

**Doniece Gott**

---

**From:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2023 2:08 PM  
**To:** House Finance; Senate Finance Committee; House Community and Regional Affairs; Senate Community and Regional Affairs  
**Subject:** Don't Let Our State's Funds Go to Waste: The Inexcusable Misuse of Taxpayer Money for the Port at Nome!

---

Dear Legislators,

---

I am writing to express my deep concern about the misuse of state funds in the construction of the port at Nome. This project is an irresponsible waste of Alaska funds. It has been ignorant to ignore the other pressing needs of our state while investing in this port, and I urge you to take action in redirecting these funds towards projects that are more fiscally responsible.

---

First, it must be noted that studies have indicated there will be little economic benefit from building a port at Nome. It does not appear as though it would bring any meaningful growth or improvement for the local economy, and so allocating such a large amount of money toward this project is wasteful and unnecessary. The potential benefits simply do not outweigh the cost. There is no national or statewide export the port at Nome provides to the nation or state other than small regional shipments of armor rock and gravel.

---

Second, there are countless other places where funds can be better used instead of on the port at Nome. For example, our state's infrastructure is in dire need of improvement and upgrading. But more importantly, THERE ARE COMMUNITIES WITH NO RUNNING WATER OR SEWER, or LAW ENFORCEMENT, or ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE! IT IS A PUBLIC OUTRAGE LEGISLATORS HAVE WASTED HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS ON A PORT AND NOT TOWARDS THOSE OTHER CRITICAL NEEDS. What is even more appalling there have not been enough efforts made to allocate money towards addressing critical community issues. Our schools also desperately need additional resources in order to provide quality education and support for students; yet again not enough effort has been made to address this issue with proper funding and resources.

---

Investing in community resiliency can prove far more beneficial than wasting money on a port at Nome. The port of Nome has never decreased the cost of living in the region and has not provided much economic value or growth for our state's citizens. Community resiliency investment projects can lead to improved quality of life for many families who would otherwise suffer from a lack of access to BASIC resources but the port of Nome funding robs this generation and future generations of basic needs. The city of Nome has peddled lies that

the port at Nome is needed for national security, oil spill response, and reduced cost of living. None of those have been proven. In fact it is expected that the port of Nome will dramatically impact housing while being constructed (March 2020, Port of Nome Modification Feasibility Study, Adverse Impacts, Section 8.8.2.2). Port of Nome modification is development purely for the sake of development with no economic justification whatsoever. It would take the city of Nome thousands of years to repay taxpayers because the port of Nome is frozen for 7 months out of the year and does not even generate enough money to fund its own operations. Other ports across the nation can fund their own modification because they generate shipping services revenue, the port of Nome ships very little out or in and will be a continua drain on the economy.

---

The port of Nome should never have been constructed with such a HUGE percentage of public funds and the city of Nome should NOT have been allowed to reduce its cost share to a mere 10%. For the hundreds of millions of dollars that taxpayers will waste on port development and with so little benefit to our state in any meaningful way the port of Nome should be subject to meaningful requirements for cost sharing. The city of Nome wants to forgoe as much responsibility as possible and put that upon taxpayers and the state whom will see so little benefit. The cost is too high, and there are much more pressing issues that require funding such as education investment and infrastructure repairs. With the potential that we've wasted hundreds of millions of dollars of public resources on a project with no return, it is time for our state legislature to take action and find a solution by REVOKING the funding for the port of Nome and redirecting it towards projects that truly provide for community resiliency, and can provide running water and sewer, and basic infrastructure for community health.

---

We must find a way to put an end to this irresponsible waste of funds. Alaskans need their legislators to work together in order to ensure that the public's money is being spent wisely and effectively. I urge you to act swiftly on this issue and do your part towards empowering responsible fiscal policy in our state, REVOKE funding for the port of Nome

---

Sincerely,

Austin Ahmasuk

Nome and Palmer

---

**Doniece Gott**

---

**From:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**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:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 05, 2023 9:22 AM  
**To:** House Community and Regional Affairs; House Finance; House Resources; Senate Finance Committee; Senate Resources; Senate State Affairs; House Tribal Affairs; House.Arctic.Policy.Economic.Dev.And.Tourism@akleg.gov  
**Subject:** The Irresponsible Waste of Our Critical Alaska Infrastructure Funds: Ignorance of Sustainability Leads to Unsustainable Losses for ALL

Dear Legislators,

My name is Austin Ahmasuk. I have lived in Nome for 50 years but for the past 7 months been back and forth between Palmer and Nome because my home was destroyed at Fort Davis as a result of Typhoon Merbok. I am hoping to provide some insight to the State Legislature as it formulates the budget and decides the future of Alaskan communities. One area that is clearly a huge waste of state funds is the port of Nome.

Nome's port has been a continual cost headache because it does not generate significant shipping services revenue. The careless and irresponsible decisions of a select few have put Nome in jeopardy, leaving Nome with extensive environmental damage, economic disparity, and long-term health risks.

I urge you to take action immediately to protect Nome and Alaska from further waste as we strive for a sustainable future. Investing in responsible management practices is key to creating a healthier and more prosperous environment for all. **Furthermore, I ask that you REVOKE the funding for the port of Nome as we struggle with incredible budget considerations that impact all of Alaskans.**

I thank you in advance for your support and attention. Your commitment to preserving the integrity of Alaskan fiscal responsibility is essential to maintaining a thriving community and economy.

