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

The Honorable David Wilson
Senate Finance Subcommittee: DEC
Alaska State Legislature

February 10, 2021

Senator Wilson,

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has an understated but critical role in supporting local governments. Local governments are often responsible for landfills, water and wastewater management, sewer and sanitation.

The Village Safe Water program, and the Revolving Loan Fund, are successful efforts by the State to support water and wastewater improvements. The State's match, which we continue to be glad to see in the budget, are critical to leverage federal funding. That said, we would just highlight that the total funding available pales in comparison to the needs identified by communities. IHS maintains a list of rural communities in need, which includes approximately \$1.6 billion in projects. We could easily double or triple that if we included urban projects. We encourage the Legislature to explore new and additional funding in support of these very basic levels of service that Alaskans depend on.

Until the Ocean Ranger statute is repealed or replaced, we would expect DEC to be appropriately funded to implement this statutorily required program.

Thank you for your attention to these requests, and consideration of the needs of Alaska's local governments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nils Andreassen".

Nils Andreassen
Executive Director