



VOTER GUIDE

2018



Get the information you need to get ready to vote!

PFD AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

Alaskan voters approved a plan in November 2016 to automatically register Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) applicants to vote. Since its passage, an additional 54,000 Alaskans are now eligible to vote, and the Division of Elections has updated addresses for nearly 100,000 more Alaskans. As we head into the general election this fall, nearly all eligible voters will be on the voter rolls for the first time in state history.

VOTING DEADLINES

- Early and Absentee In-Person, Electronic Transmission and Special Needs voting begins **Monday, October 22, 2018**
- Regional Offices (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, Mat-Su) will be open from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm for Early and Absentee In-Person and Special Needs voting on **Saturday, November 3, 2018**
- Regional Offices (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Nome, Juneau, Mat-Su) will be open from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm for Early and Absentee In-Person and Special Needs voting on **Sunday, November 4, 2018**
- Election Day is **Tuesday, November 6, 2018**
- Absentee ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before Election Day, **Tuesday, November 6, 2018**

WHERE TO VOTE

If you have questions regarding voting, or need to find your polling location, please visit www.elections.alaska.gov. You can also call 1-888-383-8683 if you are outside of Anchorage, and 269-8683 if you are within the Municipality of Anchorage.

GET OUT THE NATIVE VOTE (GOTNV)

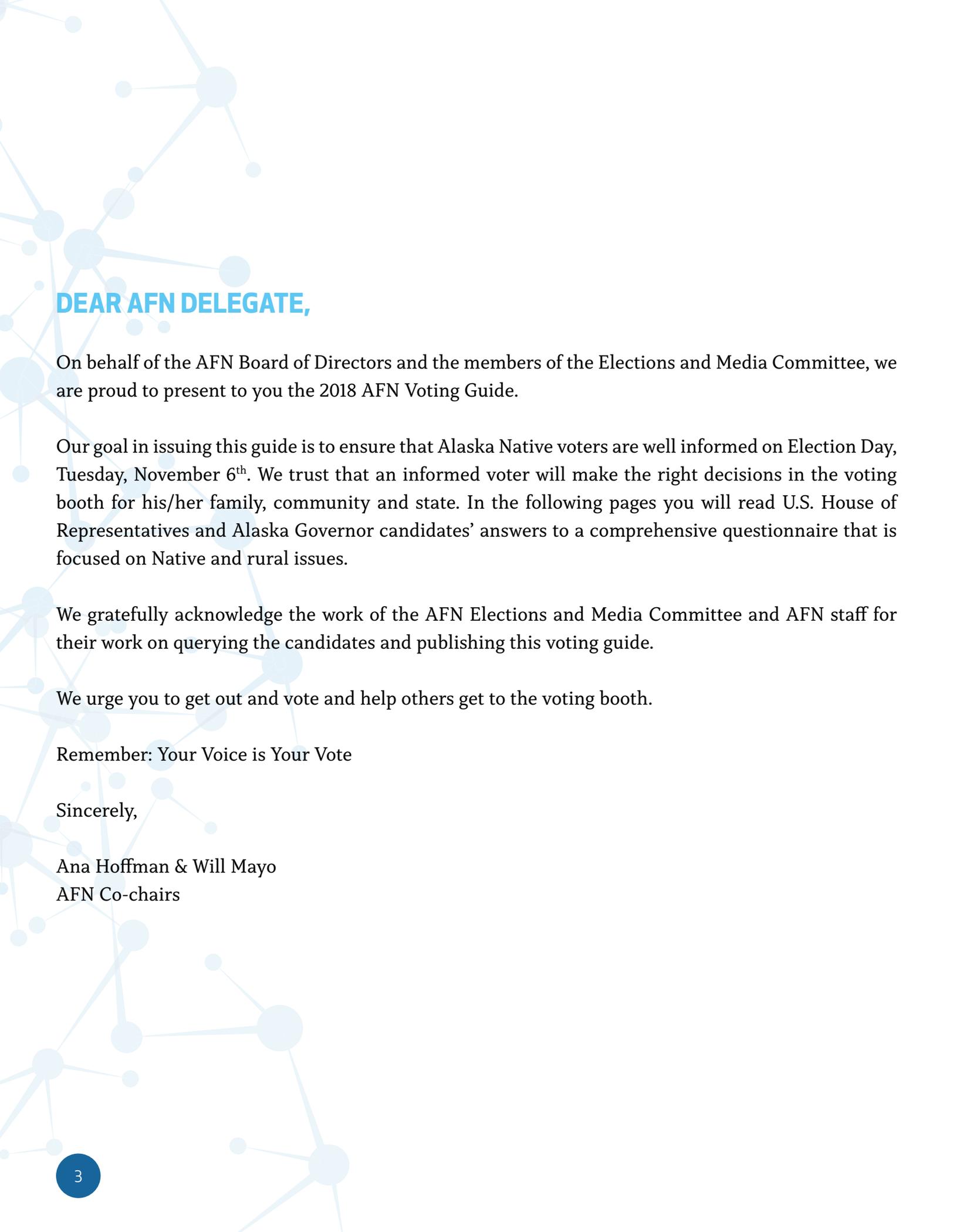
Get Out The Native Vote is a non-partisan effort in Alaska to mobilize Alaska Native and American Indian voters. GOTNV is partnering with the national Native Vote efforts led by the National Congress of American Indians.

If you would like more information, or to volunteer with GOTNV, please visit the GOTNV Facebook page: www.facebook.com/GetOutTheNativeVote or check out www.aknativevote.com.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

If you are in need of language assistance during any stage of the electoral process in an Alaska Native language, Spanish, or Tagalog, election workers can assist you, or you may have a person of your choice provide assistance to you as long as that person is not a candidate, your employer, agent of your employer, or agent of your union. The person you choose to assist you may go into the voting booth with you to help you in casting your ballot. For language assistance and information, please call 907-275-2333 or 1-866-954-8683 (toll free within the U.S.). Visit Alaska Division of Elections website at www.elections.alaska.gov/Core/languageassistance.php to find more information in the following languages:

- Dinjii Zhuh K'yaa Gwits'inyaa [Gwich'in]
- Northern Inupiaq
- Yuut Qalarcaraitgun Ikayullrit [General Central Yup'ik]
- Seward Peninsula Inupiaq
- Yuut Qalarcaraitgun Ukisqillrit [Norton Sound Kotlik Yup'ik]
- Koyukon Athabascan [Koyukon]
- Yuut Qalarcaraitgun Ikayullrit [Yukon Yup'ik]
- Nunivak Cup'ig
- Yuut Qalarcaraitgun IKayuriyaraq [Hooper Bay Yup'ik]
- Filipino [Tagalog]
- Bristol Bay Yup'ik
- Español [Spanish]
- Cuut Qalarcaraitgun IKayuriyaraq [Chevak Cup'ik]



DEAR AFN DELEGATE,

On behalf of the AFN Board of Directors and the members of the Elections and Media Committee, we are proud to present to you the 2018 AFN Voting Guide.

