336,000 tons of CO2 avoided for the planet in the year 2017 alone, the most recent year for which we have data.. For many rural communities, it is the first grant they look to for support in meeting their energy needs.

But the REF is due to expire in 2023 without a legislative extension. We hope this committee will quickly take up HB62 to renew the REF. But we also hope today that you will budget enough to make the REF effective. Money invested in the REF is money well spent by the state — it saves the state money on Power Cost Equalization, it results in more money saved by rural residents, which means more money circulating in our local economies, and it saves cities, schools, and government agencies money on their utility bills as well. These reasons alone would be enough to justify a renewed and fully funded REF, but there are also larger-scale climate and energy needs. The world is rapidly transitioning away from fossil fuels to renewable energy. We cannot afford to fall behind in this transition, and the REF is a critical component of our state's adaption to the energy transition and a key way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The \$1.4 million included in the House budget is pitifully inadequate to Alaska's challenges, and far short of the money needed to capitalize on the opportunities renewable energy presents.

When it was first created the REF was appropriated \$50 million annually. The recommended project list for this year's REF grant cycle alone is \$25 million. There are few places in the state budget where an investment could lead to greater savings over a longer term. We hope you will look at all options for funding the REF at a level that can actually meet the need for these projects around our state.

Signed:

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	EMAIL	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE
SaQuoia	Arias	arias.saquoia@gmail.com	3461 orbit CIR	Anchorage	AK	99517
Karian	Bachmann	karlan.bachmann@gmail.com	8527 A N Douglas Hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
Jessica	Barker	jessiebarker@gmail.com	114 6th St	Juneau	AK	99891
Jacob	Beeter	jacobbeeter@gmail.com	201 N. Flower St. Unit 1	Anchorage	Alaska	99508
John	Bennett	hydrojohn@gmail.com	1479 Farmers Loop Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Ariel	Berg	ariel.berg1@gmail.com	5961 Keyann Circle	Anchorage	AK	99504
Arthur	Bloom	artmbloom@gmail.com	16275 POINT LENA LOOP RD	Juneau	AK	99801
Joyanne	Bloom	joyanneb@gmail.com	883 Basin Rd	Juneau	AK	99801
Nathan	Borson	nate@borson.net	PO Box 211	Gustavus	AK	99826

Jody	Bowman	bowman808jody@gmail.com	8024 Queen Victoria Dr	Anchorage	AK	99518
Jacquie	Braden	jacquie braden@gmail.com	2117 Solstice Circle	Anchorage	AK	99503
Aaron	Brakel	aaronbrakel@gmail.com	309 D St	Douglas	Alaska	99824
Judy	Brakel	judybrakel@gmail.com	Box 94	Gustavus	Alaska	99826
Steven	Bridwell	sbridwel@alaska.edu	2220 North Star St Apt 3	Anchorage	AK	99503
Mary Kay	Brown	kaybrown@alaska.net	1820 E 24th Ave	Anchorage	Alaska	99508
Katrina	Brown	brown.katrina96@gmail.com	3022 Madison Way	Anchorage	AK	99508
Zachary	Brown	zacharywestbrown@gmail.com	PO Box 225, 5 Dungeness Way	Gustavus	AK	99826
Dan	Cannon	dgc4306@gmail.com	1420 Glacier Ave, Apt. 201	Juneau	AK	99801-1469
Tait	Chandler	taitgchandler@gmail.com	2667 Goldhill Rd	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Jeff	Chen	jeff@naivemovement.org	2901 W. 34th Avenue	Anchorage	AK	99517
Glo	Chitwood	glo@justtransitionak.org	328 Third Ave	Seward	AK	99664
Susan	Christian-Sloss	jssloss@gmail.com	15775 Glacier hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
Carrington	Christie	chase@aksolarpower.com	2726 Telequana Dr	Anchorage	AK	99517
Charlotte	Ciszek	2crazyeagles@gmail.com	873 Oslund Drive	Haines	AK	99827
Stuart	Cohen	invworld@alaska.net	725 5th St	Juneau	AK	99801
Michele	Cornelius	michelescornelius@gmail.com	P.O. Box 295	Gustavus	AK	99826
Jan	Crichton	jan1ak@yahoo.com	123 Behrends Ave	Juneau	AK	99801
Jimena	Cuenca	jqnk0040@gmail.com	505 B Street	Fairbanks	AK	99701
Lauren	Cusimano	lauren@seacc.org	3235 BRESEE ST UNIT A5	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Stephen	Day	hoistedsails@gmail.com	1546 N st	Anchorage	Alaska	99501
Chantal	deAlcuaz	c.dealcuaz@gmail.com	1626 Garden St.	Anchorage	AK	99508
Kenzley	Defler	kenzley@fbxclimateaction.org	1554 Eielson Street, Unit 4	Fairbanks	AK	99701
Evan	Deisen	evandeisen13@gmail.com	19790 Cohen Dr	Juneau	AK	99801
Bonnie	Demerjian	bonniede@aptalaska.net	PO Box 1762	Wrangell	AK	99929
Sean	Den Adel	sean denadel@gmail.com	701 Lake Ave #3	Cordova	AK	99574
Shara	Diamond	warriorgoddesstattoo@gmail.com	3507 Iowa St	Anchorage	Alaska	99517
John	Dodge	trosszone@yahoo.com	Box 2523	Homer	Alaska	99603
Deirdre	Downey	deirdree06@gmail.com	328 Gold St	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Francesca	Du Brock	frd389@mail.harvard.edu	2000 Hillcrest Dr.	Anchorage	Alaska	99517
Thomas	Ely	akthome@yahoo.com	POB 1014	Haines	AK	99827
Anita	Evans	anitalcevans@gmail.com	4030 C Delta Drive, apt C	Juneau	AK	99801-9127
Heather	Evoy	lotushaven@gmail.com	9951 Stephen Richards Memorial Drive, 1, 1	Juneau	AK	99801
Grace	Fahrney	gfahrney1@gmail.com	8731 Geirinhas pl	Anchorage	AK	99507
Brian	Fay	brianfayak@gmail.com	9683 E BREEN ST	PALMER	AK	99645
Andrea	Feniger	anfeniger@gmail.com	2754 E 20th Ave	Anchorage	AK	99508
clay	frick	claydeepsix@aol.com	po box 1222	haines	AK	99827
Christine	Gabriele	cmg007@gmail.com	PO Box 204	Gustavus	AK	99826
Staci	Genet	iskiair@gmail.com	PO Box 296	Talkeetna	Alaska	99676
Ann	Goodenough	anniekgoodenough@gmail.com	3224B Pioneer Ave	Juneau	AK	99801
Pam	Grieve	pjgrieve10@gmail.com	1462 Elizabeth CT	Craig	AK	99921
Phyllis	Hackett	hackett phyllis@gmail.com	707 Lake St A	Sitka	AK	99835