The port of Nome is frozen for 7 months of the year, it exports no resources to the rest of the state, nation, or globe; is NOT tied into the road system and has not positively impacted the residents of the region. Cost of living still remains extremely high despite promises for decades that port development would reduce those costs. Inflation has steadily increased for 20 years and NEVER been negative. Port of Nome advocates have claimed that port development would reduce the cost of living. The price of fuel spiked tremendously in 2022 to \$7.00/gallon in Nome and was a result of larger economic forces that was NOT in any way tied to port improvements. Despite the high costs of living residents of the region have adapted and continued our subsistence lifestyle. However, I urge the Alaska Legislature to look at ways to decrease the cost of living.

The port of Nome has accelerated erosion as a result of climate change to Nome beaches and will become a perennial maintenance headache. The Nome port is NOT a significant economic driver in the region, but has had a significant role in negatively impacting the lives of the people of Nome. Especially the indigenous people of Nome whose history, people and place have been destroyed. Natural environmental threats such as erosion have been exacerbated by the port. I and other Nome residents have port anxiety and general dread as a result of millions of dollars being wasted on a project that won't address real resiliency. As an example of the dread Nome residents experience the port of Nome has interrupted beach nourishment over decades which now places Nome residents at increased vulnerability when combined with climatic trends from global warming. The USACE and the city of Nome have ignored the potential impacts of climate change caused beach erosion as a result of port development. **Please revoke all funding for the port of Nome and stop its construction.**

In section 2.10.7. "Stemming From" Effects, from the 2020 port of Nome modification feasibility study, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) identified positive feedback from focus group interviews that tie into section 2006 considerations. The USACE and city of Nome assumed local fuel prices are tied to port development but that assumption is not true at all and has never been true. Once again the price of fuel is set based upon larger market forces irrespective of any port development. As I noted earlier the price of gas is now \$7.00/gallon in Nome which was a major spike in prices which was not tied to any port aspect. The regional subsistence economy is NOT tied to port development at all. Rather the regional economies are tied to ecosystem health in the region. The port of Nome must be stopped because it is a tremendous waste of US taxpayer and state dollars.

In the viability summary of the 2020 port modification feasibility summary the USACE identified the need to construct a modified port because of economic distress in the region.

The implications of port modification are wasteful government spending, irresponsible and ignorant of the long-term impacts on local communities. Port of Nome Advocates say there is a "Nome region", and "Nome Service Area". One fact must be pointed out there is NO Nome region and it is clear port of Nome advocates have used every possible mischaracterization to inflate reasons for port development. Port of Nome Advocates have indicated in section 4.8 of the 2020 port of Nome Modification Feasibility Study that the Nome service area extends from Platinum to Barrow. One could find glaring inaccuracies throughout the entire feasibility study.

There are real food security impacts that residents of Western Alaska must deal with. The true impacts to food security are disruption to traditional ways of life and natural resources. The port of Nome will damage the environment or ecosystems in the area due to irresponsible or uninformed economic decisions. The cost of port development will be underestimated due to lack of foresight into potential maintenance costs and avoided externalities such as air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution and habitat destruction caused by construction activities. Inadequate consideration is given to how port developments will change local cultures and traditions over time as they struggle to cope with an influx of new people, technologies, ideas and disruption to their way of life that these changes will bring on a local level. Please stop port development of Nome and Please REVOKE all funding for the port of Nome because it makes fiscal sense to do so. Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Austin Ahmasuk  
Nome & Palmer  
POB 2587  
Palmer, AK. 99645

or

POB 693  
Nome, AK. 99762

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 10, 2023 7:49 AM  
**To:** House Community and Regional Affairs; House Finance; House Resources; Senate Resources; Senate Finance Committee; Senate Community and Regional Affairs; House Tribal Affairs  
**Subject:** Port of Nome Modifications are Wasting Valuable Public Resources

Dear Legislators,

The irresponsible and reckless decision to fund the expansion of the port of Nome is an affront to fiscal responsibility, and puts Alaska citizens at risk who are in dire need of infrastructure maintenance. There are communities without running water and sewer, access to law enforcement, access to quality education, or access to health care. The port of Nome modifications WILL NOT BRING ABOUT any of those improvements to those communities. The legislature must act swiftly to revoke the funding to the port of Nome and send a clear message that we will not stand for the foolishness the port of Nome represents. We cannot allow one community who seek only their own gain at the expense of our safety and security, especially in these uncertain times. It is time that the legislature take action now so that future generations do not have to bear the consequences of this mistake.

I am writing to bring your attention to the fact that very little nationwide cargo is routed through the port of Nome. The port of Nome does NOT classify what cargo goes in or out (March 2020, Port of Nome Modification Feasibility Study, Section 3.6.4) and consequently the port of Nome can fabricate nearly any statistic about cargo and peddle the lie that modifications are essential for the nation when the current port needs no modification to provide for local or regional shipments. This irresponsible waste of a valuable state funds should not be allowed to continue and must be revoked as soon as possible.

The lack of cargo going through the port of Nome has caused a ripple effect in the local economy, negatively impacting businesses and livelihoods. It's time that this issue be addressed and rectified so that Alaskans can benefit from fiscal responsibility.

Unlike other ports in Alaska, Nome's geography does not provide an essential or advantageous location for carrying out trade and transportation activities. Therefore, there is no clear purpose for modification. It would be more beneficial for us to reallocate its resources elsewhere rather than using them on an inefficient project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Austin Ahmasuk

Nome and Palmer

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**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

## Doniece Gott

---

**From:** Austin Ahmasuk <austin\_ahmasuk@yahoo.com>  
**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 6<sup>th</sup> 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