



August 17, 2021

Sent Via Electronic Mail

Alaska State Legislature  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Honorable Senators and Representatives:

We are writing to urge you to finish the budget that was collectively crafted by each member of the legislature, reverse-the-sweep to fund critical programs for both rural and urban Alaska, and override the governor's vetoes with immediacy.

Native Peoples Action (NPA) is a statewide non-profit organization that strives to provide Alaska Native communities and our traditional values with a voice at all levels of policy making. The foundation of our work focuses on advocacy, education and information sharing, supporting local decision-making, and building stronger unity among Indigenous communities to collectively address issues impacting our people and ways of life.

NPA was encouraged to hear the Alaska Superior Court ruled the Power Cost Equalization program falls outside of the reverse sweep provision as this is a critical program for many Alaskans. We must also recognize many programs that impact Alaskans still remain unfunded including, but not limited to, the Alaska Performance Scholarship and Alaska Education Grant which helps many first-generation college students attend and stay in Alaska, the WWAMI program that incentivizes medical professionals to stay in Alaska, the School Debt Reimbursement funding that many rural schools critically depend on, and Community Assistance that provides a number of critical services to communities across the state.

Outside of the failure to reach the  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote to finish funding the budget, we are very concerned with Governor Dunleavy's vetoes that will impact the safety and wellbeing of many Alaskans. By cutting funding to services and programs that protect our children, like the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact, foster care services, major maintenance repairs at our schools and pre-k grants, we are jeopardizing Alaska's future generations. These vetoes are also cutting essential healthcare services such as the medicaid program, public health nursing, social services, assisted living grants and a disproportionate share of hospital funding during a time when we need to be investing more into our healthcare system to keep Alaskans safe and healthy. We need a budget that reflects the values of Alaskans, a budget that puts Alaskans first and prioritizes our health, protecting our Elders, our children, and our way of life. Unfortunately, this budget falls short and why we need to override the vetoes and continue to adequately fund essential services.

We are asking you to restore the funding for the following programs and urge you to study the impacts of these vetoes, and look at ways we can continue to fund these important programs into the future.

- Alaska Tribal Welfare Compact
- Public Assistance Positions
- Public Health Nursing
- Community Assistance Deposit
- Alaska Legal Services
- Medicaid Program Reduction
- Kuskokwim Ice Road
- School Major Maintenance
- Foster Care Services
- Pre-Kindergarten Grants
- Disproportionate Share Hospital funding
- General Relief/Temporary Assisted Living grants
- Dillingham DHSS Probate Services
- DOTPF Maintenance Stations and Marine Highway
- Mt. Edgecumbe High School Repairs
- Permanent Fund Dividend

Without many of these services, Alaskans will continue to face additional, if not more detrimental hardship. In addition to the vetoed services, the elimination of the PFD will create a compounding effect for lower income individuals in rural Alaska. We are asking you to fund the budget that was passed and keep our quality of life sustained. Please override the vetoes and finish funding the budget with the immediacy that Alaskans are asking you to.

Thank you for your service to the state and all the hard work that was put into crafting a budget this year.

Gunalchéesh/Háw'aa/Quyana/Mahsi'/Baasee'/Maasee'/Dogedinh/Thank you,



Kendra Kloster  
Executive Director  
Native Peoples Action