Maddie	Halloran	halloran.madison@gmail.com	7500 Petersburg St	Anchorage	AK	99507
Maranda	Hamme	marandahamme@gmail.com	PO BOX 315	Klawock	AK	99925
Stephanie	Harold	lstephaniehar@gmail.com	215 Hemlock St.	Hoonah	AK	99829
Karla	Hart	karlajhart@gmail.com	4950 Wren Drive	Juneau	AK	99801
Melanie and Kim	Heacox	melanieandkim@gmail.com	P0 Box 359	Gustavus	Alaska	99826
Greta	Healy	gretahealy7@gmail.com	PO box 264	Kake	Alaska	99830
Mike	Hekkers	mikehekkers@yahoo.com	423 3rd St.	Juneau	AK	99801
Leah	Hill	leahhill@gmail.com	3925 Forest Cove Ct	Fairbanks	Alaska	99709
Lila	Hobbs	lilafhobbs@gmail.com	11730 Ellen Avenue	Anchorage	AK	99515
Micaela	Hogan	mickeya.hogan@gmail.com	5808 Cordova st 2	Anchorage	Alaska	99518
John	Hyde	wildthings@gsi.net	3130 Wilma Ave.	Juneau	AK	99803
Jennifer	Isham	jisham2011@gmail.com	9683 E BREEN ST	PALMER	AK	99645
Mel	Izard	mel@seacc.org	8233 Glacier Highway	Juneau	AK	99801
Alexis	Jenkins	acjenkins97@yahoo.com	419 Marine St	Sitka	AK	99835
Tanner	Johnson	tanner@akcenter.org	2420 Lake George Dr	Anchorage	Alaska	99504
Brenda	Johnson	bljinalaska@gmail.com	5875 Glacier Hwy #26	Juneau	AK	99801
Hayden	Kaden	haydenkaden@gmail.com	78 Same Old Rd.	Gustavus	AK	99826
Gretchen	Keiser	Gekeiser@gmail.com	3271 Nowell Ave	Juneau	AK	99801
Gunnar	Keizer	gunnar@nativemovement.org	923 Freeman St.	Ketchikan	AK	99901
Linda	Kelly	LLL9937@gmail.com	1974 Sonoma Crest Circle	Anchorage	AK	99516
Lesley	Kempell	lsk726@gmail.com	640 Deermount Street	Ketchikan	Alaska	99901
Jeanne	Kitayama	jeannek@aptalaska.net	PO Box 911	HAINES	AK	99827
Jeremiah	Klejka	jeremiahklejka@gmail.com	311 cascade street	Sitka	AK	99835
Joshua	Knicely	knicelyjoshua@gmail.com	4757 Mills Lane	North Pole	Alaska	99705
Maureen	Knutsen	maureen.knutsen@gmail.com	Alaska Peninsula Hwy./PO Box 134	Naknek	AK	99633
Charles	Kraushar	nepenthe2@yahoo.com	PO Box 1645	Homer	AK	99603
Kim	Kraushar	nepenthe2@yahoo.com	PO Box 1645	Homer	AK	99603
Kathryn	Kyle	svmerlin43@gmail.com	2213 SAWMILL CREEK RD	SITKA	AK	99835
Raylynn	Lawless	raylynn@seacc.org	2207 Jordan Ave	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Barbara	Learmonth	blearmonth@gsi.net	20008 Cohen Dr	Juneau	AK	99801
Abigail	Leatherman	lil.leatherman96@gmail.com	339 5th st	Juneau	AK	99801
Steve	Lewis	Tenakeetwo@yahoo.com	PO Box 53, Lot 2 Columbia Pt Subd	Tenakee Springs	Alaska	99841
Marina	Lindsey	marinahlindsey@gmail.com	3005 Clinton Dr. #C5	Juneau	AK	99801
David	Love	pandalid@yahoo.com	6740 Marguerite St	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Laura	Lucas	laurajlucas88@gmail.com	6615 North Douglas Hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
Laura	Lucas	laurajlucas88@gmail.com	6615 North Douglas Hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
James	Mackovjak	lituya@gmail.com	P.O. BOX 63	Gustavus	AK	99826
Etta	Maillard	ettahoward@yahoo.com	PO Box 73952	Fairbanks	AK	99707
Bridget	Maryott	discoverhomer@gmail.com	53650 Mansfield Ave	Homer	AK	99603
joan	mcbeen	joanmcbeen@yahoo.com	po box 23	tenakee springs	AK	99841
Kaley	McGoey	kaley@feraphotos.com	712 5th st	Douglas	AK	99824
Luann	McVey	luannmcvey@me.com	1507 Second St.	Douglas	AK	99824

