

**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

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RESOLUTION 25-014(A)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA
STATING THE CITY'S 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND
POSITIONS

WHEREAS, The City of Homer is a First Class City within the Kenai Peninsula Borough;
and

WHEREAS, Article 10 of Alaska's constitution states that "The purpose of this article is to provide for maximum local self-government with a minimum of local government units, and to prevent duplication of tax-levying jurisdictions. A liberal construction shall be given to the powers of local government units."; and

WHEREAS, Homer city staff and elected officials work closely with Alaska's governor, legislature, and agencies to provide important quality of life services to city and borough residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Each year the City of Homer updates its five-year Capital Improvement Plan that includes a list of legislative priorities; and

WHEREAS, During each session, legislation is introduced that affects municipalities, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively; and

WHEREAS, The State of Alaska's fiscal situation in 2025 appears dire, potentially with not enough revenues to cover statutory requirements and basic state services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Homer states the following legislative priorities and positions for the 2025 legislative session:

- We request state support for the following Capital projects:
 - Homer Spit Erosion Mitigation
 - Homer Harbor Critical Float Replacement Project
 - A-Frame Water Transmission Project
 - City Hall ADA Accessibility Project
 - Homer Harbor Expansion
 - Karen Hornaday Park Improvements
- We take the following general positions on legislative issues:

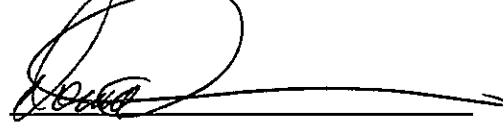
- We request that legislators confer with municipalities before implementing tax exemptions that affect municipalities' ability to collect sales or property taxes important for funding local governments.
 - We support the implementation of a broad-based tax to fund state government, though we do not prefer a statewide sales tax which could impinge on Homer's ability to collect sales taxes to fund municipal services.
 - We ask the legislature to leave the statutory Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) pension liability formula in place, with municipalities continuing to contribute 22%, which is fair and reasonable.
 - We urge the governor and legislature to fully fund the Municipal Harbor Facility grant program to ensure resilient supply chains and enhanced safety and economic prosperity among Alaskan coastal communities.
 - We support raising the maximum available Municipal Harbor Facility grant to \$7.5 million for eligible projects on an annual basis.
 - We urge the governor and legislature to fully fund community revenue sharing, as this offsets unfunded legislative mandates such as property tax exemption requirements.
 - We ask the legislature to amend Alaska Statute 29.71.800 to allow web based public notice.
 - We ask the governor and legislature to increase and inflation-proof the base student allocation for public schools.
 - We urge the governor and legislature to fully fund state support for community jails.
 - We endorse the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association list of critical fire station projects from across the state, including the need to replace the City of Homer's fire station.
 - We support legislation to bring back a public employee retirement defined benefits program that is affordable to the state and municipalities. A defined benefits program will help recruit qualified individuals for a variety of government positions, particularly law enforcement and teachers.
 - Municipalities throughout Southcentral Alaska are concerned about the looming shortage of natural gas in Cook Inlet. We appreciate the governor's and legislature's efforts to secure energy resilience for the region and the state, including natural gas and renewable energy sources.
- We take the following positions on bills currently introduced in the 2025 legislative session:
 - HB31, derelict vessels: We support this bill which corrects problems discovered with the passage of the original derelict vessel bill.
 - **HB60, municipal and state procurement: HB60 proposes a mandate that public institutions, including jails, prioritize the procurement of Alaska-grown agricultural and seafood products. While the bill aims to support**

local producers, it has significant implications for municipal operations, fiscal policy, and economic competitiveness. The Homer jail provides prisoner meals through a competitively bid contract. Requiring the contractor to provide meals with Alaska-grown agricultural and seafood products could impose undesirable constraints on the contractor and increase our costs, resulting in an unfunded mandate.

