

SB

65

**SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 2/10/03

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 3/6/03
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 3/14/03

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 65

SB 65 CORRECTIONAL FACILITY EXPANSION

"An Act authorizing the Department of Corrections to enter into agreements with municipalities for new or expanded public correctional facilities in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Bethel, and the Municipality of Anchorage."

and recommends:

- be replaced with _____ CS _____ (_____)
- adopt previous _____ CS _____ (_____)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by _____ Committee
- further referral to _____ Committee

Senate Bill:

- same title
- new title

House Bill:

- same title
- technical title
- new: SCR # _____

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#
DOC	2/19/03	✓		1

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department	Date	Fiscal	Zero	FN#

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	✓			
	✓			
				✓
			✓	
CHAIR:			✓	

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2003 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: SB65_DOC_2_19
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Corrections
 Title Correctional Facility Expansion BRU Administration & Operations
 Component _____
 Sponsor Senator Green
 Requester _____ Component No. _____

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Personal Services	200.8	207.3	1,838.8	10,653.9	18,159.2	18,202.2
Travel	7.0	8.0	151.3	232.3	313.4	313.4
Contractual	5.0	5.0	685.2	1,738.2	2,791.2	2,791.2
Supplies	6.0	7.0	778.4	2,335.5	3,892.6	3,892.6
Equipment	7.0	0.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	80.0	199.0	793.9	793.9
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	3,172.0	5,002.9	15,273.9	15,273.9
TOTAL OPERATING	225.8	227.3	6,714.7	20,170.8	41,233.2	41,276.2

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	225.8	227.3	6,714.7	20,170.8	41,233.2	41,276.2
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	225.8	227.3	6,714.7	20,170.8	41,233.2	41,276.2

Estimate of any current year (FY2003) cost: 0.0

Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time	3	3	29	46	317	314
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill authorizes the Department of Corrections to enter into twenty-five year lease agreements with the Fairbanks North Star Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Bethel and Anchorage for up to a total of 1,600 beds at state correctional facilities and a new state correctional facility.

Assume that the local government agencies will fund the costs of the new or expanded correctional facilities construction through local/AIDEA bond sales backed by the state leases. Costs of construction for Fairbanks, Anchorage and Mat-Su facilities not to exceed \$135,000 per bed, and cost of annual lease payments not to exceed \$14,600 per bed. For the Bethel facility, costs of construction not to exceed \$155,000 per bed, and cost of annual lease payments not to exceed \$16,700. (continued on page 2 of 2).

Prepared by: Jerry D. Burnett, Director Phone 465-3339
 Division: Administrative Services Date/Time 2/19/03 1:33 PM
 Approved by: Portia C.K. Parker, Assistant Commissioner Date 2/19/2003
 Agency: Department of Corrections

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2003 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB65_DOC_2_19

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

DOC will require three project management positions during the planning and construction phase.

Annual Lease Costs, by Facility (shown in miscellaneous line):

Fairbanks Correctional Center: 80 new beds = \$1,168,000

Matanuska-Susitna Borough: 1,200 new beds = \$12,101,900

Yukon-Kuskokwim Correction Center: 120 beds = \$2,004,000

Anchorage Jail: no lease payment (if appropriated, federal funds used for construction)

Additionally, security and life/safety staff and institutional staffing necessary to support the 1,600 new prisoner beds in Alaska is based on about 5 prisoners per 1 staff. Thus, 314 new staff will be needed to support these additional prisoner beds statewide.

The \$41,276,200 annual costs of incarceration and lease payments can be offset by moving any remaining prisoners housed at the out of state contract facility (Florence Correctional Center) back to Alaska and housing them in the new beds created by this bill. Assuming that in FY08, 1,000 prisoners, at \$70.00 per day x 365 days = \$25,550,000 of savings that can be applied to the cost of new beds.

The bill provides for federal receipt authority for up to \$30,000,000. The authorization to expand the Anchorage Jail facility by 200 beds may only occur if federal funds are received and the Alaska State Legislature appropriates the funds.

End.