Our goal in issuing this guide is to ensure that Alaska Native voters are well informed on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6th. We trust that an informed voter will make the right decisions in the voting booth for his/her family, community and state. In the following pages you will read U.S. House of Representatives and Alaska Governor candidates' answers to a comprehensive questionnaire that is focused on Native and rural issues.

We gratefully acknowledge the work of the AFN Elections and Media Committee and AFN staff for their work on querying the candidates and publishing this voting guide.

We urge you to get out and vote and help others get to the voting booth.

Remember: Your Voice is Your Vote

Sincerely,

Ana Hoffman & Will Mayo
AFN Co-chairs

ABOUT AFN

The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 185 federally-recognized tribes, 153 village corporations, 12 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs. AFN is governed by a 38 member board, which is elected by its membership at the annual convention held each October.

OUR MISSION

Alaska Native people began as members of full sovereign nations and continue to enjoy a unique political relationship with the federal government. We will survive and prosper as distinct ethnic and cultural groups and will participate fully as members of the overall society. The mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

AFN'S MAJOR GOALS

- Advocate for Alaska Native people, their governments and organizations, with respect to federal, state and local laws;
- Foster and encourage preservation of Alaska Native cultures;
- Promote understanding of the economic needs of Alaska Natives and encourage development consistent with those needs;
- Protect, retain and enhance all lands owned by Alaska Natives and their organizations; and
- Promote and advocate for programs and systems which instill pride and confidence in individual Alaska Natives.

AFN Candidate Questionnaire

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



ALYSE GALVIN

Alyse Galvin is a mom of four children, a lifelong Alaskan, a community leader, a former small business owner, and the Independent candidate for U.S. Congress, facing Rep. Don Young in the general election on Tuesday, November 6, 2018. She is a tireless advocate for education, working for the last five years as a leader of Great Alaska Schools, organizing parents, students, educators, and community leaders of all backgrounds to protect public schools from massive budget cuts. In 2017, she led statewide opposition to the confirmation of Betsy DeVos as U.S. Secretary of Education.

Alyse is running for Congress to bring back a voice to the people of Alaska, from Utqiagvik to Metlakatla. As Alaska's first Congresswoman, Alyse will create high-quality, good-paying jobs for Alaskans across the state and improve education and training so that every Alaskan willing to work has the opportunity to do so. A strong Independent, Alyse believes in working across the aisle to increase public safety all across Alaska and will fight for Alaskan coastal communities on the front lines of climate change. She is a firm supporter of subsistence rights and will take steps in Congress to help support Alaska Native languages. Alyse is running to work for Alaskan families so that all of our kids, no matter where they live, can thrive in Alaska.

AFN Candidate Questionnaire

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



CONGRESSMAN DON YOUNG

Throughout my service to Alaska, I've worked to protect the unique beauty, abundant resources, and resilient people of our state. Whether it's defending our economy from job killing rules and regulations, empowering families and small businesses with new opportunities, or upholding the constitution, I've always stood up and fought for Alaska.

Our state has experienced many successes and the work to protect Alaska's future is far from over. We are faced with a barrage of one size fits all, "Washington knows best" policies that jeopardize our already sluggish economy, lock away our land and resources, and ignore the needs of our people. The 2016 election sent a clear message to D.C. bureaucrats. Enough is enough. I have worked to roll back burdensome regulations, deliver tax relief and unleash Alaska's leadership potential in energy production and I still have more I want to do.

With the confidence you've entrusted in me, and the relationships I've built in Congress, I'm strategically positioned to defend Alaska's interests. As a senior member of two powerful committees and as Chairman Emeritus of the Natural Resources Committee, I continue to advocate for our great state. With these key roles and a deep passion for our people, I'm confident that Alaska will shape many policy debates needed to build a stronger, more vibrant state for generations to come.

My motivation and enthusiasm for the Alaskan people remains as strong as ever. With your support, I remain committed to defending and fighting for Alaska's future.

COMPREHENSIVE

Q. What do you see as the biggest issues facing the Alaska Native community and what needs to be done about them?

GALVIN

- Subsistence rights and food security - Maintaining subsistence rights is critical to the well-being of our rural and urban Alaska Native communities. As your Congresswoman, I will stand up for subsistence rights in Congress and will work at the federal level to protect them from encroachment or limitation.
- Infrastructure & Energy - We must ensure that all Alaska Native people have access to adequate basic and affordable necessities like water, affordable heating, and broadband internet. Energy costs are sky-high in rural Alaska and focused investment by Congress can help bring down these costs.
- Public Safety & Social Services - Our Alaska Native communities lack adequate public safety and social services. The federal and state governments must empower tribal governments to enhance delivery of services in rural Alaska.

YOUNG

Combating drug and substance abuse, suicide prevention, and protecting subsistence rights are among the biggest challenges facing the Alaska Native community. I have always worked to secure federal funding to help confront these problems and will continue to do so. This year I voted for legislation containing \$4 billion to address the ongoing substance abuse epidemic, \$1 billion of which was in grants to states and tribes to increase support for prevention and overcoming addiction. I am the sponsor of legislation to reauthorize and enhance the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Management Act, which will promote sustainable fish stocks. I am also committed to working with AFN to ensure that, regardless of the outcome of pending legal action, subsistence rights will not be diminished.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The development of sustainable tribal economies that adequately balance Alaska's rural subsistence economy is key to improving the quality of life for Alaska Native peoples.

Q. How will you encourage economic development and help to secure the basic infrastructure needed by Alaska Natives to develop, attract, and sustain profitable business ventures?

GALVIN

Alaska Native communities, small businesses and individuals have the answers of how to promote sustainable tribal economies, and I will listen to the needs and advice of these communities. Federal investment in infrastructure for our Alaska Native communities is key. We can lower energy costs through development of low-cost, local energy sources and improving energy efficiency. We also need more investment in broadband internet, so that all of Alaska can participate in the digital economy. We need to reduce transportation costs by improving our ports, roads, and airports across Alaska. We can help transform our economy by listening to Alaska Native concerns and learning from Alaska Native innovation.

