



September 16th, 2021

Subject: Support Keeping Alaska’s Future Workforce in Alaska

Dear Governor Dunleavy & Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce thanks Governor Dunleavy and the Alaska state legislature for supporting the WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho) Regional Medical Education Program, Alaska Performance Scholarships (APS), and the Alaska Education Grants (AEG). We would have lost these critical programs if you had not moved quickly to approve them. This investment today helps the Alaskan workforce of tomorrow.

At a time when Alaska is coming out of a pandemic, these programs have never been more important. We must strengthen our workforce and keep Alaskan workers in Alaska. WWAMI trains 20 doctors per year from Alaska and incentivizes them to return to the state. If the legislature did not act to support this program, bills would have been issued to current WWAMI students on September 15th in the amount of tens of thousands of dollars. Losing these current and future medical students from Alaska would have negatively affected our healthcare industry, which desperately needs doctors and always struggles to recruit from the lower 48.

In addition, without APS and AEG, we would no longer be investing in the most promising members of Alaska’s future workforce. Students with great potential have many options to attend college. By providing an opportunity to study, live, and work close to home, we increase the chances for them to contribute to our communities and local economies.

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 utilize to share knowledge.

Respectfully,

Jinnel Choiniere
President/CEO

Angie Tallant
Board Chair

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