



April 2, 2020

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

Sent electronically

Subject: Support University Funding in FY21 Budget

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

A vibrant university system is vital for the education of our citizenry, the development of a well-trained workforce, and the research necessary to address our state's critical challenges. The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce urges you to maintain the level of University of Alaska funding passed by the legislature and to sign the FY21 budget as quickly as possible.

More than ever, our businesses need an educated workforce ready to develop creative solutions and get our economy moving after the threat of COVID-19 has passed. The skilled professionals who are developed locally are the people who stay, contribute to our community, and become the future leaders that will continue a legacy of growth and development. The funding provided in the FY21 budget will help our state's university system deliver on that promise for our home-grown talent.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is a major economic driver in our region and the state. Because of its unique position at the edge of the Arctic, UAF is able to attract outside funding to support world-class research in arctic studies, unmanned aircraft systems, natural phenomena such as the aurora borealis, climate change, and national security. These federal and philanthropic dollars, as well as the world-class researchers they attract, will go to universities or organizations outside Alaska if the respected research programs developed at UAF are dismantled or the campus infrastructure disintegrates around them.

The Fairbanks Chamber is composed of member organizations who rely heavily on the University of Alaska to educate and train qualified employees, perform the

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University of Alaska Fairbanks
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Wells Fargo Bank Alaska
Yukon Title Company



research which makes us successful in a challenging arctic environment, and attract new talent to Interior Alaska. We call on you to support local business by maintaining University of Alaska funding in the budget.

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.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marisa Sharrah". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Marisa Sharrah
President/CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabrina Binkley". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sabrina Binkley
Board Chair

CC: Interior Delegation