YOUNG

Efforts to promote economic development and secure infrastructure needed in Alaska Native communities are often undermined by unreasonable federal regulations that make projects too costly or inefficient. Bureaucratic road blocks, duplicative environmental reviews, and burdensome permitting processes have stopped and delayed many vital initiatives. Alaska Natives are the best stewards of their land and resources. Regulations that prevent Alaska Natives from responsible use of their land are contrary to the intent of ANCSA and violate the federal government's responsibility to our first peoples. I have championed bills to rollback these harmful regulations and empower Native communities. I have also secured authorizations and funding in a variety of legislation for building infrastructure projects in Native communities throughout the state.

Q. What does a successful rural Alaska economy look like to you?

GALVIN

A successful rural Alaska economy would provide quality job opportunities with livable wages to all people in their communities, without having to leave in order to earn a living. Subsistence economies would be similarly strong, and quality education and healthcare would be accessible and affordable for all.

YOUNG

A successful economy in rural Alaska is ultimately about the wellbeing of families. Rural Alaska needs good paying, consistent jobs that allow families to thrive. Families must be able to move beyond living paycheck to paycheck and invest in their futures. Economic conditions should give young people positive options for staying and investing themselves in rural communities.

Q. What is your plan to increase broadband/internet connectivity to advance economic development in Alaska?

GALVIN

Slow internet in rural Alaska prevents our communities from fully participating in the global economy. Consistent access across Alaska to broadband internet is critical to ensuring equity across our state. I will advocate for increased funding for broadband infrastructure in rural Alaska.

At the same time, we need to make sure that local authorities can make full use of existing funding and infrastructure. To that end, Congress should direct the FCC to reevaluate the restrictions on current subsidies, and remove barriers to utilization of existing infrastructure.

YOUNG

As I have done in previous years, I will continue to increase funding through the Federal Communication Commission High Cost Program which is providing \$200 million each year, Rural Utilities Service, Community Connect Grants and the Denali Commission to name a few of the many federal programs that support rural broadband. I remain committed to reducing the regulatory burdens that hinder our rural communities and carriers which face the financial strain on a daily basis. I have fought for increases to the Connect America fund which helps rural communities gain modern communication technology. I am very committed to closing the digital divide and ensuring that Washington bureaucrats remain aware of the challenges Alaskan face accessing internet at a fair cost.

Q. One roadblock to economic development in villages is the high cost of energy. What measures will you take to lower the cost of energy in rural Alaska and thereby reduce the cost of doing business?

GALVIN

Energy costs in Alaska are incredibly high. We can and we should reform and diversify our energy sources. Our number one job growth opportunity in Alaska is the development of low-cost, locally-generated energy, including renewable energy. Alaska should be at the forefront of new production, research and technology, whether it is wind, solar, biofuels, geothermal, hydroelectric or tidal—we have it all here. We also need to assist Alaska villages in constructing energy efficient homes and businesses. The implementation of new building technology can also provide good paying construction jobs, allowing more youth to remain in rural Alaska.

YOUNG

Unfortunately, most areas in rural Alaska are still powered primarily by diesel, and this must change. I have and continue to advocate for a diversified energy portfolio in Alaska, which can be seen in the form of wind and geothermal in places like Bristol Bay and the Aleutians, tremendous hydropower in Southeast, and natural gas in South Central. I have advanced my Native American Energy Act, which works to resolve longstanding resource and economic development issues for Native communities and reduce energy costs. My bill would empower Native communities so they are better able to develop their resources the way they see fit, without being hindered by unnecessary regulatory red tape.

VOTING RIGHTS

Together with National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and Native American Rights Fund (NARF), AFN supports the introduction of legislative language to replace the voting rights protections stripped from the Voting Rights Act (VRA) by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The U.S. Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder* ruled that the coverage formula in Section 4(b) of the VRA, which was used to determine the states subject to preclearance by the DOJ, was unconstitutional. Alaska is one of six states no longer included in these preclearance protections.

Q. Will you advocate for the passage of Voting Rights Act amendments that protect Alaska Native voters?

GALVIN

Yes. *Shelby County v. Holder* is another shameful chapter in our country's long history of subjugating racial minorities, including Alaska Natives. It is now up to Congress to amend the Voting Rights Act to curb the wave of attacks on voting rights being adopted in various states across the country. In Congress, I will support legislation to come up with new criteria for how new election or voting laws are precleared at the state level. As your Congresswoman, I will fight to protect and strengthen the voting rights of Alaska Natives.

YOUNG

Congress must fight to protect the voting rights of all Americans. I will work with my colleagues to support reforms that are effective at reducing voter discrimination and can also pass Constitutional muster with the courts. Such reforms must consider Alaska's unique circumstances and the barriers faced by our Native communities. In particular, Alaska Natives must have access to ballots in their language and reasonable access to polling places. Alaska Natives have a long, powerful history of fighting for voting rights, and these rights must not be undermined.

SUBSISTENCE

Subsistence continues to be the foundation of Alaska Native society and culture. A vast majority of Alaska's 120,000 Native people, (nearly 20% of the general population) still participate in hunting, fishing and gathering for food during the year. Subsistence resources remain central to the nutrition, economies and traditions of Alaska's Native villages.

Q. Do you believe the present dual (federal-state) management system for subsistence hunting and fishing should remain or do you think it should be changed? Why or why not? What solution(s) would you pursue in office?

GALVIN

The current dual management system is a flawed approach caused by the State of Alaska's inability to pass a constitutional amendment to create a rural subsistence preference. I support such an amendment to the Alaska State Constitution. Until a rural preference amendment passes, however, it is incumbent on Congress to adequately fund and direct the federal agencies that share these management responsibilities to ensure that subsistence rights are protected.

YOUNG

Dual management is costly and inefficient both for the State of Alaska and for everyday Alaskans. Differences in seasons and regulations often cause confusion and frustration for individuals, and duplicative management wastes money and resources. With the mix of federal, State, and Native land boundaries in hunting areas, users often have difficulty navigating the systems properly. That said, it is imperative that any changes to the current system do not result in a net loss of subsistence rights compared to the status quo. I constantly fight for Native communities' access to subsistence. Resolving the legal and political conflicts that underpin dual management will take the State stepping up and working in partnership with the Native community. I am committed to facilitating this effort.

EDUCATION

Alaska's public education system is failing Alaska Native children. Alaska Natives constitute 19.5% of the state's population, and 23% of its school population. Alaska Natives students are dropping out of school at a rate of 7.8%, which is twice the rate of other students. Native youth are graduating from high school at a rate of only 47%. In the past several years, regions with Native enrollments greater than 80% often had the lowest proportion of schools meeting the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and the percentage of Native students passing the reading, writing and math benchmark exams lags behind all other students statewide.

