

January 25, 2024

Senator James D. Kaufman  
State Capitol Room 115  
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: SB 205, AHFC Authority to Acquire Building

Dear Senator Kaufman,

Thank you for introducing Senate Bill 205 to provide Alaska Housing Finance Corporation with legislative authority to purchase a maintenance hub in Anchorage at 700 Bragaw Street. I write in strong support of the bill and to provide information that I think your colleagues will find of interest as they consider the merits of the proposal.

AHFC owns and operates 1,612 public housing units in 13 communities across the state, and our facilities management team has increasingly been challenged with inefficient space to meet the growing demands of our aging housing stock. As we look toward more streamlined operations, standardizing our appliances, our equipment and fleet will lead to fewer supply chain disruptions and faster response to challenges in our inventory, ultimately making us more responsive landlords and better neighbors to all Alaskans.

We take pride in the condition of our housing. Our maintenance staff do a tremendous job with the resources they have but like so many others in the public and private sector, we are struggling to attract and retain a qualified workforce. The maintenance hub at 700 Bragaw has adequate space for training to support our existing employee base and ideally, we'll be able to partner with other housing providers and state agencies to attract more to Alaskans to the profession.

Through a competitive RFP process, we identified the warehouse that was vacant and in close proximity to many of our properties near downtown Anchorage. Since September 2023, our team has moved in under a rental agreement. The location is ideal. Previous tenants invested in sprinkler systems, shelving and other amenities that will go a long way in helping us to achieve our vision to protect our investments by offering service that is delivered more efficiently.

In recognition of the constrained fiscal environment that requires more responsible investment in state assets, AHFC is proposing to utilize federal HUD funds for the purchase of the maintenance hub. No state General Funds will be used in its acquisition and future operations.

I welcome the opportunity for my team and I to present to the Labor & Commerce committee on this proposal, and invite your colleagues to schedule time for a building tour when they're next in Anchorage. Stacy Barnes is our director of governmental relations & public affairs, and is happy to coordinate any such visits. She can be reached directly at 907-330-8445.

Sincerely,



Bryan D. Butcher  
CEO/Executive Director