

First Alaskans Institute

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Mission

Advance Alaska
Natives through
community engagement,
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collaboration, and
leadership development

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The Honorable Scott Kawasaki
Chair, Senate State Affairs
Beltz 105
120 4th Street
Juneau, AK 99801
Via: senate.state.affairs@akleg.gov

Dear Chair Kawasaki,

First Alaskans Institute is a statewide nonprofit funding efforts for Get Out the Native Vote, based in Anchorage. Thank you for welcoming our comments in the spirit of election reform.

SB64 ELECTIONS and SB70 SCHOOL & ELECTION BOARDS; VOTING; ELECTIONS are effective measures to ease the barriers to voting for all Alaskans, and endeavor to ensure every vote cast is successfully counted and voter intent is fully reflected in the results.

In SB64, whenever acceptable forms of ID are mentioned, we urge the Legislature to be mindful that Tribal IDs fall under that recognition. Rural residents in roadless areas have a difficult time accessing a DMV, and it is not required until early adulthood. Tribal IDs are far more accessible and are the standard for many of our tribal citizens in rural Alaska.

A DMV derived form of ID presents an undue burden to many rural residents, and SB70s proposal to hold the DMV as the only way to participate in the automatic voter registration process will create a barrier to registering to vote. Alaskan voters voted for automatic voter registration through the PFD application process in 2016, and we ask that the state remain committed to that ideal along with the DMV route.

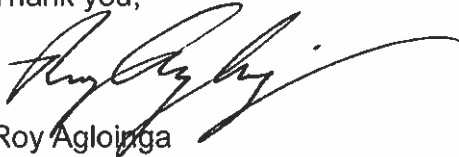
There have been instances in recent history where a rural precinct has successfully conducted an election, but their votes were not added to the final results because of postal issues. Same-day registration establishes a highly accommodating one-stop-shop to participate in the election. It minimizes drop-off rates of voters because it removes confusion over different dates, deadlines and precinct locations. Same day registration for all statewide races will increase overall voter turnout and lessen the need for questioned ballots, thus lowering the rate of partially accepted ballots.

First Alaskans Institute supports, through CITC's GOTNV program, the creation of a rural community liaison in Section 16 to help facilitate access to early and absentee voting in rural areas of the state and ensure that precincts are fully staffed. access to early and absentee voting in rural areas of the state and ensure that precincts are fully staffed.

We also encourage language in the bill to include schools and school districts to the collaborative role of recruiting Youth at the Booth to help run elections and become active citizens. It would bolster election worker experience, and plant seeds for new generations of super voters. GOTNV helped 113 students sign up at Youth Ambassadors in 2024 but only 15 were pressed into service at a rate of 13.5%.

We all know this election reform will make voting more equitable and accessible for voters and thereby fully express our support.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roy Agloingga', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Roy Agloingga
President and CEO
First Alaskans Institute