These statistics compel us to seek a new approach to education for Alaska Natives. Part of the reason for poor academic achievement among Native students is the lack of culture-based programs.

Q. Will you protect Head Start programs and funding?

GALVIN

Absolutely. We must improve access to federal funds for pre-K education in Alaska, including Head Start and Early Head Start. As a leader in Great Alaska Schools, I fought for increased investment in early childhood education. Currently, only one-third of our kids are prepared for Kindergarten — half the national average. Alaska currently has the lowest public investment in Pre-K. That is shameful. Increased investment in Head Start programs, especially ones that support Alaska Native languages and cultures, will be critical for our kids' future success.

YOUNG

I have always been a strong supporter of Head Start, which helps young children prepare for school by enhancing their social and cognitive development through educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services. Head Start provides emotional support and counseling for families as well as education for our youngest children. Improving basic skills early on is a vital component of our effort to raise students' academic achievement throughout the full course of their time in school. Head Start is particularly important in Native communities where access to child care and early childhood programs is often more limited. Each year, I advocate for increased Head Start funding by working with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee. For Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019, we secured significant funding increases.

Q. What can Congress do to improve Alaska's K-12 and higher education?

GALVIN

I am all-in for Alaska's K-12 teachers and students. We need to create incentives to educate highly-qualified teachers in Alaska and to keep them in our schools. I will work to recruit and retain Alaska's best and brightest by expanding tuition-free and loan forgiveness opportunities. At the same time, we must expand federal funding for vocational and technical education programs so students who choose not to go to college are also ready for careers after high school. Along with vocational education, we can promote and expand apprenticeship programs that provide intensive on-the-job training for jobs in construction and building trades. I look forward to expanding opportunities for low-income and underrepresented students to go to college.

YOUNG

To improve K-12 education, Congress must provide robust supplemental assistance to state and local education agencies without mandating one-size-fits-all standards or dictating approaches to education policy. We must pass legislation that empowers parents, teachers, and Native leaders to develop learning systems and standards that are tailored to the individual needs of communities. This is particularly important for Alaska Native students who face burdensome socioeconomic and historic barriers to their educational success and benefit from culturally-based learning. For higher education, Congress must increase the accessibility of post-secondary study. It is unacceptable that college tuition and student debt loads have skyrocketed over the last decade. I support enhancing federally-backed assistance programs, such as Pell Grants, that enable low- and middle-income students to pursue their educational paths.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Alaska Natives face many barriers to adequate health care and wellness. There are many terrible statistics that demand attention by our communities and our leaders in all governments, including the nation's highest number of deaths by suicide, and high rates of obesity and diabetes.

Q. How will you address the opioid and heroin crisis now devastating Alaskan communities?

GALVIN

The effects of substance abuse and addiction have far-reaching consequences for Alaska Native communities. Overdose deaths and hospitalizations are rising while the number of people receiving treatment is much too low.

In Congress, I will support funding for comprehensive regional alcohol and drug treatment centers to increase access to care. Also, we need to be training Alaskan providers to treat Alaska Native patients with opioid use disorder, improving broadband capability in rural areas to expand telemedicine for those who don't live near a qualified provider, and ensuring that Medicaid expansion has adequate funding for treatment facilities in rural Alaska. I will furthermore support funding for prevention programs that stop substance abuse before it begins.

YOUNG

Opioid and substance abuse presents a great challenge in Alaska. It robs us of our youth, plagues countless adults, and inflicts anguish on our families. We must unify to seek ways to address this problem. Recently, I supported legislation providing nearly \$7 billion to fight this epidemic. Additionally, I voted in favor of the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act which will help in the overall efforts to address the crisis by advancing treatment and recovery initiatives, improving prevention, and protecting our communities. However, we cannot believe this will solely be fixed at the federal level. State, local, and tribal government ideas and solutions are a part of this puzzle. This even extends to the friend and family relationships that those suffering need the most.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) included permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, which brought the entire IHS system, including tribal and urban programs and clinics, into the new system of health care delivery. Successful and seamless implementation of the ACA will increase health care access for American Indians and Alaska Natives, support the IHS system of care, broaden services provided in rural communities, and strengthen an integral network of providers.

Q. Will you support passage of advanced appropriations of Indian Health Service funding?

GALVIN

Yes, the Indian Health Service is one of the most chronically underfunded federal agencies. Advanced appropriations will only be a part of the steps needed to address this failure of the federal government.

YOUNG

I am at the forefront of efforts to enable IHS advance appropriations. Once tribal health providers know IHS funding levels one fiscal year early, the providers will be able to more effectively and efficiently manage budgets, coordinate care, and improve health quality outcomes. This would be particularly helpful given the difficulty of forward planning when faced with the possibility of funding interruptions, such as government shutdowns. Securing advance appropriations requires a push on multiple fronts. I am the sponsor of a bill that would authorize Congress to allocate advance appropriations for IHS funds and have raised the issue in hearings. Since the Budget controls which programs are allowed advance appropriations, I will also continue working with the Budget Committee to secure necessary language.

Q. Do you support the Affordable Care Act? If so, how will you improve it?

GALVIN

The Affordable Care Act alone is not a long-term solution for Alaska, as it did little to lower Alaskans' healthcare costs, especially premiums and prescription drug prices. However, I appreciate that it provides some stability for the IHS, and a large number of Alaskans depend on the ACA — namely, people with pre-existing conditions, those under age 26, seniors and elders using Medicare, and lower-income individuals who are accessing healthcare from Medicaid expansion. Now these same Alaskans are getting caught in the crossfire of Washington's attacks on healthcare coverage. In Congress, I will fight to support and expand IHS funding, hold the line on consumer protections for Alaskan patients, while working to support solutions to meaningfully lower our costs and broaden access to affordable healthcare.

YOUNG

The Affordable Care Act ended up being a one-size-fits-all government approach to our health care system. I was hopeful that Congress could work together in a bipartisan manor to address major issues such as cost and access. So much so that I recommended President Obama look at the Southcentral Foundation Nuka Model. To my dismay, the recommendation was ignored and it became a one-sided process which bitterly divided the institution. I am strongly opposed to the individual mandate however I do support some policy provisions, especially protections for preexisting conditions. We have seen soaring premiums in previous years and all but one insurer in Alaska leaving the individual market. I continue to encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work together.

Q. What is your view of the current system for funding the Indian Health Service?

GALVIN

As I stated above, the Indian Health Service is one of the most chronically underfunded federal agencies. It will take a comprehensive and concerted effort to reform and correct the problems at the IHS. Reports from the Government Accounting Office continually show the complete failure of the federal government to properly fund and manage this critical agency. The federal government has a moral and legal obligation to effectively deliver the services intended to be provided by the IHS.