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
POOR
ORIGINAL
COPIES



CITY OF FAIRBANKS

Steve M. Thompson, Mayor

800 CUSHMAN STREET
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4615

OFFICE: 907-459-6793

FAX: 907-459-6787

smthompson@ci.fairbanks.ak.us

March 10, 2003

VIA FACSIMILE: (907) 465-3805

Senator Lyda Green
State Capitol, Room 516
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Senate Bill 65

Dear Senator Green:

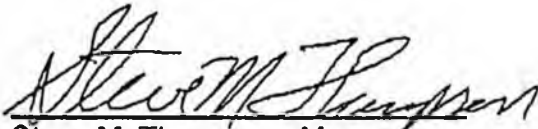
I salute your persistence in pursuing a solution for the state's future correctional facility needs. It has not been an easy route. Clearly, there is substantial debate, strident at times, throughout the state regarding the solution to the problem.

The regional approach taken in Senate Bill 65 makes a great deal of sense. There are many advantages of building new facilities in Sutton, Fairbanks, Bethel and Anchorage that outweigh the other "monolithic" approach of a single large facility.

Thank you again for your work.

Sincerely,

CITY OF FAIRBANKS


Steve M. Thompson, Mayor



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Interim:
600 East Railroad Avenue
Wasilla, Alaska 99654
(907) 376-3370
(907) 376-3157 Fax

Session:
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-6600
(907) 465-3805 Fax

SENATOR LYDA GREEN SENATE DISTRICT G

Sponsor Statement SB 65

The need for additional prison beds in Alaska has been recognized by the Legislature for a number of years. Currently, there are about 650 Alaskan prisoners being held in facilities outside of Alaska.

Senate Bill 65 provides legislative authorization for the expansion of state prisons by local governments. Under the provisions of SB 65, local governments would finance the construction of new prison facilities and additional beds at facilities currently owned by the state. The State of Alaska would then enter into long-term leases and operate the facilities as part of the state correctional system. This financing mechanism allows the state to acquire facilities with no up-front capital costs. It benefits both the state and local economies with construction jobs and long-term jobs in the facilities.

The need for additional prison beds in Alaska is virtually uncontested. However, the location of facilities, the method of financing the construction and who will operate the new facilities all raise issues. In 1998, the Legislature authorized the construction of a privately constructed and operated prison with a minimum of 800 beds in Delta Junction. The prison was not built. In 2001, the Legislature passed HB 149, which provided for construction of a minimum of 800 private prison beds on the Kenai Peninsula. Again, the prison was not built. I believe it is time to go in a new direction in order to finally address this chronic and increasing prison bed space problem.

SB65 provides a long-term solution to Alaska's prison bed space problem. The proposed expansions to existing facilities in Bethel, Fairbanks and Anchorage (federal prisoner unit expansion) will provide relief to the most chronically overcrowded regional hubs. The new 1,200-bed facility will provide the most cost-effective in-state solution to bringing Alaska's prisoners home from Arizona, relieving prison bed overcrowding issues in other regions of the state, as well as providing additional bed space for the state's projected prisoner population increases.

I ask for your support and swift passage of SB65.

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

February 20, 2003

SUBJECT: Sectional Summary - SB 65

TO: Senator Lyda Green

FROM: Gerald P. Luckhaupt *GPL*
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill. As a preliminary matter, please note that a sectional summary of a bill is not an authoritative interpretation of a bill - the bill itself is the best statement of its contents.

Section 1. Authorizes the Department of Corrections to enter into agreements with various municipalities for new or expanded correctional facilities and provides conditions on the authorization.

GPL:lmb
03-038.lmb

ESTABLISH MUNICIPAL OWNED, STATE OPERATED PRISONS

By **Resolution No. 1264**, copy attached, the City of Palmer supported the concept of establishing multiple, municipal owned, state operated prisons. The City supports the expansion of existing prisons to meet the demands of the Department of Corrections.

