

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 26, 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Capitol, S-131
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Capitol, S-131
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
Room 142, Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Bond
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
Room 128, Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Cochran, Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Bond:

As the Committee begins consideration of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies bill I request support for the following projects:

Project: Denali Commission Transportation Program

Amount: \$6,000,000

Recipient:

Location:

Purpose: The Denali Commission's Transportation Program began in late 2005 and focuses on rural roads and waterfront development. Projects funded: Local Roads, Boardwalks, ATV Roads, Community Connection and Economic Development Roads, Regional Ports and Local Small Boat Harbors, and Barge Landings. The Denali Commission is an independent federal agency designed to provide critical utilities, infrastructure, and economic support throughout Alaska. With the creation of the Denali Commission, Congress acknowledged the need for increased inter-agency cooperation to focus on Alaska's remote communities. Since its first meeting in April 1999, the Commission is credited with providing numerous cost-shared infrastructure projects across the state exemplifying effective and efficient partnership between federal and state

agencies, and the private sector. The Denali Commission will partner with tribal, federal, state, and local governments and collaborate with all Alaskans to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government services, to develop a well trained labor force employed in a diversified and sustainable economy, and to build and ensure the operation and maintenance of Alaska's basic infrastructure.

Project: Relocate Crisis Center

Amount: \$2,505,000

Recipient: Covenant House AK

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: Covenant House Alaska (CHA) serves the immediate and long-term needs of homeless youth in Alaska. CHA has experienced tremendous growth in the last 20 years. In FY 09, CHA served nearly 3,000 individual youth throughout all of its programs. Covenant House's main emergency shelter for homeless youth is operating at structural capacity. It has experienced a 58% increase in daily census over the past several years. With recent in-migration trends from rural to urban Alaska, the need for services will likely continue to grow. Currently, because of limited beds and room configurations, youth often have to sleep on mats in a common area. This is an unsustainable situation for staff and youth. It does not afford youth the space, rest and privacy they need through what are often painful transitions. CHA's goal is to relocate the Crisis Center. CHA is poised to take on the challenge of an aggressive capital campaign. CHA benefits from strong community and statewide partnerships with other non-profits, mental and physical health care clinics, national, state and local governments, corporations, businesses, the Alaska State Legislature and our parent Covenant House headquarters. Through these relationships, CHA serves its vital role in providing for homeless youth without duplicating the services other organizations provide. CHA has actively begun its capital campaign by researching the new site and purchasing the land. A construction budget, made up of municipal, state, federal and private funding sources has been developed. Additionally, a construction timeline for the new facility has also been created. CHA applied and was accepted into the highly competitive Pre-Development Program established through an agreement between the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, the Denali Commission, The Foraker Group and the Rasmuson Foundation. CHA is "shovel-ready" and will begin construction activities as soon as necessary investments are secured.

Project: Installation of the Sterling Highway/Birch Street Traffic Signal Light

Amount: \$1,500,000

Recipient: City of Soldotna

Location: Soldotna, AK

Purpose: Design and install a traffic signal light at the intersection of the Sterling Highway and Birch Street. The Sterling Highway is an interstate highway. This section

of the highway has the highest volume of traffic on the entire Sterling Highway. Traditionally, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds are used to construct or make improvements on these type highways. The City of Soldotna is willing to pay for the design of this project in order to accelerate the timing for installation of the light. A city community center park and playground have been constructed on the south side of the Sterling Highway and virtually all the pedestrian traffic is located on the north side of the highway. The city would like to have this light installed to encourage pedestrians to walk to this park and in doing so, cross the busy Sterling Highway in a safe and practical manner.

Project: Cape Blossom Road

Amount: \$6,000,000

Recipient: City of Kotzebue

Location: Kotzebue, AK

Purpose: Construction of a 10-mile access road from Kotzebue to Cape Blossom, located south of the Community. The access road will allow for the future development of a Deep Water Port at Cape Blossom. Cape Blossom has been chosen by the Community and the region as its future Deep Water Port site. There is no road or railroad in or out of Kotzebue. Currently, access to Cape Blossom is non-existent. The State of Alaska Department of Transportation is currently completing a reconnaissance study and environmental work for the access road. The work to date includes geotechnical, economic studies and mapping.