YOUNG

IHS has been historically underfunded and, while Congress has increased appropriations levels over the last few years, more progress is needed. There is still a significant backlog of vital construction and maintenance for facilities and unmet needs in terms of health care delivery. I worked with the Appropriations Committee to secure an indefinite, ongoing appropriation for IHS Contract Support Costs (CSC), which ended CSC shortfalls. Ultimately, CSC and other critical IHS accounts should be transitioned from discretionary to mandatory funding, which would provide more certainty for tribal health providers. By shielding allocations from volatility in the budget cycle, mandatory funding also upholds the federal trust responsibility to provide for the wellbeing of Alaska Natives and American Indians.

AFN Candidate Questionnaire

GOVERNOR

MARK BEGICH



As a lifelong Alaskan with decades of experience in public service and business, Mark Begich has spent his career working to make Alaska the best place to live and raise a family.

In 2003, Mark was elected as Mayor of Anchorage, where he served two terms, and oversaw the biggest building boom in Anchorage in a generation, balanced the city budget while earning top grades from bond rating agencies, grew the economy, strengthened relations with Alaska Natives and other minority communities, and reduced crime.

In 2008, Mark was elected to the United States Senate, where he earned the reputation of a no-nonsense problem-solver who was willing to work across party lines to get things done. Defying party labels and drawing on his business background, Mark broke down bureaucratic barriers to do what was right for Alaskans and built an impressive record of accomplishments on key Alaska issues such as fisheries, travel & tourism, transportation, resource development, tribal and Alaska Native interests, the Arctic, education, veterans, commerce, housing, and more. Some of the highlights from Mark's time in the Senate include:

- Protected Alaska Native corporation 8(a) program—fought off attacks on the program from both parties.
- Fought for Subsistence Rights as chair of the Oceans subcommittee and on the Indian Affairs Committee.
- Helped 26 tribal health organizations get agreements to serve our veterans in their home communities, reducing the VA wait list from 1000 to practically zero.
- Secured funding for the Barrow and Nome hospitals—creating hundreds of new jobs, and was pivotal in getting Alaska Native health providers millions in back pay from the Obama administration.
- Protected and invested in Essential Air Services for 44 Alaska airports, while working with Senator Murkowski and Congressman Young to protect Bypass Mail and to keep rural post offices from closure.
- Successfully pushed the feds to give more money for broadband for places like Barrow, Nome, Hooper Bay, Kotzebue, Mountain Village, Unalaska and the Copper River area, which was secured in the Reinvestment Act he supported.

AFN Candidate Questionnaire

GOVERNOR

MIKE DUNLEAVY



Mike Dunleavy was born in 1961 to working class parents in the Rust Belt city of Scranton, Pennsylvania. His father was employed as a mailman, and his mother as a secretary. He attended public schools and played high school basketball. After graduation, he attended College Misericordia (now Misericordia University), where he received a B.A. in History in 1983.

Like many earlier generations of Alaskans, Mike journeyed north looking for opportunity. He arrived in Southeast Alaska in 1983 and took a job at a logging camp on Prince of Wales Island. He then pursued his dream of becoming an educator. He earned a teacher's certificate, and in 1984 began teaching school in the village of Koyuk in northwest Alaska. Mike's wife Rose is from the community of Noorvik in the Kobuk River Valley. The couple met during the Iditarod in Nome and were married in 1987. They made their home in Koyuk, where Mike continued teaching for several more years.

In 1991, Mike and Rose moved to Fairbanks where Mike pursued his Master of Education degree. After completing the master's program, the couple moved to Kotzebue in 1992, where Mike began work as a 4th grade teacher. He would later serve as a school principal and eventually became the Superintendent of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District.

Mike and his family moved to Wasilla in 2004. Mike served from 2004 to 2006 as the administrator of the Mat-Su Central School, a public homeschool/correspondence school. He also worked as the program manager for the Alaska Statewide Teacher Mentor Project, which helped recruit and retain excellent teachers in rural Alaska. He ran for and won election to the Mat-Su Borough School Board in 2009 and later served two years as Board President.

In 2012, he ran for and was elected to the State Senate. In Juneau, he focused on several priorities: developing Alaska's natural resources, protecting the Permanent Fund and the PFD program, controlling state spending, improving educational outcomes, and protecting individual constitutional rights.

Mike and Rose have three children – Maggie, Catherine, and Ceil – who were raised in rural and urban Alaska.

AFN Candidate Questionnaire

GOVERNOR



BILL WALKER

Governor Bill Walker was born in Fairbanks and raised in Delta Junction and Valdez. His parents, Ed and Francis Walker, were Alaskan pioneers. As a family, the Walkers celebrated Alaska Statehood in 1959, lost everything they owned but survived the 1964 Earthquake, and worked together in the family construction and hotel businesses to rebuild their lives. To help the family put food on the table, at age 12, Bill became the post office janitor and worked with his family as a school janitor before and after school. Governor Walker also worked as a carpenter, teamster and laborer on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction to pay for his education.

He earned his bachelor of science degree in business management from Lewis and Clark College and his juris doctor from the University of Puget Sound School of Law (now Seattle University). The Walkers have owned hotel, travel, real estate and retail businesses. Prior to taking office, Governor Walker and his wife, Donna, owned a law firm that focused on municipal and oil and gas law.

Bill Walker and Byron Mallott took office in December of 2014 as the first non-partisan administration in Alaska history and the only Unity ticket in the nation. They are also the first Alaska-born Governor and Lt. Governor to serve together. They have put what's best for Alaska over party politics for the past four years.

Governor Walker has been a vocal proponent of Tribal sovereignty and improved collaboration between state government and Alaska Native peoples. In 2015 he established the Governor's Tribal Advisory Council (GTAC), an advisory body made up of 12 members from various regions of the state who represent the interests of Alaska's Tribes. The GTAC has ensured that Alaska Native voices, ideas, concerns, and solutions are heard when decisions are made that impact their peoples, communities, and ways of life.

In 2015, Governor Walker was adopted into the Tlingit Kaagwaantaan Wolf Clan as a member of the Eagle's Nest House and given the name of Gooch Waak which means "wolf eyes". Few Alaskan leaders have been adopted into Native clans, but tribal elders wanted to do this because of the Lieutenant Governor's Native roots. Byron Mallott is Raven and in the Tlingit way, Eagle/Raven is a balance. Married since 1977, Donna and Bill Walker have four children, and five grandchildren. Their son, Adam, married his high school sweetheart, Sabrina, who is Tlingit and their son, Leo, is a Raven in the Deisheetaan clan.