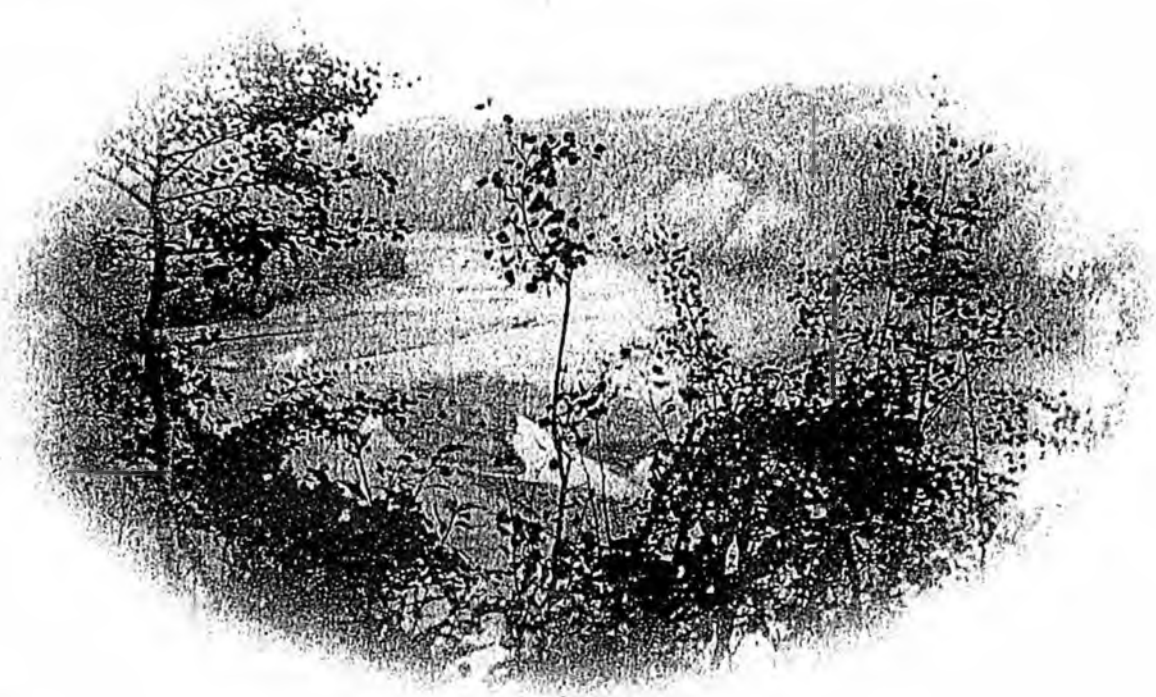
At a meeting on February 11, 2003, the City Council reaffirmed its support of Resolution No. 1264.

This approach to prison expansion will save the State prisoner transport costs related to housing prisoners out of state. Funds spent in the state will benefit the state and local economies, and will provide temporary and permanent jobs in the state.

If you have any questions concerning these issues, please contact:

Tom Healy, City Manager
City of Palmer
745-3271
745-0930 (FAX)
city_mgr@palmerak.org

5. **Expansion of Correctional Facilities.** The State currently transfers approximately \$20 million per year to the State of Arizona in order to house Alaska prisoners. This transfer of funds seriously compromises efforts to improve and diversify our economy. The State's Correctional Facilities located in the Borough have the lowest cost per bed within the state system and the facilities were originally built with expansions in mind. Hence, expansion costs will be lower than at other facilities. Expanding the correctional facilities within the Borough will create jobs and contracting opportunities and eliminate the out-of-state transfer of funds.



Matanuska-Susitna Borough

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FEBRUARY 2003

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH****Borough Mayor**350 East Dahlia Avenue, Palmer, Alaska 99645-6488
Phone (907) 745-9682 FAX (907) 745-9669

February 18, 2003

Jim Clark, Chief of Staff
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Mr. Clark:

Please accept my apology for missing the 2:30 meeting Thursday. We had it on our schedule for 3:30.

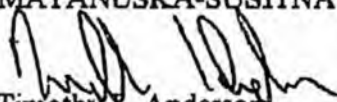
I would nevertheless like to share in writing with you the message from Mat-Su Manager John Duffy and myself. We want to convey to you the following:

1. The Mat-Su Borough wholeheartedly supports the Governor's position in support for public prisons.
2. Private prisons have been decisively rejected in south Anchorage, Delta, Wrangell, and the Kenai Peninsula.
3. The Borough supports SB 65, sponsored by Senator Green and others.
4. SB 65 will allow the state to bring home prisoners from Arizona and create jobs and economic benefits for Alaskans.
5. The Mat-Su Borough welcomes public correctional facilities and employees in the Valley.
6. Mat-Su voters and correctional officers overwhelmingly supported Governor Murkowski and his correctional policy during the last election.
7. The Mat-Su Borough is prepared to assist the administration in any way possible to construct public prisons in the Valley as it represents the most cost-effective locale for correctional facilities in the state.

Again, please accept our apology for missing our meeting. We look forward to working with you and the legislature on this important issue.

Sincerely,

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH


Timothy L. Anderson
Borough Mayor

Adopted: 02/18/03

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 03-012

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING MULTIPLE, MUNICIPAL-OWNED, STATE-OPERATED PRISONS.