Project: Construct/Fund CRNA Health/Multi-Use Facility

Amount: \$1,500,000

Recipient: Copper River Native Association (CRNA)

Location: Copper Center, AK

Purpose: This project continues the funding for a desperately needed health and multi-use facility serving a major underserved region in Alaska. The population has a large Alaska Native population. There is no Indian Health Service (IHS) facility in this area, which is the size of the State of Ohio. CRNA transports tribal members over 10,000 miles a month to facilities in Palmer and Anchorage. If you need to visit an IHS clinic for basic health services the roundtrip travel time can be up to eight hours. To visit the IHS clinic tribal members must travel a distance equal to going from Washington, D.C. to New York City.

Project: Village Public Safety Officer Housing

Amount: \$1,378,200

Recipient: Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP)

Location: Communities in South West Alaska

Purpose: Rural villages face extraordinary challenges in providing basic services to community residents. In the AVCP region, public safety is an issue of a great importance. Villages have many incidents of crime and domestic violence. Alaska State Troopers can be hours – or weather permitting, days – away from responding. Public safety is crucial in each community. Crime data is difficult to obtain from communities with no public safety officer. Most crime goes unreported. Domestic violence and sexual assault is almost never reported. Just the presence of a public safety officer reduces crime. Over the last five years, villages have asked AVCP to assist with providing housing for public safety officers. Communities cannot attract qualified applicants because there is no available housing. There are no available homes and no local residents qualified or able to assume a role as a Public Safety Officer. AVCP wishes to facilitate the construction of Public Safety Officer housing by constructing adequate homes in communities that require housing. Construction will be done in partnership with regional Housing Authority to make construction as efficient as possible. Construction costs are estimated at \$440 per square foot for a turn key house. Requesting funding for five two bedroom homes.

Project: Coffman Cove Barge Ramp and Loading Facility

Amount: \$1,994,000

Recipient: City of Coffman Cove

Location: Coffman Cove, AK

Purpose: Construction of a 40 x 80 foot elevated concrete dock with electric dock hoist for loading vessels. Adjacent to the facility will be an 80 foot wide two tier barge ramp for loading at all tides. Coffman Cove, a small community, began as a logging camp and has been a city for 20 years. With the proper infrastructure, it can become self-sustaining. The barge ramp and bulkhead will enable Coffman Cove to attract barge traffic to the north end of Prince of Wales Island.

Project: Build a new Alaska Laborers Training School

Amount: \$2,850,000

Recipient: Alaska Laborers' Training Trust

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: The project is the construction of a non-profit educational facility providing training for building highways, and bridge construction; and for careers in the oil, natural gas, and mining industries. Since 2005, the current training facility has held on average 2,588 students per year. Of those nearly 45% were minorities and over 14% were women. The new training school will expand those figures greatly. New energy technologies require new skill sets from the workforce. The new training facility will provide the training to tap those "green" resources. The money requested will be used for constructing and equipping the training facility.

Project: Renovation and New Construction for Stepping Stones Women with Children Residential Facility

Amount: \$2,000,000

Recipient: Akeela Inc

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: The Stepping Stones program provides treatment for substance abuse, mental health, and trauma issues to women living together with their young children in a safe and therapeutic environment. While recognized as a powerful and very effective treatment modality—particularly in fighting the affect of inter-generational patterns of abuse and addiction—the harsh fact is most women requiring this intensity of treatment have long ago lost, either voluntarily or otherwise, custody of their children. The particular mix of programming and our focus on women who have custody of their children while in treatment, makes the Stepping Stones program unique in Alaska. The project consists of badly needed renovations and repairs of the existing Stepping Stones residential facility, and also new construction that will free-up residential space currently being used for clinical and programmatic purposes. At minimum, each of the existing three buildings requires both interior and exterior renovations including windows, doors, and siding. The project plan anticipates building approximately 4500 sq. ft. of additional space for day care, common program areas, and staff space. This building strategy provides numerous advantages including the ability to keep the apartment units like real-world apartments rather than some hackneyed blend of residential, day care, and clinical areas, provides dedicated and appropriate clinical space, and greater flexibility in how we configure common program and day care space. It also allows us to maximize program receipts by using all available residential space for billable service provisions and would create a clinically appropriate, safe, and secure campus.

