



ALASKA FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 200, Juneau, Alaska 99801

Alaska Representatives & Senators
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: Override of the Governors vetoes

Dear Alaska Representatives & Senators,,

The Alaska Fire Chief's Association represents fire chiefs from all across Alaska. We are asking for ALL Legislatures override the Governor's line item vetoes on the current budget. Most importantly are those vetoes related to education, health, and public safety.

- The LEPC are the community level organizations that work together and provide information to their citizens and in turn report back through the SERC on the community's needs. They have in large part grown past just hazardous materials response concerns in Alaska and look at emergency planning as an all hazardous response.
- The cuts to Alaskan Seniors will cause them to live in poverty, declining their health, and will cause an increase in using the 911 system for assistance. Putting another strain on a system that is already strained.
- Cutting education is not only hurting the fire service, it's hurting all Alaskans. Starting with the young by not funding the Head Start program for early childhood. Those attending Head Start programs transitions into Kindergarten with increased literacy, math and social skills over those that did not attend. Many parents use this program, so they are able to work and be a productive member of society. Without it, some will have to quit their jobs and will be looking for the government for assistance.
- For our higher education, these cuts are making everyone leave Alaska to continue their education. Most individuals that leave their home for college, never return home for employment.

The current Fire Science program at University of Alaska Fairbanks has graduates working all across Alaska and the Nation. Students that complete this program enter into the workforce having not only the knowledge of the job, but also have hands on experience. Almost all departments across Alaska have employed graduates from the UAF Fire Science program. Currently 50% of Fairbanks Fire Department employees are graduates from the fire science program.

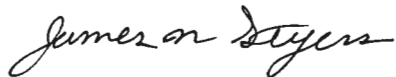
It was not too long ago there were very few departments that had a paramedic working for them. It was mainly the larger departments in the state that had the ability to send someone out of state for the training. These cuts may affect the Paramedic program in Fairbanks. Because of this program we have paramedics throughout the state working

to providing top level service to all Alaskans and visitors.

- The proposed cuts to the VPSO program will affect many of our rural communities. While they are under the Alaska State Troopers, they are not Law Enforcement. They are the "First Responders" in areas where AST will be delayed in their response. They are also (in many places) the only local first aid that can respond to assist someone having a medical emergency or injury from an accident. They play a vital role across Alaska.

The Alaska Fire Chiefs Association again request each legislature take a long look at how these cuts are going to affect all Alaskans and please override the Governors vetoes.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at jstyers@fairbanks.us or at (907)450-6604.



V/r

James N. Styers
1st Vice President
Alaska Fire Chiefs Association