



ONE SEALASKA PLAZA, SUITE 200 • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
TEL (907) 586-1325 • FAX (907) 463-5480 • WWW.AKML.ORG
Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

February 5, 2025

The Honorable Senator Murkowski
522 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Senator Sullivan
302 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Representative Begich
153 Cannon House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressional Delegation,

The Alaska Municipal League represents and works to strengthen the 165 local governments across Alaska. Our state's cities and boroughs have a wide range of responsibilities and varying levels of capacity to deliver these effectively. Thirty-three municipalities have school districts and obligations to fund their local public schools.

On behalf of our members, we are writing to thank you for your support for the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools program. There are 19 local governments in the Tongass and Chugach National Forests that receive funding through the program. For many of them, SRS funding makes up a significant portion of their local contribution to education funding. It is unlikely that the local tax bases could immediately absorb the impact of the loss of this funding.

The impact goes beyond school operating budgets. In Petersburg, SRS funds have also been used to supplement local road and streets projects and as funding for school major maintenance and repairs. The elimination of this funding source would have an immediate detrimental effect on the school system and local transportation projects. This would likely result in a combination of higher property taxes and the loss of local jobs at the school.

Similarly in Yakutat, SRS money funds not only school operations, but school capital projects, maintenance of the school swimming pool, snow removal, and road maintenance. In FY23, SRS funding was 21% of the City & Borough of Yakutat's total revenue.

The Secure Rural Schools program supports essential local services in communities across Alaska. It is important that the program continue. Congress must honor the historic national commitment to the 775 rural counties and 4,400 schools in rural communities and school districts in 42 states served by the Secure Rural Schools program.

Respectfully,

Nils Andreassen
Executive Director