Project: Construct Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Fueling Station and Convert Vehicles to LNG in the Fairbanks North Star Borough

Amount: \$1,000,000

Recipient: Fairbanks North Star Borough

Location: Fairbanks, AK

Purpose: The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) seeks federal funds to construct a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) refueling station and to convert local semi tractor trailers to LNG fuel. This project will help the Borough as it continues to address clean air problems and become compliant with federal regulations. On December 23, 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed portions of the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) as a non-attainment area for particulate matter (PM) 2.5 fine particles. Research by the Borough, the Alaska Department of Environmental Quality, and the EPA demonstrates that a significant source of PM 2.5 particulates within the FNSB is diesel fuel and home heating oil combustion products. Conversion of the local trucking fleet to LNG fuel will begin to address that component of the PM 2.5 particulate spectrum. The

FNSB LNG service station project will construct a fueling station and help with conversion of local semi tractor trailers to LNG fuel. Further, the FNSB will encourage conversion of other large vehicle fleets operating in the Borough to natural gas. LNG is a popular fuel for heavy-duty vehicle operators seeking to reduce pollution. Currently, thousands of heavy-duty, LNG-powered vehicles operate throughout the United States, according to the California Air Resources Board and US Environmental Protection Agency.

Project: Alaska Volcano Observatory (AVO)

Amount: \$1,000,000

Recipient: University of Alaska

Location: Statewide

Purpose: The AVO provides constant volcano monitoring, hazard prediction, research into more accurately predicting volcanoes, ash cloud behavior and student training. It is a partnership of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the University of Alaska and the State. AVO's funding levels have shrunk from a high of roughly \$8 million to a current level of \$5 million. This has necessitated leaving some volcano monitors unmaintained and inoperable. This is part two of a two-pronged effort at bringing AVO back to full service. The other is a Federal Aviation Administration request for an add to its base proposal of \$5 million. The USGS is the lead partner in the AVO and makes decisions of distribution of funding among the partners. The University of Alaska receives funds from this effort. FY09 funding to UA was \$700,000.

Project: Small Boat Harbor Improvements-Phase1B

Amount: \$2,100,000

Recipient: Municipality of Skagway

Location: Skagway, AK

Purpose: These funds will be used for the purpose of capital investment to dredge and improve moorage, which will enhance the economic viability of the Small Boat Harbor with added tourism, transportation activities, and related business. The Municipality has active grant applications and local appropriations of \$9.4 million, with an estimated gap of \$2.1 million, which is this request amount.

Project: Jesse Lee Leadership Residential Charter School

Amount: \$1,600,000

Recipient: Friends of the Jesse Lee Home

Location: Seward, AK

Purpose: The Jesse Lee Leadership Residential Charter School will provide high quality education to Alaska's youth in a setting existing nowhere else in the country. The Jesse Lee Home has a place in the nation's civil rights history. For 39 years, the Home housed and educated Native and non-Native youth alike. This integrated approach to children's

housing and education was unique in the nation. The Jesse Lee Home buildings are national treasures, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. We propose to restore the facilities as a residential charter leadership school for high school youth. Youth statewide will come to the Jesse Lee Home to study with local day students in Alaska's only residential charter school, learning through competency-based educational techniques about the sciences, mathematics, politics, technology and the humanities at the same time as they learn about what makes Alaska work: hands-on skills like plumbing, engine repair, and health care. Students will attend semester-long courses and return to their home communities, maintaining their ties to their families and culture.

Project: Ketchikan Vessel Maintenance Facility

Amount: \$9,922,500

Recipient: Alaska Ship and Drydock

Location: Ketchikan, AK

Purpose: This project is a component of the Ketchikan Shipyard Development Plan and provides funding for critically needed enclosed fabrication and assembly facilities. The project will produce 463 direct, indirect, and induced construction jobs nationwide providing manufacturing capacity supporting another 50 direct, permanent jobs at the Ketchikan Shipyard. The project has an FTA approved NEPA Environmental Assessment and is ready to commence detail design and construction immediately. At full build out of the shipyard development plan, the yard will provide up to 360 full time, year round, jobs in Ketchikan in the High Job Growth Training Initiative industry sector of Advanced Manufacturing, generating \$60 million annual gross revenues accompanied with \$27 million in labor income. This replaces the 450 jobs and \$20 million in annual payroll in Ketchikan lost to collapse of the forest products industry.

