FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 - 29

A RESOLUTION IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

WHEREAS, The Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly identifies and supports the following legislative priorities for 2022:

PERS Contribution Rate and strategy to reduce unfunded liability
Maintain the 22% PERS contribution rate as was agreed to by PERS employers and the state in allocating the unfunded liability and to provide certainty of set rates for all employers. There should be focused efforts to develop strategies to reduce the unfunded liability and reduce the overall payout through incentive programs not by adjusting the contribution amount. Options may include buy out provisions.

Defining Economic Development within Title 29
Economic development should be defined more broadly for purposes of our powers, including spending revenue to assist local businesses and industries and for property tax exemptions or deferrals. This would allow for more incentives to make it more attractive for trades and businesses to maintain operations in the borough.

Support Military Affairs Commission Legislation
Create a commission to provide advice, counsel and recommendation to the Governor, the Alaska Legislature and State agencies on initiatives, programs, and legislation that continue and increase the role that Alaska’s military installations, the National Guard and Reserve play in America’s defense strategy and the economic health and vitality of the State.

Government-to-government annexations
Amendment to the annexation statutes that would allow a city within a second-class borough and that borough to agree, by ordinance, to expand city boundaries within the borough through an abbreviated process. Such amendment would allow the LBC to approve such boundary changes provided that no private lots are affected.
Creation of Enterprise Zones in State Statute
An enterprise zone is a geographic area that has been granted special tax breaks, regulatory exemptions, or other public assistance to encourage private economic development and job creation. The programs may be used to encourage a private company to stay in a neighborhood, expand in it, or relocate to it. The creation of economic enterprise zones is a goal set forth in the FNSB’s Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Regulate Broadband as a Utility
The Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) regulates various industries based on the need for consistent and safe operations of key aspects of a community and economy. Currently the RCA regulates industries such as Telephone, Electric, Natural Gas, Wastewater, Water and Refuse. Regulating a utility provides a transparent and clear path for development to ensure all areas are provided consistent service and a unified cost structure, in a consistent manner.

The State of Alaska should fully fund education to the basic need
Any local contribution would be added to the basic need provided by the state, not deducted from the amount the state would otherwise pay. Removing the required local contribution could incentivize communities to incorporate by no longer penalizing communities but by creating an incentive, to contribute additional funds to education. A new disparity formula would need to be taken into consideration for this change to ensure districts with low tax bases are not left behind.

School Funding and Forward Funding Education
Maintain school funding and forward funding of schools.

Municipal Capital Project/School Construction Reimbursement
The Fairbanks North Star Borough has partnered with the State of Alaska on municipal capital and school construction projects. The Borough supports full reimbursement as provided for in state law.

Human Services Community Matching Grant (HSCMG) Program
The HSCMG program has significant and wide-ranging impacts in the Fairbanks North Star Borough and is an exceptionally cost-effective use of public dollars which are passed through to nonprofit recipients providing basic and essential human services to underserved residents.

Community Assistance
Support maintaining the community assistance program and considering ways to stabilize the fund and or expand to create consistency. Support a baseline floor of $60 million annually, and encourage a long-term, sustainable solution.

FNSB Approved FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
Projects listed in Attachment 1 of FNSB adopted Resolution No. 2021-12.
Loan Authority for Regional Development of residential and commercial buildings due to military growth

The Interior Energy Project set a precedent of low to zero percent interest rates and extended payback period to initiate lower energy costs for the Interior. Providing special authorities for state-funded loan programs to incentivize new and renovative building could help the FNSB meet growth demands, exasperated by the planned deployment of military personnel to Eielson and Fort Wainwright military bases.

Fund AHFC Home Energy Rebate Program

The AHFC Home Energy Rebate Program has not been funded since 2016. Encourage funding and expand access of AHFC Home Energy Rebate Program and Energy efficiency standards for new and retrofitted construction, including a call center and energy rater certification.

Fund the University of Alaska system

The University of Alaska, specifically the Fairbanks campus, is a leading research facility for the Arctic. Alaska makes the United States an arctic nation, and cutting-edge research and innovation is paramount to development of energy systems and climate realizations of the future.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks North Star Borough supports these legislative priorities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assembly requests the Clerk to distribute a copy of this resolution to the Alaska Congressional Delegation, Alaska Interior Delegation, and the Honorable Governor Dunleavy.


Mindy O'Neal
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:
April Trickey, CMC
Borough Clerk

Yeses: Wilson, Cash, Sanford, Tomaszewski, Lyke, Williams, O'Neall
Noes: Lojewski
Other: Cooper (Abstained)