- HB62/SB69, tracking sexual assault examination kits: We support the passage of these bills.
- SB11, flood insurance: We do not support this bill as currently written. Federal flood insurance on the Kenai Peninsula is cost effective for those who need it. A state funded system would likely cost more for users and the cost to the state to establish a flood insurance fund and administer it is unknown.
- SB42, use of force: We do not support this bill as currently written, though we support having Municipal Corrections Officers be certified. Community jails are currently required to submit monthly use of force reports to the FBI; submitting the same report to the state would be workable, but requiring jails to submit different forms to the state would be time consuming and redundant. We would not support submitting a form that would identify the name of the suspect or the officer. Use of force reports should remain highly confidential. State judges currently can review use of force reports for specific cases.
- SB53, law enforcement accreditation standards: We do not support this bill. While it is possible to establish a statewide accreditation system that would be effective and affordable to all, SB53 imposes a huge burden on the Department of Public Safety and all law enforcement agencies in Alaska. The bill needs to be vetted through the law enforcement community in Alaska before proceeding.
- HB43 and SB64, elections: We generally support the elections reforms presented in these bills, with the following caveats:
 - The requirement to report results by 11:59pm Alaska time on Election Day may be unreasonable given the work required by election workers to perform required reviews of the election system before tabulating the results.
 - Municipal clerks' offices typically follow state election procedures and requiring counting of absentee, special needs, and questioned ballots 10 days prior to Election Day may provide added impacts to offices that have limited staff or are understaffed.
 - Conducting absentee/early voting 30 days prior to an election will require additional workers or additional days and times for the current roster of election workers, many of whom are not interested or available to work the additional hours.
 - We recommend presenting these bills to the Alaska Association of Municipal Clerks for their review and input before passage.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, this 10th day of
February 2025.

CITY OF HOMER



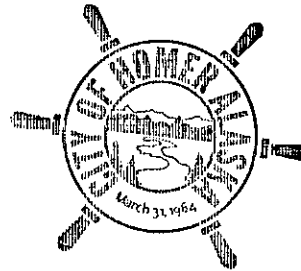
DONNA ADERHOLD, MAYOR PRO TEM

ATTEST:



RENEE KRAUSE, MMC, CITY CLERK

Fiscal Note: N/A





MEMORANDUM

Resolution 25-014, A Resolution of the City Council of Homer, Alaska Stating The City's 2025 Legislative Priorities and Positions.

Item Type: Backup Memorandum
Prepared For: Mayor Lord and City Council
Date: November 12, 2024
From: Renee Krause, MMC, City Clerk
Through: Melissa Jacobsen, City Manager

During our January 27, 2025, meeting, Mayor Lord tasked me with crafting a resolution stating council priorities and positions ahead of our trip to Juneau for the Alaska Municipal League meeting the week of February 17. Resolution 25-014 is my response to the request. In the past, we have most often prepared resolutions for individual positions. This "omnibus" resolution includes a variety of issues and does not provide much detail. I keep thinking of things I've forgotten to include, so I appreciate other councilmembers coming to the meeting with amendment proposals.

The State is in a dire fiscal situation now and may not have funding to meet their statutory requirements, so asking for capital funding for the upcoming fiscal year will probably not result in a positive response. However, sharing our capital priorities while understanding the situation the legislature is in remains a good idea, so senators and representatives understand our specific municipal needs. In addition, we need to recognize that the legislature often wants to push down fiscal responsibilities where they can. For instance, the PERS pension liability funding formula is being discussed in the hallways, and we need to work with other municipalities and AML to stand firm on the 22% contributed by municipalities. Another topic that is being floated is some boroughs (e.g., Mat-Su) being required to take on police powers to reduce the number of state troopers needed; while borough police powers does not affect us, community jail funding could also come up. Another topic likely to come up is community assistance (formerly revenue sharing).

I've organized the resolution into sections for our capital priorities, general positions, and bills currently introduced during the legislative session. The capital priorities are repeated from our Capital Improvement Plan and the memo we shared with Representative Vance and Senator Stevens.

The general positions are predominantly issues council has taken a position on in past years, though some of the positions are from previous councils. The new items include support for the

critical infrastructure needs identified by the Alaska Fire Chiefs Association and support for natural gas solutions in Cook Inlet.

The positions on bills introduced in the legislature are based on my perusal of bills and reviews of pertinent bills by city staff with knowledge of the specific topics. If you know of additional bills that I missed that should be included in the list, please be prepared to propose an amendment during discussion of the resolution.

I look forward to our discussion as we prepare to visit Juneau and meet with state legislators.

Recommendation:

Discuss the resolution, propose amendments, and vote.