Project: Employ two community outreach coordinators to support Mountain View neighborhood redevelopment

Amount: \$155,000

Recipient: Anchorage Community Land Trust

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: The Anchorage Community Land Trust is sponsoring a three-year community connectivity project that will empower local residents to guide the planning and implementation of redevelopment initiatives in the Mountain View neighborhood of Anchorage, Alaska. Residents of the neighborhood have long recognized redevelopment must be community-driven and community-supported if it is to have effective and sustainable benefits for improving their health, safety, employment and business opportunities, education and housing. This federal appropriation request will enable Anchorage Community Land Trust to employ two permanent, full-time community outreach coordinators from the neighborhood, charged with the responsibility to organize and implement a sustainable community connectivity process. The coordinators will

identify and work with resident teams to advocate for and create opportunities for Mountain View to establish businesses and increase local employment; improve access to job training, education, health care and safe housing; and address other pressing neighborhood issues related to public safety and the improvement of substandard residential and commercial properties.

Project: Kenai Spur Highway Extension

Amount: \$12,500,000

Recipient: Kenai Peninsula Borough

Location: Kenai Peninsula Borough

Purpose: The initial funding is expected to allow for completion of the environmental phase, at a cost of approximately \$3,000,000, leaving a balance of just over \$2,280,000 to complete the anticipated 26 miles of new road construction. This additional request is anticipated to allow the Borough to construct proposed road extension. The Borough has subdivisions along this stretch of right-of-way and has sold approximately 70 percent of the parcels. Residents currently have only a heavily damaged dirt trail to access these lands. This project will address environmental damage, provide appropriate road access to residential and recreational parcels, and encourage economic development in the area.

Project: Multi-Tenant Non-Profit Center

Amount: \$600,000

Recipient: United Human Services of SE AK (UHSSEA)

Location: Juneau, AK

Purpose: UHSSEA proposes to purchase and remodel the Salmon Creek Professional Building at 3225 Hospital Drive in Juneau for use as a Multi-Tenant Non-Profit Center (MTNC). The founders of UHSSEA originally envisioned new construction of a significantly larger, LEEDS certified facility built to universal design standards and housing several additional regional non-profits who expressed a desire to co-locate. In response to the current cost of new construction and the general state of the economy, it became evident a more prudent approach was needed at this time. The facility we propose to purchase will allow us to realize many of our original goals as well as the opportunity to 'prove the model' should we at some time in the future time wish to pursue the original dream. The Salmon Creek Professional Building is a 12,620 SF facility conveniently located on the bus-line mid-way between downtown Juneau and the Mendenhall Valley. Two long-term leases to for-profit entities totaling 7,060 SF will allow for significantly below-market rents to non-profit tenants. UWSEAK, SAIL, the American Red Cross of SE Alaska, and Aiding Women and Rape Emergencies (AWARE) Batterer's Accountability Program will co-locate in the facility and share a board room, classroom, break room, reception and lobby.

Project: Develop and implement a Veteran-specific Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program, in partnership with the Alaska Veteran Administration and local Veteran Centers.

Amount: \$750,000

Recipient: Cook Inlet Housing Authority (CIHA)

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: CIHA proposes the development and implementation of a Veteran-specific TBRA program, in partnership with the Alaska Veteran Administration and local Veteran Centers. With hopes for accessing funds from the Per Diem Only grant program and state and federal grant monies, this voucher program would assist 20 homeless veterans and their families achieve residential stability by providing program participants with up to 24 months of rental assistance. This program model would couple the two-year voucher with case management supports to assist these veterans with successfully securing housing and accessing the appropriate resources to begin achieving necessary services and eventual self-sufficiency.

Project: Design Phase II of the terminal improvement project at Juneau International Airport.

Amount: \$1,400,000

Recipient: City and Borough of Juneau

Location: Juneau, AK

Purpose: Funding is requested to complete the design for Phase II of the terminal renovation project. This funding will complete pre-construction requirements and enable construction of Phase II. Phase II consists of demolition of the older (circa 1950) sections of the terminal and construction of a new North Wing.

Project: Reconstruct downtown streets to create the Main Street Couplet in Wasilla

Amount: \$4,700,000

Recipient: City of Wasilla

Location: Wasilla, AK

Purpose: The couplet alternative was adopted by the City Council in 2006. Alaska DOT is beginning the design in 2010. This request will fund engineering design (\$9 million) and partial construction. Main Street will become one-way south from Bogard Road, cross Parks Highway and continue along Knik-Goose Bay Road to the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension. One-way north traffic from Knik-Goose Bay Road will connect to Talkeetna Street, cross Parks Highway and continue along Yenlo Street to Bogard Road. The City is seeking to re-appropriate all of its existing federal earmarks towards this project, in addition to seeking more funding in FY11. Total construction cost is estimated at \$18 million.

