

CITY OF UNALASKA

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July 8, 2019

Alaska State Legislators
State Capital
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Governor Dunleavy Operating Budget Line Item Veto's

The City of Unalaska adamantly opposes to Governor Dunleavy's operating budget veto's, across the board. We urge the legislature to override all of these odious veto's that will destroy the quality of life in Alaska as we know it. Below are major areas of concern to Unalaska.

Debt Reimbursement

This veto directly impacts \$500,000 of debt reimbursement for the Carl Moses Harbor and Eagle View Elementary school to the City of Unalaska.

Program Elimination

The deletion of the funding for Online with Libraries (OWL) Program, results in a loss of approximately \$27,100 to the City of Unalaska which helps to pay for the library portion of the shared internet connection with the School. Historically the City of Unalaska has received about \$10,000 in grants annually through the Local Emergency Planning Committee to help support training and preparedness initiatives in our remote island community. Unalaska sits on the ring of fire, has many earthquakes and regular Tsunami warnings.

These are major hits, but other veto's placed by Governor Dunleavy are much more concerning to Unalaska as a community.

Senior Benefit Funding

The cost of living in the Aleutians is much higher than many areas of the state and this benefit barely covers the food that they need to purchase monthly. The loss of this needed funding will greatly impact the quality of life of senior citizens in Unalaska.

Medicaid Funding

Medicaid cuts will impact members of the community that need Medicaid benefits to travel for medical attention in Anchorage. Unalaska is a community of 4,700 located 800 miles west of Anchorage in the middle of the Aleutian Islands. We have no hospital we and the highest round trip airfare cost in the state to Anchorage at \$1,100. The reduction of Medicaid benefits will greatly impact members of the community that can't afford the high cost of travel to get medical attention.

University System Funding

The Governor's veto of an additional \$130 million dollars to the University will destroy the University as we know it. The best and brightest staff members and students will move out of Alaska. Students and families will be forced to pay out of state tuition, leading to increased debit and student loan costs. Personally, I have three granddaughters. One just graduated from high school and two others going to graduate in the next two years. None will consider going to UAA due to the uncertainty of university funding. We are concerned about the future of Unalaska's UAF satellite campus. Closing that location will result in layoffs of local residents and hurt students that are taking classes locally and online.

Public Broadcasting

The elimination of Public Broadcasting funding is major is issue to a remote community such as Unalaska. The one local station is of critical importance to Unalaska in the communication of important community issues and public notifications in case of emergencies. The reduction of state funding places additional burden on the City to step in with funding to keep the station alive. Unalaska already provides an annual grant to the station. This veto will impact rural communities across the state.

Early Education Funding, Parents as Teachers, Head Start, Early Childhood

Early education is of critical importance to the future success of our children in school. The City of Unalaska has been funding preschool for years with a tremendous success. Head Start and preschool programs are vital in our community with a large number of students whom have English as a second language. It is hard to understand the Governor making this veto when his background is in education this veto diffidently needs to be defeated.

Miscellaneous Items

The elimination of other programs, such as the Council of the Arts, Community Assistance Capitalization, and Human Services Community Matching Grants will also have lasting impacts to many communities across the state. We hope that they will survive.

In closing, we urge you as our elected officials, to overturn the Governor Dunleavy veto's which will be devastating to Alaska for years to come. It is of the utmost importance that you do your best to protect the quality of life in Alaska, as we know it today. Thank you.

Sincerely

CITY OF UNALASKA



Frank Kelty
Mayor



Erin Reinders
City Manager

Cc: Unalaska City Council