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

For Release: AML Applauds Governor's Focus on Public Safety

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The Alaska Municipal League (AML) is pleased to see continuing efforts by Governor Mike Dunleavy to address and strengthen Alaska's system of public safety.

"AML commends the Governor for his People First Initiative," says Mayor Jim Matherly, this year's AML President, adding that it "is a welcome addition to federal, state, and local efforts to prevent and combat crime, and ensure the well-being of Alaskans." While AML recognizes there will be work ahead to unpack proposed legislations and the FY23 budget, it is clear that the Governor has placed a high priority on these issues.

AML's members over the last few years have passed resolutions that correspond to the emphasis the Governor has directed toward public safety.

- [Resolution 2020-03](#): Expressing support for rural law enforcement efforts such as the VPO and VPSO program, while recognizing the need for increased investment and the potential for reform to ensure both public safety and the sustainability of law enforcement efforts in rural Alaska.
- [Resolution 2021-09](#): In support of increased funding for community and regional jails, and a base level of funding for Village Police Officers.

It is important to recognize that state and local law enforcement and correctional facilities are interdependent. Collaborative efforts to address criminal behavior and protect Alaska's most vulnerable are critical. Complementing the Troopers' force of approximately 400 officers are:

- 39 local governments that have police departments that together employ 867 police officers
- 21 local government that employ 62 Village Police Officers
- 15 local governments manage jails on behalf of the State

A prior analysis by AML had found that about a third of these local governments' budgets are dedicated to public safety. AML recognizes that the Governor's increases within the budget of Trooper positions and the VPSO program, alongside legislation that addresses sex trafficking, victim protection, and sex offenses, will increase and help to meet the responsibilities that State and local law enforcement are obligated to carry out.

The impacts of the Governor's priority on public safety extend well beyond protecting Alaskans – they strengthen a system of public safety that all Alaskans depend on, ensuring that the State's resources are appropriately directed to meet these needs.

AML members come together in Juneau this week to review budget and legislative priorities, and welcome the Governor's participation in this annual event.