Jessica	Medlin	zenlemon6@gmail.com	P.O. Box 75	Skagway	Ak	99840
Pamela	Miller	pamela@akaction.org	1557 Airport Heights Drive	Anchorage	AK	99508
Scott	Miller	scottysusan@gmail.com	55852 Glenn Rd	Homer	AK	99603
Leif	Mjos	lkmjos@gmail.com	1810 Talkeetna St	Anchorage	AK	99508
Leah	Moss	leah@akcenter.org	1629 Lake Otis Parkway	Anchorage	AK	99508
Don	Muller	donmuller@msn.com	310 Islander Drive	Sitka	Alaska	99835
K.	Murphy	shuyakland@yahoo.com	Amalga Harbor	Juneau	AK	99801
Felix	Myers	fdmyers15@gmail.com	1203 edgumbe drive	Sitka	Alaska	99835
Rachel	Myron	Tenakeetwo@gmail.com	PO Box 53	Tenakee Springs	AK	99841
Kengo	Nagaoka	kengo.nagaoka@gmail.com	2901 W 34th Ave	Anchorage	AK	99517
John	Neary	john.neary99@gmail.com	17735 Pt Stephens Rd	Juneau	AK	99801
Mary Ann	Nickles	manicklesak@gmail.com	1035 Kellum St. #2G	Fairbanks	Alaska	99701-4475
Annika	Ord	annikaord@gmail.com	1606 Laurie Lane	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Barbara	Passtorino	pastorino@gci.net	4935 Wren Drive	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Scott	Pearce	closedtiltomorrow@hotmail.com	55 Haines Hwy, Suite 165	Haines	Alaska	99827
Tyler	Pitts	tyler.pitts@gmail.com	816 Warren Street	Ketchikan	AK	99901
Caio	Poletti Romano	caiopromano@gmail.com	2640 Lucky Law Court	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Satchel	Pondolfinio	satchel@inletkeeper.org	8140 Dagan St	Anchorage	Alaska	99603
Kate	Pottebaum	kpott37@gmail.com	32855 Cirrus Way	Eagle River	Ak	99577
Hailey	Quinto	hailey.m.quinto@gmail.com	4514 Hillcrest Ave	Juneau	AK	99801
Ann	Rappoport	agrappoport@gmail.com	17053 Aries Court	Anchorage	AK	99516
Jordan	Rashea	j.rashea@outlook.com	11140 Lipscomb St	Anchorage	Ak	99526
Martha	Raynolds	martharaynolds@gmail.com	1819 Muskox Trail	Fairbanks	AK	99709
Kiersten	Rezek	kiersten.rezek@gmail.com	1761 NW 61st St	Seattle	Ak	98107
monica	ritter	acinomr56@gmail.com	328 Gold St.	JUNEAU	AK	99801
monica	ritter	acinomr56@gmail.com	328 Gold St.	JUNEAU	AK	99801
Andy	Romanoff	romak4456@gci.net	4456 MOUNTAINSIDE DR	Juneau	AK	99801
Aurora	Roth	rothaurora@gmail.com	1736 Aleutian St	Anchorage	AK	99508
Sally	Rue	sarjesrue@gmail.com	7083 Hendrickson Rd	Juneau	AK	99801
Lillian	Ruedrich	lillian.ruedrich@gmail.com	PO Box 235	Gustavus	Alaska	99826-0235
Donovan	Russoniello	donoruss@gmail.com	2746 W 42nd Ave, Unit 3	Anchorage	Alaska	99517
Lisa	Sadleir-Hart	3AKharts@gmail.com	815 Charles Street	Sitka	AK	99835-7235
Barry	Santana	bwsantana@gmail.com	PO Box 298843, 3397 N Meadow Lakes Dr	Wasilla	AK	99623
Mary Pat	Schilly	mpschilly@gmail.com	18175 Pt Stephens Road	Juneau	AK	99801-8322
Lisa	Schramek	leschramek@gmail.com	201 Mitkof Highway	Petersburg	Alaska	99833
Elaine	Schroeder	eschroederjnu@gmail.com	1706 Willow Dr	Juneau	AK	99801
Sydney	Scout	aksydneyscout@gmail.com	835 D Street #207	Anchorage	AK	99501
Micki	Sievers	mickisievers@gmail.com	309 Shannon Dr	Fairbanks	Alaska	99701
Autumn	Simons	autumn.simons14@gmail.com	PO Box 20927	Juneau	Alaska	99802
John	Sisk	juansisk@gmail.com	18175 Pt Stephens Rd	Juneau	AK	99801
Leslie	Slater	thinicedance@gmail.com	PO Box 2316	Homer	AK	99603
Jeff	Sloss	jssloss@gci.net	15775 Glacier hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
Allegory	Smith	allegory.smith@gmail.com	811 Goldfinch Road	Fairbanks	AK	99709

