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RESOLUTION 27-35

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH SUPPORTING THE FULL FUNDING ($20,636,306) FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA HARBOR FACILITY GRANT PROGRAM IN THE FY 2028 STATE CAPITAL BUDGET

WHEREAS, the majority of the public boat harbors in Alaska were constructed by the State during the 1960s and 1970s; and

WHEREAS, these harbor facilities represent critical transportation links and are the transportation hubs for waterfront commerce and economic development in Alaskan coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, these harbor facilities are ports of refuge and areas of protection for ocean-going vessels, and serve as essential transportation hubs to coastal Alaskan communities for supplies, trade goods and services and connections to the work market for our exports and imports; and

WHEREAS, over the last 30 years, the State of Alaska has transferred ownership of most of these State-owned harbors, many of which were at or near the end of their service life at the time of transfer, to local municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities took over this important responsibility even though they knew that these same harbor facilities were in poor condition at the time of transfer due to the state's failure to keep up with deferred maintenance; and

WHEREAS, consequently, when local municipal harbormasters formulated their annual harbor facility budgets, they inherited a major financial burden that their local municipal governments could not afford; and

WHEREAS, in response to this financial burden, the Governor and the Alaska Legislature passed legislation in 2006, supported by the Alaska Association of Harbormasters and Port Administrators, to create the Municipal Harbor Facility Grant program (AS 29.60.800); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities utilizes a beneficial administrative process to review, score and rank applicants to the Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program, since state funds may be limited; and

WHEREAS, for each harbor facility grant application, these municipalities have committed to invest 100% of the design and permitting costs and 50% of the construction costs, which is a large amount of funding that is being leveraged with the relatively small amount of state dollars; and

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WHEREAS, the Aleutians East Borough has not submitted a project for the FY2028 Harbor Facility Grant Program but still supports the municipalities of Haines, Juneau, Kake, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Unalaska and Wrangell who have committed to contribute half of their project cost in local matching funding for FY2028 towards harbor projects of significant importance locally as required in the Harbor Facility Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, completion of these harbor facility projects is dependent on the 50% match from the State of Alaska's Harbor Facility Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, a survey done by the Alaska Municipal League of Alaska's ports and harbors found that from respondents, the backlog of projects necessary to repair and replace former State-owned harbors has increased to at least $500,000,000; and

WHEREAS, given that Alaska is a maritime state and that our harbors are foundational to both our way of life and the economy of this great State, it is in the public's best interest to maintain this critical infrastructure by using State, Local, and Federal funds to recapitalize the crucial harbor moorage infrastructure statewide.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough urges full funding by the Governor and the Alaska Legislature for the State of Alaska's Municipal Harbor Facility Grant Program in the FY2028 State Capital Budget in order to ensure enhanced safety and economic prosperity among Alaskan coastal communities.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Aleutians East Borough on this 12th Day of November 2026.

Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beverly Rosete, Clerk

ANCHORAGE OFFICE • 3380 C Street, Ste 205 • Anchorage, AK 99503-3952 • (907) 274-7555
KING COVE OFFICE • P.O. Box 49 • King Cove, AK 99612 • (907) 497-2588 • Fax: (907) 497-2386
SAND POINT OFFICE • P.O. Box 349 • Sand Point, AK 99661 • (907) 383-2699 • Fax: (907) 383-3496