Governor Walker is an avid downhill skier and enjoys fishing, boating, snow-machining, campfires with the family at the lake, and taking the grandkids ice skating.

COMPREHENSIVE: STATE/TRIBAL RELATIONS

State/tribal relations have fluctuated with the years and with issues.

Q. What will be your administration's top priority for the Alaska Native community during the first 90 days? 180 days? And year?

BEGICH

Day 1 – recognize tribes as the federal government has.

90 days – Ensure our communities are safe. I will examine the structure of Troopers, redeploy them to help improve safety in rural communities, and direct funds to tribes and Native health corporations to hold community safety trainings in every village in Alaska. I will immediately engage in government-to-government consult with Native leaders and tribes to help prioritize funding in my state budget proposal.

180 days – Pass legislation to enact my infrastructure program to improve our schools, community buildings, and roads in rural Alaska and make our communities energy-efficient and sustainable. My goal is to have projects shovel ready for the summer of 2019.

Year – Pass my fiscal plan to constitutionally protect the PFD and fund education.

DUNLEAVY

Tribes play an important role and are vital partners with the state of Alaska. I will seek to enhance the relationship with our tribal community. As you might know, my wife Rose is an Inupiaq from Noorvik. She is a tribal member and our three daughters are tribal members as well. My administration will have qualified Alaskans to lead and advise me on rural and Alaska Native matters.

WALKER

My administration's top priority for the Alaska Native community will be a draft government-to-government plan, as required by Administrative Order 300, Responding to Alaska's Linguistic Emergency and Increasing Collaboration with Tribes, detailed below. This plan will not only fully recognize the tribal sovereignty of Tribes-this was done last fall, when the Attorney General issued an Opinion formally establishing the State's legal mechanism to recognize all 229 sovereign Native nations in Alaska-but will detail specifics of how each State department will engage in consultation and collaboration with the Alaska Tribes, tribal organizations, Alaska Native community, and the

Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation endeavor. I expect a draft plan to my office within the first 90 days of reelection. Within 180 days, I expect a final plan to be initiated and mobilized. Within one year's time, each department will report back to my office and Tribes the progress of their plan and adapt/change each plan when and where necessary.

Within the first year in office, I expect work enhancing our government-to-government relationship to Tribes to continue. This work will grow from the foundations that were set over the past four years.

In Administrative Order 300, my administration takes a number of steps not only to recognize tribal sovereignty, but to establish a way to work collaboratively with Tribes moving forward. All Commissioners are required to formally establish the role of the tribal liaison within their office, and to identify a plan to enhance the government-to-government relationship between State and Tribal Governments. Another requirement in the plan is to identify how each department will engage in the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation movement.

Consistent with this work, we will draft and adopt a consultation and collaboration policy with the Tribes that strengthens this unique relationship between our State and Tribal Governments within the first 180 days. Each Commissioner and State-authorized entity will create an Alaska Native engagement plan and implement the consultation and collaboration policy with the help of a Tribal Liaison who has been identified and permanently placed in the office of the Commissioner. Each plan will be consistent with the Attorney General's opinion on tribal sovereignty and include other Alaska Native entities and leadership when appropriate and applicable, such as tribal consortia, Alaska Native non-profits, and Alaska Native regional and village corporations. When governments engage with other governments, respectful cultural protocols and understandings, as well as thoughtful, informed decision-making are key to making good policy. We intend to continue to uphold these values in our administration.

Last, I expect for our work on Alaska Native languages to continue. Administrative Order 300 declared a language emergency in Alaska and prioritized state support in language revitalization efforts. That order directed the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development to facilitate coordination and collaboration among the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council, state university, state agencies, and other governments and non-profit entities to implement options to promote Alaska Native languages in public schools and universities; strengthened the existing Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council; and supported the use of Alaska Native place names in public signage. This work will continue and grow in the upcoming year.

Q. How will you ensure the Alaska Native community has a meaningful role in your administration?

BEGICH

One of my top priorities is to ensure Alaska Native voices are heard and consulted at every stage of the decision-making process, including in addressing public safety, building a stronger educational system, investing in infrastructure, protecting fisheries, and beyond. I'll keep in place current State-Tribal advisory boards and compacts, but we will go further to explore opportunities for new compacts and to make sure decisions are made from the ground-up. I'll restore a government-to-government relationship where there is true consultation on decisions affecting the Alaska Native community. Alaska Natives need a seat at the table, and my administration will include strong Native representation on its staff and boards, in addition to Lieutenant Governor Debra Call. I will always fight for Alaska Native rights and traditions.

DUNLEAVY

Tribes play an important role and are vital partners with the state of Alaska. I will seek to enhance the relationship with our tribal community. As you might know, my wife Rose is an Inupiaq from Noorvik. She is a tribal member and our three daughters are tribal members as well. My administration will have qualified Alaskans to lead and advise me on rural and Alaska Native matters.

WALKER

I will ensure that the Alaska Native community has a meaningful role in my administration by continuing to ensure Alaska Native voices, ideas, concerns, and solutions are heard when decisions are made that impact their peoples, communities, and ways of life. One key way to do this will be to continue to engage with the Governor's Tribal Advisory Council (GTAC).

As Governor, I created the GTAC by administrative order in 2015 and re-established the group (adding an additional member) in 2017. This group is made up of 12 Alaska Native leaders who meet quarterly with myself, the Lt. Governor, Commissioners, and Senior Leadership. We will continue to maintain this forum and draft legislation to enshrine the role of Tribes in state government for the foreseeable future.

The Alaska Native population is our measure of success and equity. As a State, if we are failing the Alaska Native people, then we are failing Alaska. I will do all within my power to rectify these failings in my service to this state and enshrine the voice of Alaska Native people in State Government. In the next term of office, it is my goal to solidify, embed, and institutionalize the great work we have done in the first term in re-setting the relationship between the State of Alaska and the Tribes of Alaska, and Alaska Native peoples.

ALASKA'S ECONOMY

Economists agree that the recent rebound in oil prices is not enough to undo the damage to Alaska's credit rating and other business ratings, or to solve Alaska's budget crisis.

Q. Does your plan for leading Alaska out of its fiscal crisis include additional cuts to the state budget? If so, which departments? Which programs? And how much would you cut to each?

BEGICH

My fiscal plan would:

- Constitutionally protect the PFD (estimated over \$2,000 per person this year), inflation-proof the Fund, and guarantee funding for pre-K-12 education;
- Reform delivery of government services – implement creative solutions to modernize government, increasing efficiency and saving money;
- Move from a one-year budget process to a two-year budget to create fiscal stability and certainty;
- Stop paying cash for capital budgets by using general obligation bonds to provide a stable, structured approach and a 6-year capital plan; and
- After taking the above steps, bring together the Legislature with communities, experts, and others to determine the most effective and targeted ways to deal with new revenues – but none that fall disproportionately on Alaskans who can least afford it. We cannot cut our way to prosperity.

