



June 1, 2020

Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

*Sent electronically*

**Subject: Rapid testing as a tool to reopen Alaska**

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce requests your help to expand availability of rapid testing for COVID-19 throughout the state. We appreciate your leadership during the novel coronavirus pandemic in the face of this invisible but deadly menace. Like you, we are eager to reopen our economy and get Alaskans back to work. Many businesses are utilizing the tools currently available, such as face masks and social distancing, but there is still one important tool that businesses can use to enhance customer and employee safety as we reopen: increased access to rapid COVID-19 testing.

Until we can significantly reduce the spread of this virus, our economy will continue to suffer. As a voice for business in the Interior, we support the availability of rapid virus testing as one important and attainable piece of an overall recovery plan. It is an important step towards creating safe working environments for our employees, improving productivity, and restoring consumer confidence. And, it is a step which our State government can directly impact.

Many of the state and national guidelines for reopening are designed to minimize spread of COVID-19 when it is unknown who has the virus. These preventative measures, such as a 14-day quarantine for travelers and reduced building capacities, are medically logical but economically devastating. Many industries in Alaska rely on workers from outside the community or visitors from outside the state. Other businesses rely on consumers to feel comfortable eating, exercising, or making purchases in public spaces. Even the healthcare industry is affected by patients postponing medical procedures because they cannot produce a negative COVID-19 test within 48 hours of surgery. By accurately identifying and quarantining carriers of the virus, we hope to see a large increase in the number

## EXECUTIVE PARTNERS

### DIAMOND

Alaska Airlines  
Denali State Bank  
Foundation Health Partners  
Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, TVC Orthopedics & Sportsmedicine  
Mt. McKinley Bank  
Vivamore Companies

### PLATINUM

Alyeska Pipeline Service Co.  
ConocoPhillips  
Doyon, Limited  
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner  
Golden Heart Utilities  
Kinross Fort Knox Mine  
Lockheed Martin  
MAC Federal Credit Union

### GOLD

Alaska Executive Search  
BP Exploration  
Carlson Center  
Design Alaska  
Doyon Utilities LLC  
First National Bank Alaska  
Matson Alaska  
Northern Star Pogo LLC  
TOTE Maritime Alaska  
Usibelli Coal Mine  
WAL-MART Stores, Inc.  
Westmark Fairbanks Hotel & Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge

### SILVER

Ahtna Incorporated  
Alaska USA  
Alaska Railroad  
Ambler Metals  
AT&T  
Costco Wholesale  
Crowley Fuels Alaska  
Everts Air Cargo, Everts Air AK  
Exclusive Paving/University Redi-Mix  
Fairbanks Natural Gas  
Flowline Alaska  
GCI  
Gene's Chrysler, Jeep & Dodge  
Golden Valley Electric Association  
Hale & Associates, Inc.  
Hilcorp Alaska, LLC  
HUB International  
JL Properties, Inc.  
Key Bank  
LifeMed Alaska  
Lynden  
McDonald's of Fairbanks  
Northrim Bank  
Personnel Plus  
Seekins Ford Lincoln  
Sourdough Fuel  
Spirit of Alaska Federal Credit Union  
TDL Staffing  
Tower Hill Mines-Livengood Gold Project  
Trilogy Metals  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Verizon Wireless  
Wells Fargo Bank Alaska  
Yukon Title Company



of businesses that could safely resume nearly normal operations by reducing the chance of community spread.

Interior Alaska still does not have wide access to COVID-19 tests that produce accurate results within 24 hours. One way to address this is to increase the capacity of the state virology lab in Fairbanks so that it may accept a much higher volume of tests. Another way to address this would be to ensure that other labs in Fairbanks have access to the necessary reagents to do the analysis locally. Our local healthcare providers would also need to have supplies to administer testing for local businesses as needed.

The Fairbanks Chamber strives to serve as a resource for the Fairbanks community as we participate in the phased reopening of Alaska. We have connected our member businesses with information about the CARES Act, PPP program, loan forgiveness, and, most recently, the Alaska Cares Grants. While some businesses have closed their doors temporarily or permanently, many allowed their employees to work from home, took measured steps to enhance employee and customer safety, and embraced the possibilities of videoconferencing.

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce represents over 650 business members throughout Interior Alaska. We work to advocate for the best business environment, promote economic strength and growth for interior Alaska, and to develop the resources and networks enterprising people use to share knowledge. We look forward to working with you and continuing to support our members on this road to economic recovery.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marisa Sharrah".

Marisa Sharrah  
President/CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabrina Binkley".

Sabrina Binkley  
Board Chair

CC: Interior Delegation