Tom	Snyder	tom3@gci.net	12345 Main	Anchorage	AK	99516
John	Sonin	sojohn61@hotmail.com	2201 Crow Hill Drive, A-6	Douglas	Alaska	99824
Laura	Stats	laurastatsdaugherty@gmail.com	418 7th St	Juneau	AK	99801
Michaela	Stith	michaela@nativemovement.org	9336 Blackberry St. #22	Anchorage	Alaska	99502
Greg	Streveler	greg.streveler@gmail.com	box 94	Gustavus	Alaska	99826
David	Sturdevant	sturdbox@icloud.com	2551 Vista Dr C302	Juneau	AK	99801
Molly	Sturdevant	mvsturdevant@yahoo.com	PO Box 995	Haines	AK	99827
Mike And Karen	Taylor	mikeandkaren@shizendou.net	PO Box 85	Gustavus	AK	99826
Steven	Teshima	teshimasteve.321@gmail.com	9000 Dalton Hwy	Fairbanks	Alaska	99709
Sara	Thomas	sara.siqiniq@gmail.com	1841 Cindy Lee Lane	Anchorage	AK	99507
Kyla	Thompson	kthompson13@alaska.gov	1370 Kale Ln	Fairbanks	Alaska	99709
Michael	Tobin	miketobin2046@gmail.com	PO Box 34577	Juneau	AK	99803
Meredith	Trainor	Meredith.Trainor@gmail.com	1718 Evergreen Ave	Juneau	AK	99801
Margo	Waring	margowaring@gmail.com	11380 N. Douglas Hwy	Juneau	AK	99801
Natalie	Watson	kwan.myong@gmail.com	9350 Glacier Hwy, Juneau	Juneau	Alaska	99801
Mathias	Weibel	mweibel@protonmail.com	617 Katlian St	Sitka	AK	99835
Lynn	Wilbur	kalei.lw@gmail.com	8515 Jennifer Drive	Juneau	AK	99801
Karen	Wilson	kwilson@wileng.net	175 S. Franklin, Suite 300	Juneau	AK	99801
Douglas	Woodby	doug.woodby@gmail.com	3240 Nowell Avenue	Juneau	Alaska	99801

Doniece Gott

From: Brian Hakkinen [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 5:03 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: budget

I am a 72 year resident of Alaska. I attended territorial and state schools in Alaska. I paid state income tax for 20 years. I voted to create the permanent fund. I supported the creation of the Permanent Fund Dividend . I want my full permanent fund dividend. The legislators have not right to take money that belongs to me and to give it to some special interest..

Cut education funding until a thorough audit is done on all school districts to see where the money is going. It looks like education spending is approaching \$3 billion. That is a lot of money with poor test scores to show for it. With every contractor in Alaska booked ahead for at least one year this is not a good year for capital projects funding. Reduce funding as much as possible.

Abolish community assistance programs. In my community the same special interest group packs the meeting every year and walks away with all the money. This money would be better spent if added to PFDs.

I would like to see the Senior Services program abolished. The whole program is incredibly unfair and biased. Residents in the Pseudo Pioneer Homes receive up to \$200,000 in benefits. Every town has a multi million dollar senior center that hands out free meals and provides rent free apartments. Some seniors receive a cash payment from the state every month for some unknown reason. Me, I receive nothing, nada, zippo. Zero dollars and zero cents. No free lunch, no free apartment. How is that fair? Let's bring back the senior benefit program so that every senior receives something. At least close the Pseudo Pioneer Homes. They are a huge financial burden on the state and I don't even know why they exist.

The Department of Corrections budget is out of control. DOC cannot get enough officers even with paying \$20,000 bonuses for new hires. This means that the officers that are working are on continuous overtime. Now is the time to close correctional facilities and send the convicts to Colorado DOC had planned to close Wildwood a couple of years ago until Peter "COP" Machiche stopped the closure for some reason. Close Wildwood and Spring Creek. Wildwood consists of 10 70 year old buildings. It is time to shut it down. The officers from Wildwood can easily work at another correctional facility. Probably save \$50 million per year. How much did DOC spend on snow removal this year? Alaska correctional facilities have the highest medical health care costs in the United States.

It is time to bring back the state income tax. I get tired of hearing the "Fund Education Bots" constantly demanding that I give up my PFD to help Johnny read. For 80 years education in the territory and the state was funded with income tax and a school tax. Stealing peoples PFD to fund education is a recent development. Someone should explain that to the "Fund Education Bots" Bring back the income tax. Increase taxes on the oil producers. No sales tax.

Cut spending. Pay a full PFD to help those of us on a fixed income that have been hammered by inflation.

Brian Hakkinen
Kasilof



101 Dunkel Street, Suite 111 • Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4806
(907) 457-3282 • www.explorefairbanks.com

April 19, 2023

To: Senate Finance Committee
House Finance Committee

From: Scott McCrea, President and CEO

As the destination marketing organization representing Interior Alaska, Explore Fairbanks is a strong supporter of the Alaska Long Trail project. We are writing today to encourage approval of the \$9.5M that was submitted into CAPSIS for inclusion in the FY24 state capital budget.