DUNLEAVY

One of the fundamental reasons that I am running for governor is Alaska's economy needs to get on the right track. We are a resource state and we must foster responsible resource development that helps all Alaskans. Access to our resources will create jobs and allow Alaskans to continue to live and prosper here. In the case of rural Alaska, we must allow those who choose to live in the village, to stay in the village. We must also look for ways to make government operate more efficiently. Until that happens, any tax discussion is premature.

WALKER

Our plan to continue to lead Alaska out of the fiscal crisis is not to further cut the budget; instead, it is to create jobs for Alaskans.

Our administration inherited a \$6.1 billion budget with just \$2.3 billion in revenue. The remaining \$3.7 billion budget gap was funded by savings. Today the budget is \$4.7 billion – a 20% reduction.

Thanks to the hard work done by the legislature and this administration, we closed 80% of the gap with spending cuts and the passage of SB 26 – a structured and sustainable reform of the use of the Permanent Fund earnings.

State agency operating budgets have been cut by \$563 million, or 13%, since FY 2015. Today, there are 2,900 fewer state jobs in April 2018 as compared to April 2014. State government employment has been reduced to 2002 levels. However, additional cuts are increasingly difficult to make without adverse consequences to Alaskans' health, safety, and the overall well-being of the economy.

Looking forward, while we are actively looking for means to make government more efficient, we do not anticipate additional cuts to State departments.

Q. Does your fiscal plan include additional revenue streams (please be specific, and include taxes)?

BEGICH

I won't rule out any revenue stream, including taxes or fees, if we need additional resources after following my fiscal plan steps of identifying efficiencies and the investments we need for long-term success. As stated above, I will never support any revenue increase that falls disproportionately on Alaskans who can least afford it – families struggling to get by, children, people with disabilities, or Elders. That's not the way to build a stronger Alaska, and it's why I opposed the recent changes to the PFD. I also don't support a wage tax or a gas tax, which would disproportionately impact rural Alaska.

DUNLEAVY

The PFD is a huge cash infusion into Alaska's economy and I am the only candidate for governor that is guaranteeing a full dividend. Governor Walker's dividend-cutting policy is wrong on a number of fronts, and comes when Alaska is experiencing anemic growth, the highest unemployment in the nation, and outmigration. Alaskans were smart enough to create the Permanent Fund decades ago and they're smart enough today to decide if it needs to be changed. No change should be made to the PFD without a vote of the people. The other two candidates have endorsed plans that would cut your PFD – they say, to fund government.

WALKER

Our fiscal plan does include a broad-based tax to add an additional revenue stream to support State government. While I am open to other proposals, I could see an income tax as a means to bring in this additional revenue and a way to capture some of the \$1.6 billion dollars that leave the State each year in wages of out-of-state workers.

Right now in Alaska, there is the Alaska disconnect: that there is not a current link between economic growth in the state of Alaska and the services needed to support it. Until this issue is resolved, the Alaska economy will be stymied in terms of long-term development.

In many other states, economic development generally pays its own way—there is some tax or fee charged on the business in a manner that is sufficient to pay for public services to support that business. This is not true, however, in Alaska, where for many years, Alaska has been the beneficiary of a single revenue source: the price of oil.

Alaska has followed a boom and bust cycle for years. When we came into office, the drop in the price of oil had significant impacts for our economy.

While in office, we reduced our dependence on oil from 90% to just 30%. This was done in collaboration with the Legislature with SB 26. Our work has resulted in Alaska's credit rating being restored from negative to stable. We can also now issue General Obligation (GO) bonds. These steps are significant in getting Alaska's economy back on track.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable rural economies that balance Alaska's mixed cash and subsistence economy is key to improving the quality of life for Alaska Native peoples.

Q. How will you secure the basic infrastructure needed to develop, attract, and sustain profitable business ventures in rural Alaska?

BEGICH

For decades, rural Alaska hasn't received the investment it deserves for basic infrastructure, including broadband and affordable energy, and that must change immediately. My Alaska infrastructure plan will create a comprehensive list of capital investments that are objectively scored based upon safety, economic development potential, and community support. As mayor, we used this strategy and built more roads than the previous four mayors combined. As governor, I'll reassess the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to ensure we meet the needs of all Alaskans, not just those who have the influence to push their pet projects. Using a 6-year capital plan backed by a general obligation bond leveraging existing state resources, which will provide a minimum of \$2 billion to invest, we will tackle this problem head-on.

DUNLEAVY

Creating a stable business environment and supporting utilization of our natural resources is critical to Alaska's economy, which includes rural Alaska. This is one reason I do not support Ballot Measure 1. I believe Ballot Measure 1 will make economic development across Alaska more expensive and more difficult. As Governor, I will work with ANCSA Corporations, Tribes, Community Development Quota groups, ARDORs and municipalities to best move our state forward for the betterment of all Alaskans. Red Dog mine is a prime example that benefits NANA and its shareholders, all ANCSA corps through the 7i and j sharing, the NWA Borough, and many other Alaskans that work there.

WALKER

One way I will secure basic infrastructure needed to develop, attract, and sustain profitable business ventures in rural Alaska is in collaboration with the Governor's Tribal Advisory Council (GTAC), established in 2015. This group, made up Native leaders, can help identify and prioritize different needs in rural Alaska.

At GTAC, state Commissioners and senior staff are required to attend the GTAC meetings on a regular basis and discuss any issue brought up by the Council. Commissioners and senior staff are also required to provide an update on any Tribal/Native related activity that may be of interest to the Council. This creates a space where Native leaders own the dialogue, but also mandates the participation of the State.

Consultation and collaboration is another avenue I am mandating for the State. While this model is not yet perfect, we have ensured we won't let that stand in the way of good, solid progress. It provides a place to start conversations and provides an avenue for Tribal Sovereignty recognition. I have seen the dedication by most of my Commissioners to recognize our government-to-government relationship with Alaska's sovereign Tribes, but I also see the need to spread that message to every line staffer employed within the State. This work will perpetuate through any development project initiated by the State of Alaska.

Another way I will secure basic infrastructure is to continue to invest in deferred maintenance for projects around the state, and to support the use of the Alaska Marine Highway System. I understand the importance of this socio-economic transportation link, and that this system is a lifeline for many communities. In 2016, I signed an MOU with Southeast Conference to look at how to sustain this system for the long term. The resulting group from this, the AMHS Reform Group, has looked at changing the AMHS governance structure and implementing other changes to ensure reliable service to communities. I will continue to look for ways to enhance and improve service on the AMHS during the next four years.

