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Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

Alaska Municipal League Resolution 25-2020

Requesting State partnership in public health decision-making

Whereas, the State of Alaska has unequivocal health and disaster powers, which were applied effectively in the form of mandates early in the pandemic; and

Whereas, increasingly the State has asked that local governments take on more of these decisions, for community-specific responses; and

Whereas, while many local governments may have the ability to adopt health powers and to exercise them during a pandemic, that process takes time and depends on the capacity of each local government; and

Whereas, second class boroughs do not have these powers, and adoption would require a vote of the people or legislative action; and

Whereas, the majority of local governments do not have the capacity nor the time to develop the capacity to evaluate current threat levels and implement corresponding health mitigation measures; and

Whereas, of 165 cities and boroughs, 125 have fewer than 1,000 residents, with whom the DHSS has not been able to share relevant public health data; and

Whereas, local government officials are concerned with the health, welfare, and safety of their residents, and will take prudent and allowable action in response.

Now, therefore be it resolved that the State of Alaska should work in collaborative partnership with local governments to issue and assist in enforcement of community-specific health measures that contribute to mitigating the public health crisis; and

Be it further resolved, that in those circumstances where the local government is not able to act – because of lack of powers or capacity – in response to high threat levels (red, or as determined by the Chief Medical Officer), AML requests that DHSS and the Governor assist by implementing the appropriate mitigation measures in collaboration with the local government.