

Alaska Regional Coalition

Representing 100 Communities

April 27, 2023

The Honorable Andi Story
Representative, Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska 99801

Subject: SUPPORT for HB26 Council for Alaska Native Languages

Dear Rep. Story:

The Alaska Regional Coalition (ARC) **SUPPORTS HB26(TRB)**, which seeks to recognize, preserve, and celebrate the diverse languages spoken in the State of Alaska. The bill proposes to add several overlooked Alaska Native languages to the list of official languages of the state. By officially recognizing these languages, the State of Alaska takes an important step towards promoting linguistic and cultural heritage, preserving Alaska Native cultures, and supporting the education of Alaska Native languages. HB26 also proposes to rename the Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Council as the Council for Alaska Native Languages and increase the number of voting members on the council from five to seven.

ARC appreciates your advancing this legislation and we strongly urge your colleagues to support CS for HB26(TRB) and ensure its passage in the legislature. By doing so, the State of Alaska is demonstrating its commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of its indigenous peoples and ensuring that future generations have the opportunity to learn and use these languages.

Ana baasee', Gunalchéesh, Háw'aa, Quyana, for your work on this important issue.

Respectfully,



Brian Ridley, Chief/Chairman
Tanana Chiefs Conference



Melanie Bahnke, President/CEO
Kawerak, Inc.



Tim Gilbert, President/CEO
Maniilaq Assn.



Angela Vanderpool, Executive Director
Chugachmiut



Richard Peterson, President
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

The Alaska Regional Coalition is a consortium of four Alaska Native regional tribal nonprofits and one regional tribe – Tanana Chiefs Conference, Maniilaq, Kawerak, Chugachmiut, and Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. We are all recognized by the U.S. Indian Self-Determination Act to provide medical, behavioral, social, public safety, workforce development, and

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judicial supports to the State of Alaska through contracts, compacts, and grants. The coalition represents 65,000 Alaskans and 100 communities from Ketchikan to Kotzebue.



Tanana
Chiefs
Conference



MANILAQ
ASSOCIATION



KAWERAK, INC.



Central Council
Tlingit and Haida
Indian Tribes of Alaska



Chugachmiut