The Alaska Long Trail project is one that could benefit our state in many ways above and beyond the visitor industry, creating construction jobs in the near term and providing lasting benefits for Alaska's economy, communities, health and our unique outdoor recreation lifestyles.

Certainly, from the perspective of the visitor industry, the project could attract adventure-seeking travelers from around the world, especially from markets such as German-speaking Europe who are attracted to our destination because of experiences that allow them to connect with the great outdoors. The project would encourage longer stays in Alaska and subsequently adding more visitor spending.

What is particularly impressive is the broad support for the project, both in terms of being bi-partisan as well as the diversity of entities, to include local governments, state and federal agencies, trail organizations, tourism businesses and marketing organizations, and individual trail users.

We want to thank the State Legislature for including the 15 Alaska Long Trail projects in the FY2023 budget last year, though only seven of them stayed in the budget after the vetoes. We hope that this legislative session you will support the new set of the Long Trail projects, including the four that didn't make it through the vetoes last year.

Thank you in advance for our consideration as well as for your leadership to the State of Alaska.

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Westmark Fairbanks Hotel

Richard Croteau
Arctic Travelers Gift Shop

Kristan Kelly, Ex Officio
Fairbanks North Star Borough

Lonny Marney, Ex Officio
City of Fairbanks

My name is Meredith Ahmasuk a 46 year resident of Nome. I oppose Graphite One's plan to develop a lithium mine in the Kigluaik Mountains and I hope you will use your legislative power to protect the area because of its vast cultural and ecological importance.

<https://www.graphiteoneinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/JDS-Graphite-One-NI-43-101-PFS-20221013-compressed.pdf>

The Kigluaik Mountains and Imuruk Basin are incredibly special and sacred to regional tribes whose ancestors lived in the area for thousands of years. The land has been a part of a thriving indigenous culture and heritage since time immemorial. It's a place that holds deep significance and is where subsistence is still heavily practiced. Unfortunately, it's also threatened to be changed forever.

The Imuruk Basin and Kigluaik Mountains are not only important for its cultural heritage but also for its natural beauty and biodiversity. It provides critical habitat for all five species of salmon, anadromous and non-anadromous fish that are unique to the Kigluaik Mountains, globally significant migratory waterfowl, important habitat for ESA listed nesting birds, important habitat for several species of marine mammal, and important wildlife corridors. Each species relies on the Imuruk Basin and Kigluaik Mountains to thrive and reproduce thus allowing for the food security indigenous people have relied upon for millennia

It's clear that the Imuruk Basin and Kigluaik Mountains are far more than just parcels of land - it's a vital part of both local tribal history and culture as well as crucial habitat for numerous animal species in need of protection from destructive mining. For these reasons the State of Alaska must revise any plans that would threaten this special place now and into the future.

Thank you Meredith Ahmasuk

Doniece Gott

From: citymanager fortyukon.us [redacted]
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2023 9:38 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: City of Fort Yukon Testimony

Honorable Senators, The Community of Fort Yukon is very fortunate to have the City and Tribal Governments taking the lead in community projects. We are more fortunate than other rural communities. Senator Bishop is well aware of our request for 100K to finish the final road project to our new landfill. We would like it now in 10s and 20s!! Kidding! By early summer would be a perfect time to get started on the project. That's all the Community needs for now. We have dust palliatives ready to use. 3 more Water and Sewer hook-ups are going to be installed. Garden Projects. Old landfill cleanup. Fire breaks made. King Salmon Fishing. Possible road elevation to mitigate high water damage. I added the goofy comment in this testimony to let you all know to have a little fun during work, I do.....paul

Paul Shewfelt, City Manager
City of Fort Yukon
[redacted]
Fort Yukon, Alaska 99740
[redacted]
[redacted]

Doniece Gott

From: Austin Ahmasuk <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, April 16, 2023 3:01 PM
To: House Finance; House Tribal Affairs; House Resources; Senate Finance Committee; Senate Resources
Subject: Funding for the Port of Nome is an Unjust Decision with Serious Consequences"

Dear Legislators,

It is my opinion that the funding for the Port of Nome is a complete waste of our hard-earned federal tax dollars and a waste of our limited state funds. The port of Nome does not generate any significant shipping services revenue and very little product is shipped out of Nome that supports the state economy. The port of Nome as it exists now can provide for all of the needs of the region. We must ensure justice for our citizens by taking decisive action against projects such as this one. There are communities in Alaska that do NOT have running water or sewer, or access to basic needs. I urge you to immediately revoke any and all current or future funding for the port so that we can direct these resources towards more meaningful and beneficial purposes.

The decision to fund the port of Nome was made without due consideration or consultation with those who know best -the people themselves- which makes it highly irresponsible. A growing number of people from Nome are opposing the port of Nome modifications. Funding the port of Nome is NOT justified. This whole charade about the port of Nome sends an alarming message about our government's ability to handle public funds, and it could have serious repercussions if allowed to continue. The city of Nome has peddled three lies 1. the the port of Nome is needed for National Security, IT IS NOT needed for national security; 2. It is needed for oil spill response, there are no oil spill response plans with the port of Nome; it is needed to reduce the cost of living, that has never been true and it would be just as silly to say the port of Nome will increase the living wage. The port of Nome advocates have claimed without evidence those three big lies, and have jeopardized good political decision making.