Project: Hire Youth Employment in Parks

Amount: \$1,250,000

Recipient: Anchorage Park Foundation

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: Since 2007, the Anchorage Park Foundation has partnered with the Municipality of Anchorage Parks & Recreation Department to operate the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) program, engaging teens to complete park improvements and offer recreation programs in Anchorage parks. Teens learn valuable natural resource management and recreation job skills by building trails, restoring stream banks or leading neighborhood children in content-based play. In 2009, for example, crews completed waterways projects along the Campbell Creek Greenbelt, including repairing fishing platforms, restoring stream banks, and landscaping eroded areas in partnership with experts from Fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, and Municipal watershed management.

In addition, I request you include the following bill language:

Project: Road, sidewalk and drainage construction and improvements

Amount: \$0

Recipient: City of Unalaska

Location: Unalaska, AK

Purpose: A new \$150 million, 30,000 ton cold storage seafood facility is being built on Ballyhoo Road in Dutch Harbor. This facility represents a significant investment in this community and its purpose is to improve the quality of fish products being shipped from the region. The City is seeking to “get the product out of the mud” by upgrading and paving the road. We are asking for a reprogramming of funds previously provided in SAFETEA-LU for a new ferry terminal in Unalaska. Both the City and AK DOT/PF have decided against proceeding with a new terminal and the State is recommending that a technical correction be made to SAFETEA LU so another local transportation priority can be funded. The paving of Ballyhoo Road is the community highest transportation priority.

Requested Bill Language: “In Section 1702 of P.L. 109-59, Project Authorizations, under item No. 400, strike the existing text under Project Description and insert in lieu thereof “Road, sidewalk, and drainage construction and improvements, City of Unalaska.”

Project: Sliding Scale Nonfederal Match for Urban Area Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Recipients

Amount: \$0

Recipient: Municipality of Anchorage

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: To provide sliding scale reduced nonfederal match for urbanized area FTA recipients as current law does for state and local FHWA recipients and state government FTA recipients, as well as similarly for state and local FAA recipients. It is difficult for affected local governments like Anchorage to meet the 20% nonfederal match. Instead, the FTA nonfederal match should be 9.03% just like federal highway (FHWA) funds in Alaska. This legislative provision will remove the bias against FTA public transportation funds and enable the FTA funds to be easier used. This provision would affect Alaska and 13 other western states with extraordinary amounts of nontaxable federal land.

Requested Bill Language: Insert the following new section in title 49 chapter 53 (Federal Transit Act):

“SECTION ____ . GOVERNMENT SHARE OF COSTS IN CERTAIN STATES. A local government authority in a State described in section 120(b) of title 23 shall receive an increased Government share under Chapter 53 of title 49 in accordance with the formula under that section.”

Project: Reprogram funds to Anchorage People Mover transit needs.

Amount: \$0

Recipient: Municipality of Anchorage

Location: Anchorage, AK

Purpose: The Municipality is unable to move forward with the line item appropriation in SAFETEA-LU as written. There are many other capital needs for the Municipality that cannot be met with existing FTA funding. The reprogramming of this \$5,000,000 project will provide funding for critical needs including replacement of aging buses, vehicles for the paratransit system and for the vanpool system. The People Mover fleet of 55 buses provides transportation for more than 4 million annual passenger trips; the AnchorRIDES paratransit fleet of 46 vehicles transports more than 185,000 annual passenger trips— senior citizens, people with disabilities, children in homeless situations, and Medicaid recipients; the Share-a-Ride vanpool fleet of 59 vans provide 263,000 annual passenger trips to commuters traveling to and from Anchorage. Reprogrammed funds could also go toward essential rehabilitation and upgrades to transit facilities to provide energy efficiencies, to provide system security, and to improve customer safety.

Requested Bill Language: SECTION ____ . (1) Section 3044(a) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (P.L. 109-59) is amended in item 422 by striking the project description “C Street Expanded bus facility and intermodal parking garage, Anchorage, AK” and inserting “Anchorage People Mover transit needs,” Anchorage, AK.” (2) All amounts made available shall remain available for obligation until September 30, 2012.

I certify neither my immediate family nor I have a pecuniary interest in any of the congressionally directed spending item(s) I have requested, consistent with the

Senators Inouye, Cochran, Murray, and Bond

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requirements of paragraph 9 of Rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate. I further certify I have posted a description of the items requested on my official website, along with the accompanying justification.

If you have any questions, please contact Liz Brinkerhoff-Nottberg of my staff at (202) 224-3004.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Begich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Begich".

Mark Begich
United States Senator