WHEREAS, the state of Alaska recognizes the pressing need to reduce overcrowding in its prisons and bring home the 900 plus prisoners that are presently housed in out-of-state correctional facilities; and

WHEREAS, the state of Alaska expends approximately \$20 million annually to transport and house prisoners in out-of-state facilities; funds that if expended in the state of Alaska could significantly benefit state and local economies; and

WHEREAS, the development of new or expanded prisons in Alaska's municipalities would benefit Alaskans by providing much needed construction and permanent, year-round prison jobs; and

WHEREAS, maintaining prisoners within the state allows for them to be closer to their families and culture which enhances the potential for prisoner rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, expansions of many of Alaska's existing prisons can be accomplished more cost effectively than by constructing new prisons; and


WHEREAS, the state of Alaska, Department of Corrections has a long-standing history of providing consistent correctional practices that protect the public's safety, allow for community participation through government-to-government transactions, and

address statewide and regional correction needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly supports the concept of a comprehensive approach to prison development, where the financial and clinical benefits of expanding existing prisons are equally considered with the development of new prisons; and

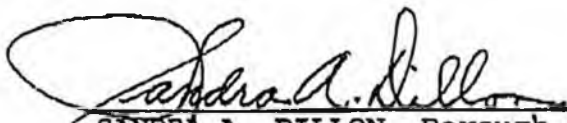
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that new or expanded prisons be owned by the municipalities and operated by the state of Alaska, Department of Corrections under a long-term lease with the relevant municipalities including the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this 18 day of February, 2003.



TIMOTHY L. ANDERSON, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:



SANDRA A. DILLON, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

JB63

Requested by: Mayor
Prepared by: Administration
Meeting date: February 24, 2003
Adopted: February 24, 2003
Vote: Unanimous; Lowe absent

**CITY OF WASILLA
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 03-07**

A RESOLUTION OF THE WASILLA CITY COUNCIL TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL NO. 65 FOR LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH MUNICIPALITIES FOR NEW OR EXPANDED PUBLIC CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES IN THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH, THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH, BETHEL, AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE.

WHEREAS, to relieve overcrowding of existing correctional facilities in the state and the extensive use of out-of-state correctional facilities, the Department of Corrections, not later than July 1, 2006, may enter into agreements with the following municipalities for new or expanded correctional facilities:

- (1) Fairbanks North Star Borough – expansion of existing facility by up to 80 beds;
- (2) Matanuska-Borough Borough – construction of new facility with up to 1,200 beds;
- (3) Bethel – an expansion of exiting facility by up to 120 beds;
- (4) Municipality of Anchorage – expansion of Anchorage Jail by up to 200 beds, and

WHEREAS, the average capital cost for all beds may not exceed \$135,000 a bed for (1), (2), and (4) of above, and \$155,000 a bed for (3) above, adjusted for inflation each year at a rate equal to the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for urban wage earners and clerical workers for Anchorage, Alaska, during the previous calendar year as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor, and

WHEREAS, if construction of a new facility is authorized, the municipality shall own the facility, and the state may enter into a long-term lease not to exceed 25 years

with the municipality to operate the facility; the annual lease payment for a new facility may not exceed \$14,600 a bed; and

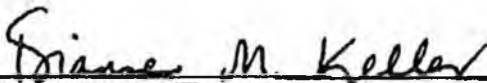
WHEREAS, if expansion of an existing facility is authorized, the state shall enter into a joint ownership agreement with the municipality of the expanded facility, enter into a long-term lease not to exceed 25 years of the municipality's interest in the facility, and operate the facility; payments under the lease may not exceed \$16,700 a bed for the Bethel facility and \$14,600 a bed for the Fairbanks and Anchorage facilities;

WHEREAS, the agreement to lease must contain terms providing that the commission of corrections may terminate for cause any contract for operating the facility, and

WHEREAS, the agreement to lease must contain terms providing that the commissioner of corrections may terminate for cause any contract for operating the facility.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Wasilla City Council that the authorization given by this legislation is subject to the following condition: expansion of the facility may only occur if the expansion is funded by up to \$30,000,000 in federal receipts.

ADOPTED by the Wasilla City Council on February 24, 2003.