For these reasons and more, I strongly recommend that you review the current funding for the port and redirect this money towards other more productive initiatives.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Austin Ahmasuk
Nome and Palmer

Doniece Gott

From: Briana Sullivan [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 16, 2023 2:02 PM
To: Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Kelly Merrick; Sen. James Kaufman; Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Cathy Giessel; House Finance; Senate Finance Committee
Cc: mariyam.medovaya@alaska-trails.org
Subject: Support ALT in FY2024

Greetings Senators and Representatives,

I am writing to urge your support for the Alaska Long Trail Projects for FY2024 state budget. Please support the 14 ALT projects, submitted into CAPSIS for inclusion in the FY2024 state capital budget, totaling \$9.5 Million to fill key shovel-ready and planning ready gaps along the length of the planned route.

Thank you also to the State Legislature for including the 15 ALT projects in the FY2023 budget last year, though only seven of them remained after the Governor's vetoes. I hope that this legislative session prioritizes sustainable tourism developments and gives Alaska and our smaller communities opportunity to spotlight the active, ground-level recreation that can come to fruition, buoyed by the current momentum* and energy that is supporting the design and studies.

As an active outdoors enthusiast, who also guides seasonally, I can assert that spending time on trails and amidst the natural features in our environment - places within minutes or hours of the road system - is both impactful and meaningful for individuals, thus acknowledging further care for our planet and ecosystems, and appreciation for life. Connecting these trails will raise the value of this corridor in myriad ways, and your approval of funding is the critical piece, which can make the difference.

Thank you for all of your service, and focusing on the important, most pressing needs of Alaska, its residents, and visitors.

Thank you for your time,
Briana Sullivan
Girdwood Resident

*Alaska Trails and many partnerships

Doniece Gott

From: Asia Freeman <~~asia.freeman@alaska.gov~~>
Sent: Friday, April 14, 2023 9:48 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Capital Budget, Alaska Cultural Trust

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

As you are likely aware, The State of Alaska has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to strengthen the cultural vibrancy of its communities, and we are asking for your support in funding this effort.

In 2021, The Alaska State Council on the Arts reviewed and discussed *Developing a Cultural Trust for Alaskans: A Plan for Action* and is asking that you support the board's recommendation to fund a Cultural Trust for Alaska. We hope that a CAPSIS legislative request of at least \$1 Million will be a 10% seed and incentive for philanthropic and private donations that will support Alaska's cherished cultural heritage.

Doing so at this critical juncture will have a resounding and lasting impact for the betterment of Alaska, its culture, and its economy:

- The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that in 2020, during the pandemic, cultural production accounted for \$1.3 Billion and 2.6% of the Alaska economy. However, Alaskan employment in this sector was particularly devastated during the pandemic, decreasing at a rate of 11% between 2019 and 2020 while overall state employment decreased by 7%. In the event of future unforeseen events or disasters that deeply impact the culture sector, an Alaska Cultural Trust will be positioned as an additional resource for immediate and long-term recovery to ensure Alaska's cultural assets are protected.
- Cultural is integral to Alaska's economic diversity. Data cited above, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, shows that the culture is a significant part of Alaska's economy with an impact larger than both the utilities industries and agriculture and forestry industries. Alaska is recognized as a national cultural leader, a magnet for artists and art enthusiasts, and cultural assets create destinations for tourists. A robust culture sector will leverage and attract parallel industries with jobs that provide a sustainable economic engine for Alaska. Those effects can be seen at the community level, as local arts activity boosts revenues for restaurants, retailers, transportation providers and many other businesses.
- Because of our culture and history Alaska's communities can continue to be successful, dynamic, and attractive places to live, work, play and raise our families. They also connect Alaskans to one another, which has taken on extra importance following the pandemic.

- Alaska should ensure that it provides world class quality cultural experiences in every corner of the state, today and for the future. A public private partnership supported by the state would ensure that every borough has access to the benefits of the cultural support that rural communities are not left behind.
- Culture is critical to education, success in school and workforce preparation. Engaging in and cultural activities develops resilient, creative minds that maximize new opportunities and find solutions to life's challenges.
- Equity in the disbursement of funds to rural Alaska is a goal of the Trust. Alaska is comprised of many disparate geographic regions which face barriers in resources that cultural bearers deserve. Marketing and providing access to resources for all Alaskans is a key strategy of the Trust.
- Culture embodies Alaskan pride and define who we are. Alaska is a place where people, citizens, and visitors alike are transformed by the quality of their experiences. As a result, culture should be visible as essential to our community, connecting people of all ages and cultures, fostering understanding and respect among ourselves, with others, and with place.

Developing a Cultural Trust for Alaskans: A Plan for Action recommends the development of Alaska's Cultural Trust to: 1) advance culture as a strategy for community and economic development, 2) cultivate a vibrant nonprofit culture network characterized by financially sustainable organizations that are flexible enough to respond to needs of individual communities and 3) be a champion for a public-private partnership that will advance Alaskan culture and historic preservation.

Please invest in the cultural health and well-being of all Alaskans by funding the Alaska Cultural Trust. Doing so will advance Alaska as a highly desirable place to live and work and globally position Alaska as a place that values its cultural and historic heritage.

