



# 2009 - 2010

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### **Our Mission:**

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce represents our members by building partnerships, advocating for a healthy economic environment and promoting the greater Fairbanks area as an attractive place for business and community.

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# TOP SIX PRIORITIES

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## **#1 - ENCOURAGING NEW OIL PRODUCTION** *(Natural Resources)*

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce (GFCC) encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to establish regulatory and taxation policy that will encourage sufficient investment into new oil production to reverse the dramatic and continuing decline in current oil production.

## **#2 - AFFORDABLE ENERGY** *(Natural Resources)*

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to continue to place a high priority on reducing the cost of energy throughout Alaska, especially in rural areas. High energy costs will reduce or limit jobs and Alaska's economy. To avoid economic hardship, the State must take steps to increase electrical capacity and reduce energy consumption. Government actions should include short, mid, and long-term energy solutions.

## **#3 - NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT** *(Natural Resources & Transportation)*

The GFCC requests the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature support projects that will deliver natural gas to the Interior, South-Central, and other regions in the State to relieve the immediate high cost of energy and gas shortages to deliver reasonably priced energy alternatives. The GFCC also requests that the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature work in cooperation with the federal government and all stakeholders to accomplish meaningful progress towards the day we begin construction on a large-diameter, commercial-quantity natural gas pipeline. This must include an immediate re-evaluation of the current fiscal and tax structure to ensure true progress is accomplished.

## **#4 - THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA LIFE SCIENCES PROJECT** *(Education)*

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to endorse the University of Alaska Board of Regents FY11 capital funding request for the Life Sciences Classroom and Lab Facility. This will be the only new construction project on the Board of Regents request. Life Sciences research and teaching is a high-value growth industry, already bringing in over \$100 million to the State over the past ten years. If this facility is constructed, there is even greater potential for increased growth including more jobs, more research dollars, and increased training opportunities for Alaskans.

## **#5 - BURDEN OF TAXATION ON NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES** *(Natural Resources)*

In order for Alaska to be a better place to do business, the GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to examine the total tax burden of non-fuel natural resource extraction, to include Federal, State, Local, and Municipal jurisdictional effects. The objective should be to create a reasonable, but supportive, tax structure within jurisdictional units to the extent that developmental entities can rely on a reasonable and consistent tax burden.

## **#6 - INCREASED FMATS FUNDING** *(Transportation)*

The GFCC asks the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to provide financial support to improve the transportation system within the FMATS Metropolitan Planning Area. With a significant decrease in vehicle miles traveled and the federal highway trust fund nearly depleted, FMATS will be unable to continue to improve the safety of its roads without additional support from the State.

# ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

Business &  
the Arts

Education

Natural Resources

## **SUPPORT ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS (ASCA) FUNDING REQUEST**

The GFCC asks the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to support the ASCA request for the following budget increases: \$50,000 increase in General Fund monies to respond to increases in demand for services throughout Alaska, and to meet the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Partnership 1:1 grant requirement; a \$100,000 line item in capital budget for one time appraisal and assessment of the Alaska Contemporary Art Bank, and to provide for repairs to artwork; and 1 FTE for Fine Arts Administrator position to oversee the Arts in Education program.

## **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)**

The GFCC believes that quality CTE is essential to building a skilled Alaskan workforce. The GFCC requests the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to support the opportunity for all middle school-aged students to have a career pathway plan upon entering high school and the opportunity to fulfill that plan.

## **UA FY11 OPERATING BUDGET**

The GFCC recognizes the University of Alaska as an integral part of our community and our State by supporting programs vital to the education of our citizenry and the research necessary to address our State's needs. The GFCC urges the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to fully support and fund the University of Alaska Board of Regents FY11 operating budget request of \$361.2 million.

## **VALUE-ADDED (MADE IN ALASKA) RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to provide incentives to business in an effort to encourage the beneficiation of natural resources, including agricultural, mineral, energy, and forestry based, to promote processing, manufacturing, and retail sales of those products created in Alaska for export.

## **NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The GFCC advocates for progressive and responsible non-renewable, resource development such as oil, gas, non-fuel metallic and non-metallic minerals and coal that is important to the State's economy. This includes the need to expand infrastructure and work force necessary for the development of current and new projects, and applied research into improving the environmental performance of non-renewable resources development.

## **POSITIVE, OBJECTIVE, AND TIMELY PERMITTING PROCESS FOR RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to emphatically support, both philosophically and financially, the ability to permit natural resource development projects in a positive and timely manner. We advocate and promote responsible and environmentally sensitive resource development, to provide a fair return to the businesses and residents of the State of Alaska. We request that the state review the procedures and processes required to develop new natural resource development operations and expand existing ones, integrate the development review process with local jurisdictions and federal requirements, and develop a schedule to make the process more efficient and thus, more viable.

## **ACTIVE FISH AND GAME MANAGEMENT**

The GFCC advocates for preservation of renewable fish and wildlife resources for future generations of Alaskans. The State of Alaska must responsibly balance subsistence, commercial, personal, and sport uses of these resources and engage in proactive management in order to maintain sustainability and maximum long-term benefits. Issues resulting from proactive fish and game management must be resolved using factual scientific information. The GFCC requests the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature support full funding and local management of the Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery currently under construction in Fairbanks.

# ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

## Transportation

### **NATURAL GAS PIPELINE CORRIDOR**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to upgrade and maintain the existing transportation facilities along the proposed natural gas pipeline corridor, as it is critical to prepare for anticipated gasoline development. The needs of the Dalton, Parks, Richardson and Alaska Highways, the Deadhorse and Fairbanks Airports, the urban arterials and collectors in Fairbanks, and the Alaska Railroad connection to tidewater.

### **RAIL & ROAD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE FAIRBANKS-NORTH POLE REALIGNMENT**

The GFCC asks the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature provide financial support to allow continued environmental and engineering studies to address the safety and efficiency issues associated with the current rail alignment including improving more direct rail service to the Fairbanks International Airport.

### **STATE FUNDING SUPPORT FOR TRANSPORTATION**

The GFCC urges the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to provide increased general and non-general fund support for maintenance and capital improvements to protect our land, water, air, and public transportation systems.

### **RAILROAD EXPANSION**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to continue its support of improved rail connections and capacity in and out of Alaska, and to Canada, thereby implementing better opportunity for resource development in Alaska.

### **PORT MACKENZIE**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to support the development of import and export capabilities and opportunities of Port MacKenzie including the creation of a rail link to the Alaska Railroad system.

### **WESTERN ACCESS CORRIDOR**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to support the development of an access corridor and infrastructure from the Interior to Nome and the Seward Peninsula.

### **ARCTIC OCEAN**

The GFCC encourages the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to support unrestricted access to the Arctic Ocean for the further development of tourism and other economic development on the North Slope.

### **POWER COST EQUALIZATION**

The GFCC urges the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature to continue contributing general funds to the Power Cost Equalization Endowment to reduce power costs in rural Alaskan communities to include public entities - i.e. schools municipalities, tribal facilities - and all potential sources of fuel instead of diesel-only.

### **BROADBAND ACCESS FOR RURAL ALASKA**

The GFCC requests that the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature promote statewide "connectivity" and work with the Federal Government to alter the current restrictions on the limited use of previously established hardware in some rural communities. It should be the primary interest of the State to promote publicly accessible technology and infrastructure to enhance cost-saving methods of connectivity that result in effective outreach in areas including, but not limited to: healthcare, Workforce Training, Education, business-to-business contact; business-to-consumer contact; Health & Safety Awareness; and Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

## Urban/Rural