DIANNE M. KELLER, Mayor

ATTEST:

KRISTIE L. SMITHERS, CMC
City Clerk

[SEAL]



RECEIVED

FEB 24 2003

RESOLUTION 03-04

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF HOUSTON, ALASKA
IN SUPPORT OF THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING MULTIPLE,
MUNICIPAL OWNED, STATE OPERATED PRISONS.**

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska recognizes the pressing need to reduce overcrowding in its prisons and bring home the 900 plus prisoners that are presently housed in out-of-state correctional facilities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska expends approximately \$20 million annually to transport and house prisoners in out-of state facilities; funds that if expended in the State of Alaska could significantly benefit state and local economies; and

WHEREAS, the development of new or expanded prisons in Alaska's municipalities would benefit Alaskans by providing much needed construction and permanent, year-round prison jobs;; and

WHEREAS, maintaining prisoners within the State allows for them to be closer to their families and culture which enhances the potential for prisoner rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, expansions of many of Alaska's existing prisons can be accomplished more cost effectively than by constructing new prisons; and

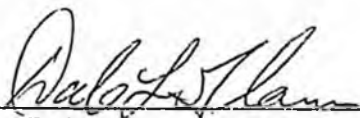
WHEREAS, the State of Alaska Department of Corrections has a long-standing history of providing consistent correctional practices that protect the public's safety, allow for community participation through government-to government transactions and address statewide and regional correction needs.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Houston, Alaska, supports the concept of a comprehensive approach to prison development, where the financial and clinical benefits of expanding existing prisons are equally considered with the development of new prisons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that new or expanded prisons be owned by the

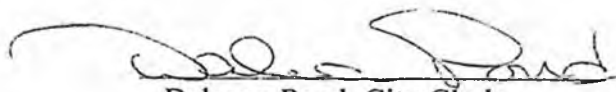
municipalities and operated by the State of Alaska Department of Corrections under a long-term lease with the relevant municipalities including the City of Houston, Alaska.

ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the City Council for the City of Houston, Alaska on this 13th day of February, 2003.



Dale Adams, Mayor

ATTEST:



Daleann Pond, City Clerk



CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA

RESOLUTION NO. 1264

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALMER IN SUPPORT OF THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING MULTIPLE, MUNICIPAL OWNED, STATE OPERATED PRISONS.

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska recognizes the pressing need to reduce overcrowding in its prisons and bring home the 800 plus prisoners that are presently housed in out-of-state correctional facilities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska expends approximately \$20 million annually to transport and house prisoners in out-of-state facilities; funds if expended in the State of Alaska could significantly benefit state and local economies; and

WHEREAS, the development of new or expanded prisons in Alaska's municipalities would benefit Alaskans by providing much needed construction and permanent, year-round prison jobs; and

WHEREAS, maintaining prisoners within the state allows for them to be closer to their families and culture which enhances the potential for prisoner rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, expansions of many of Alaska's existing prisons can be accomplished more cost effectively than by constructing new prisons; and

WHEREAS, Alaska State Department of Corrections has a long-standing history of providing consistent correctional practices that protect the public's safety, allow for community participation through government-to-government transactions and address statewide and regional correction needs.

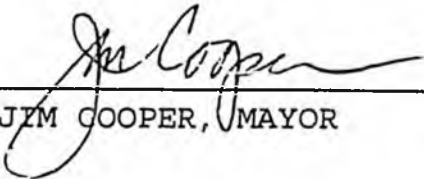
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Palmer supports the general concept of a comprehensive statewide approach to prison development, where the financial and clinical benefits of expanding existing prisons are equally considered with the development of new prisons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that new or expanded prisons be owned by the municipalities and operated by the Alaska State Department

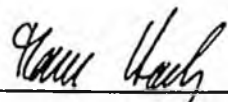
Resolution No. 1264 - Continued

of Corrections under a long-term lease with the relevant municipalities including the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

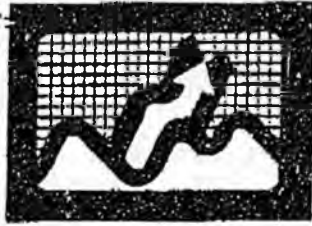
Adopted by the City of Palmer this 26th day of February, 2002.