Sincerely,

Asia Freeman, President
The Alaska Arts and Culture Foundation

Doniece Gott

From: Karyn Rideout <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2023 8:14 AM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: Against state funding of the proposed Alaska Long Trail

I am a 57 year Alaska born resident who questions the State of Alaska funding any of the proposed 'Long Trail'. I don't believe that this is a project that the state can afford to help finance for many reasons. I'd like to see the data on how much revenue is generated by hiker 'tourism' in every state that has a 'Long Trail'. I'm also wondering how much money is spent to maintain those trails. I don't believe this is a good investment or that it won't have some negative consequences for the environment, wildlife, and local communities in close proximity to the 'Long Trail.'

Karyn Rideout

Sent from my iPhone

Doniece Gott

From: Austin Ahmasuk <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2023 12:46 PM
To: House Resources; Senate Resources; Senate Finance Committee; House Finance; House State Affairs
Subject: The Cost of Expansion at The Port of Nome is Unsustainable and Risky Development That Will Last Generations

The Port of Nome's rapid expansion has had a devastating negative effect on the community. The growth of the facility, increase in shipping, and other infrastructure will cause a massive influx of pollutants into nearby waters. But there is a more sinister aspect of port expansion. People from surrounding villages used to enjoy coming to Nome for the shopping and regional hub activities. Now as a result of community sprawl directly from the port of Nome expansion people avoid Nome as much as possible. The port of Nome expansion has fueled a national trade in gold, and illegal mining. Gold miners who come to Nome, annually report in their Alaska Placer Mining Affidavits they steal gold from adjacent Native lands. The gold extraction and trade is not only fueling this corruption but the port of Nome is complicit in this travesty.

I am quite concerned about the detrimental effects the Port of Nome has already delivered upon an innocent public. Residents are expecting an over influx of people that will impact housing caused by port modification, local residents have already dealt with detrimental conditions caused by erosion which may stem from the Port of Nome diverting up to 120,000 cubic yards of sands each year.

The City of Nome and US Army Corps of Engineers have created a west beach and east beach niche. The two beaches created when the western causeway was constructed change the nature of the beach to this day. The two beaches each need different beach nourishment schemes because both have experienced different rates of beach narrowing. Annual dredging has not contributed to beach widening, any dunes, dune vegetation or other features that contribute to a healthy beach. The project and renourishments have decreased the health of Nome's beach.

In September 2022, Typhoon Merbok eroded the beaches of Nome, and as a result, FEMA funded emergency response. But NO federal agency has funded protective beach features. It appears the USACE is relying on dredged sand from annual dredging, instead of constructing a beach protection features. Nome will likely endure more severe storms as the 6th assessment of the IPCC clearly warns of. Instead of climate resiliency to nourish the East and West beaches it appears the USACE and city of Nome will continue to fund a port expansion that is not needed.

These issues call into question whether continued expansion at the Port of Nome is sustainable or worth the potential risks associated with it. If left unaddressed, this looming environmental disaster could cause irreparable damage to local ecosystems and negatively impact entire communities for generations to come. It is critical, therefore, that the port of Nome expansion is stopped.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Austin Ahmasuk
Palmer and Nome



**FRIENDS OF
THE
ANCHORAGE
COASTAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE (FAR)**

**PO Box 220196
Anchorage, AK
99522-0196**

**Phone: 907-248-2503
Fax: 907-248-3159
email: bc@farak.org**

The Honorable Senator, Gary Stevens, President
The Honorable Senator, Cathy Giessel, Majority Chair
The Honorable Senator, Bill Wielechowski, Rules Chair
The Honorable Representative, Cathy Tilton, Speaker
The Honorable Representative, Dan Saddler, Majority Leader
The Honorable Representative, Calvin Schrage, Minority Leader
And All Alaska State Legislature Members
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

*Sent by email to addressees with attachment

Subject: FAR opposes use of Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge Land in The Long Trail Connections

2023.3.18

Dear Honorable Senators and Esteemed Representatives:

Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (FAR) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization of citizens and professionals whose mission is to preserve the integrity and biological diversity of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR). This easily damaged subarctic saltmarsh system supports an unusual diversity of plants, birds, mammals, and invertebrates, and is of continental conservation significance. The proximity of the refuge to Alaska's largest city makes it important for public education and enjoyment but also makes it highly vulnerable. We write in opposition of the Alaska Long Trails project #1, TPS Number: 66547.

To honor and protect in perpetuity the values upon which the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge (ACWR) was established, FAR opposes the use of ACWR land for heavily used public trails. After years of studies and public review, in May Of 2003, about 20 years ago, stewards, citizens, and agencies submitted formal testimonies against the South Extension of the Coastal Trail. The Federal Highway Administration issued a Record of Decision on 2006 selecting the No Action Alternative, because "the purpose and need [of the trail through the refuge] would not be achieved, and none of the beneficial and adverse impacts associated with the build alternatives would accrue." A trail through the ACWR was not acceptable then, and it is not acceptable now.

The ACWR is a 16-mile narrow wildlife refuge of continuous connected habitats that support approximately 220 bird species and while they are too numerous to list here, the species most sensitive to human recreational disturbance are snow geese, sandhill cranes, and bald eagles. The Refuge is part of the Anchorage Coastal IBA (Important Bird Areas) and is especially valuable to wildlife because of the length and connected variety of habitats and ecotone areas allowing wildlife to move through it, find hiding places, forage, breed, nest, and brood rear. During fall and spring migration these habitats are also critically important refueling stops for migratory birds who stop to rest, preen, and feed in the rich intertidal flats.