JIM COOPER, MAYOR



THOMAS HEALY, CITY CLERK



Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION BY THE FAIRBANKS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION IN SUPPORT OF ESTABLISHING A NEW CORRECTIONAL FACILITY WITHIN THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

WHEREAS the Alaska correctional system is severely over-crowded; and

WHEREAS the State of Alaska recognizes the need to bring home the approximately 600 inmates incarcerated in Arizona prisons; and

WHEREAS the Fairbanks Correctional Facility (FCC) is the collection center for prisoners from Western, Northern, and Interior Alaska; and

WHEREAS the current FCC was constructed in 1965, and would require extensive renovation to provide necessary services if additional beds were added; and

WHEREAS a larger correctional facility in Fairbanks would provide an opportunity for cultural, social, and family support for a large percentage of the inmates; and

WHEREAS a larger correctional facility in the Fairbanks North Star Borough would provide considerable economic growth; and

WHEREAS the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation encourages the Fairbanks North Star Borough to issue bonds to finance the construction of the facility; and

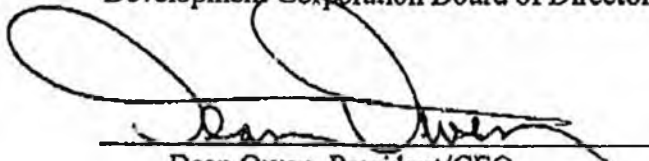
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation requests that the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, Fairbanks North Star Borough, City of Fairbanks, and the City of North Pole support the significant expansion of the number of inmate beds in Interior Alaska where the financial and clinical benefits of expanding the existing facility are equally considered with the development of a new facility; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a new or expanded prison facility be owned by the municipalities and operated by the State of Alaska Department of Corrections under a long-term lease with the relevant municipalities including the Fairbanks North Star Borough.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be distributed to:
Governor Frank Murkowski
Commissioner Department of Corrections
Interior Delegation

Mayor Rhonda Boyles
Mayor Steve Thompson
Mayor Jeff Jacobson
Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly
Fairbanks City Council
North Pole City Council

PASSED in Fairbanks, Alaska this nineteenth day of February, 2003 by the Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors.



Dean Owen, President/CEO



James Dodson, Chairman

Subject: Prisons

Date: Thu, 20 Feb 2003 20:28:02 -0900

From: William Hathaway <billandann@gci.net>

To: Fairbanks_LIO@legis.state.ak.us, Brad Wilson <brad@psca.net>

SB 65

Please support ~~house bill 91~~ *SB 65*. I have been a Correctional Officer for the state for 13 1/2 years. I first worked 17 months a Spring Creek Correctional Center in Seward. Then I transferred to the Fairbanks Correctional Center. After working here for 12 years I cannot stress enough how much we need the extra bed space. It is not uncommon to have numerous prisoners sleeping on the floor in the gym because all of the beds are full. This increases tension within our facility because it prevents all prisoners from recreating properly to relieve tension. It is particularly stressful on the prisoners housed there because not only are they on the floor but other prisoners are recreating in their assigned living area. The increased tension spills over into fights, assaults, and contraband problems. As tension increases the prisoners become more desperate to smuggle contraband (primarily drugs) to aid in stress relief. It is easy to see how this becomes a vicious cycle. Consequently security and safety for the public, staff and prisoners is compromised.

Having done extensive personal research on the problems of prison overcrowding I can assure you that, without action on your part, we are sitting on a time bomb.

>From this research I have learned that private prisons are NOT the solution.

Pennsylvania has started the jailing staff of their private prisons because of their inability to control contraband. Ohio has jailed the wardens from their private prisons because they were unable to adequately provide for the safety of the prisoners housed there. Missouri is trying to close its private prisons because the liability lawsuits are over 600 times higher in private prisons than in state run facilities. Additionally the number of escapes from private prisons there is described as being "almost unbelievable." Georgia had to use the State Troopers to quell a riot at some of their private prisons and the resulting lawsuits are described as "astronomical." On several occasions Texas has had to use the Texas Rangers to quell disturbances in their private prisons because the staff there were untrained and unwilling to do so. Oklahoma has had similar problems and describe the rate of assaults, sexual assaults, and escapes as "something unheard of in professional state run facilities."

To a person Alaska's own prisoners returning from the private facility in Florence, Arizona all express a happiness to be back where "you guards are trained and paid enough to act like professionals". Most, but not all, express a feeling of safety upon returning and almost all will tell you that contraband is rampant there but almost totally controlled in our state facilities. This is something I have heard over and over while booking returnees.

*William S. Hathaway
2299 FREEDOM way
NORTH Pole, AK 99705*