There are already several other routes that could connect The Long Trail from Fairbanks to Seward in the Anchorage area such as Powerline Pass and Crow Pass.

Several existing multiple-use, off road trails already connect the Seward Highway Long trail route with the Campbell Creek Trail, and thru the Bicentennial Park and Ruth Arcand Park, and it would be beneficial to have the Long Trail go behind Potter Marsh. There is no reason to undermine the primary value of the ACWR, as established by the Alaska Legislature in 1971 and expanded in 1988. To do so would degrade the habitats upon which wildlife depend by displacing wildlife during sensitive times of their life cycles, which generally are between March and November, depending on the species. Again, FAR objects to the use of ACWR land for heavily used public trails.

FAR supports The Long Trail if it will not intrude on ACWR integrity and biological diversity of existing habitats and resident and migratory wildlife populations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara Švarný Carlson

Barbara Švarný Carlson
President and Executive Director

cc: Lisa Murkowski, US Senator for Alaska
Mike Dunleavy, Governor of Alaska
Doug Vincent-Lang, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), Commissioner
Joe Meehan, Lands and Refuges Program Coordinator, Division of Wildlife Conservation, ADFG
David Battle, Area Biologist, Anchorage - GMU 14(C), ADFG
Sara Boario, Alaska Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service
David Bronson, Mayor of Anchorage
Jason Mellerstig, Chair, Sand Lake Community Council
Liz Vasquez, Vice Chair, Sand Lake Community Council
Bruce Schulte, President, Bayshore/Klatt Community Council
Bob Laule, FCC Delegate, Bayshore/Klatt Community Council
Joan Henry, Chair, Old Seward/Oceanview Community Council
Ann Rappoport, Co-Chair, Rabbit Creek Community Council
John Riley, Co-Chair, Rabbit Creek Community Council
Meg Mielke, President, Spenard Community Council
Cathy Gleason, Vice President, Turnagain Community Council
Anchorage Assembly
Steve Rafuse, Park Superintendent, Park Development and Natural Resources (PDNR), MOA
Tom Korosei, Land Manager, PDNR, MOA
Brad Muir, Natural Resources Manager, PDNR, MOA
Beth Nordlund, Executive Director, Anchorage Park Foundation
Steve Cleary, Executive Director, Alaska Trails
David Krause, Executive Director and Director of Conservation, Audubon Alaska
W. Keys, President, Anchorage Audubon Society
Ellen Kazary, Executive Director, Great Land Trust

Doniece Gott

From: Austin Ahmasuk <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2023 2:11 PM
To: House Resources; House State Affairs; House Community and Regional Affairs; House Tribal Affairs; Senate Resources; Senate Finance Committee; Senate State Affairs
Subject: The Dark Side of Graphite One: Unforeseen Risks to Health and Environment

An overwhelming number of residents of the Seward Peninsula are against Graphite One's plan for a lithium mine in the Kigluaik Mountains because it poses a huge risk to people, fish and wildlife. I am a 50 year resident of Nome but now living between Nome and Palmer for the past 7 months. I urge the Alaska legislature to pass a resolution against graphite mining in the Kigluaik mountains north of Nome. Graphite one intends to co-locate complicated mine treatment facilities such as a grinding plant for single-stage crushing, a coarse ore stockpile, and a milling machine. The mine treatment facilities pose a risk to the environment because operation of the facilities that Graphite One proposes requires a high degree of skill. Because the State of Alaska has some of the worst environmental regulations in the entire United States there is a great risk of operational failure, and environmental costs associated with the proposed processes.

The project will result extensive resource extraction that will change the landscape and ecology for hundreds of years in a remote area. Not only may this negatively affect biodiversity, but it could also decrease water availability and quality for nearby populations.

Increased industrial activity in the Kigluaik Mountains and Imuruk Basin will lead to increased levels of noise pollution that will disturb wildlife habitats or disrupt other human activities.

Pollutants from mining are of grave concern and there are significant pollutant problems at the potential mine site. Graphite One intends to store waste rock within a pit in order to mitigate the impacts of acid rock drainage. Acid rock drainage is harmful to aquatic life. Graphite One has already shown that ore and waste rock will have a pH of 5.0, and that concentration of five metals could exceed Alaska's water quality standards: Al, Fe, Mn, Ni, and Zn.

In order to address the dilemma of acid rock drainage Graphite One is looking to the Imuruk Basin. The potential mine will be 3.5 miles from the Imuruk Basin, a water body that serves as rearing habitat for an important variety of fish species used for subsistence. The Imuruk Basin is part of the largest watershed on the entire Seward Peninsula and supports large runs of salmon as well as every other fish species that exists on the Seward Peninsula. Graphite one intends to discharge to directly into the Imuruk Basin 3.5 miles away because marine water quality standards are lower than fresh water standards. Because marine water quality standards are significantly less stringent than fresh water standards, Graphite One is fully intentionally choosing to discharge pollution to a higher level into the Imuruk Basin rather than treat the pollution into adjacent water bodies.

It is entirely likely that there will not be careful regulation and oversight because of the remoteness of the location. The Graphite Creek mine will essentially become an acid generator, with leachate into soils, groundwater, and the Imuruk Basin, with potential consequences for humans and animals living in the area. Please STOP the Graphite One Mine.

Austin Ahmasuk

Nome and Palmer