Q. How will you ensure resource development in rural Alaska equitably benefits rural Alaskans?

BEGICH

Rural Alaskans deserve their fair share of the benefits of resource development, which happens almost exclusively where they live. Tribal consultation must begin at the moment there is consideration of a new development project. When you look around our state and see successful projects, those have occurred when resource developers have listened to and involved rural Alaskans from the start: running Native hire programs, consulting with communities, and addressing concerns. We also can't forget that 25% of resource revenue, almost all from rural Alaska, goes into the permanent fund – which is then shared with every Alaskan. I believe cuts to the Dividend not only disproportionately harm Elders, children, and those fighting to make ends meet, but also short-change rural Alaskans.

DUNLEAVY

Creating a stable business environment and supporting utilization of our natural resources is critical to Alaska's economy, which includes rural Alaska. This is one reason I do not support Ballot Measure 1. I believe Ballot Measure 1 will make economic development across Alaska more expensive and more difficult. As Governor, I will work with ANCSA Corporations, Tribes, Community Development Quota groups, ARDORs and municipalities to best move our state forward for the betterment of all Alaskans. Red Dog mine is a prime example that benefits NANA and its shareholders, all ANCSA corps through the 7i and j sharing, the NWA Borough, and many other Alaskans that work there.

WALKER

Resource development in rural Alaska is stagnated due to high costs of energy. We need innovation to offset the prohibitive cost of energy in Alaska, especially rural Alaska. There are many naturally occurring opportunities for hydro, tidal, wind, thermal, and possibly even solar throughout Alaska.

We need to gather all of the knowledge and resources that have already been compiled and conducted on these opportunities and see how we can support their implementation. The State has initiated various energy projects over the years, but due to budget constraints, we have lost many energy programs dedicated to aid our communities.

With a fully sustainable budget, we can continue to invest in projects to develop renewable energy and reenergize programs such as the weatherization program. Another avenue to address the disparity in the high cost of energy is through Alaska Liquified Natural Gas (AKLNG) revenue sharing.

Twenty percent revenue sharing from the sale of the state's share of natural gas is mandated by law for this project and will be dedicated for the sole purpose of reinvesting in energy development, including renewable energy, for our rural communities, and as noted before, is another area worthy of potential compacting with Tribes since they know best what will work for their communities. I see this as a huge win for the State of Alaska and know it will benefit beyond energy, but to other facets of energy consumption such as water and wastewater.

We have also advanced the building of the Trans-Alaska gas line, scheduled to begin construction in 2020. This project will employ approximately 15,000 Alaskans during construction under a Project Labor Agreement that ensures a hiring preference of Alaskans. It would also create tens of thousands of additional jobs in rural Alaska during construction, and we could build incentives into the construction contract to have an Alaska Native hiring preference. Those construction jobs would pay between \$20,000-\$30,000/month during construction and there would be about 1,000 permanent operational jobs over the 30+ year life of the project.

Q. What is your plan to increase broadband/internet connectivity to advance economic development in rural Alaska?

BEGICH

Broadband connectivity as a key infrastructure investment and part of my infrastructure plan. All Alaskans need reliable, affordable broadband to be able to choose to participate in the information economy. My administration will invest in broadband connectivity and work with companies who manage these networks to provide culturally-appropriate technical support and installation assistance to achieve full connectivity. Local Alaskans must be trained to maintain broadband infrastructure, so that local communities aren't waiting for specialists from urban areas to travel to villages to deal with problems. I'll work with the federal delegation to ensure federal funding for broadband access is not

cut by the FCC. And I'll enact net neutrality protections – particularly important in rural communities that almost never have competition between broadband providers.

DUNLEAVY

Creating a stable business environment and supporting utilization of our natural resources is critical to Alaska's economy, which includes rural Alaska. This is one reason I do not support Ballot Measure 1. I believe Ballot Measure 1 will make economic development across Alaska more expensive and more difficult. As Governor, I will work with ANCSA Corporations, Tribes, Community Development Quota groups, ARDORs and municipalities to best move our state forward for the betterment of all Alaskans. Red Dog mine is a prime example that benefits NANA and its shareholders, all ANCSA corps through the 7i and j sharing, the NWA Borough, and many other Alaskans that work there.

WALKER

All Alaskans should have meaningful Internet access. Internet access is as essential as the many utility services we take for granted, such as sewer, water, and electricity. It can be a lifeline--access to education, health services, or law enforcement hundreds of miles away.

Earlier this year, I met with Brad Smith, President and Chief Legal Officer at Microsoft about our need for broadband in Alaska and their goal of broadband in rural areas of the US by 2020. In April, I penned a letter to him, formally asking him to consider working with the State of Alaska to enhance broadband connectivity through his Rural Airband Connectivity initiative. I suggested to him: if he can solve the challenges of broadband connectivity in rural Alaska, he can use that technology anywhere in the world.

This May, the State of Alaska announced an exciting new partnership with Education SuperHighway, a non-profit organization committed to helping states expand broadband opportunities to Alaska schools. The organization is already in use in 29 other states, and provides advocacy and consultation services.

I plan to build off the work of these and other efforts in order to expand broadband throughout the state.

ENERGY

Rural Alaska villages are among the most economically depressed communities in the nation, yet they have the highest per capita fuel costs.

Q. Will you seek to utilize the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) Fund to help balance the state budget gap?

BEGICH

As governor, I will invest in renewable energy sources to help lower costs in rural communities. I support and will maintain the PCE Fund, and I support Senator Hoffman's bill to allow use of excess earnings for renewable energy projects. Alaska has all the resources to become a leader in clean energy: we can utilize wind, hydro, tidal, and solar power, and leverage our university system to lead on energy innovation. I will engage tribal leaders, labor, the university, career and technical education programs, and others to ensure we are developing our own, Alaska-grown workforce to put us on the cutting edge of efficient, low-cost energy production. We must achieve scale in our rural communities and deploy emerging technology to the microgrids across rural Alaska.

DUNLEAVY

We are an oil producing state and a huge share of Alaska's economy is dependent on oil. Yet our state has some of the highest energy cost in the nation and rural Alaska is hit even harder, in part because of transportation costs. As a State Senator, I supported SB 21 – and it's working. Alaska's decline in oil production has been stopped and we are now on an upward swing. A robust economy and cash flow can help sustain the state's continued support of PCE and the renewable energy projects through the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA).

WALKER

I will not seek to utilize the Power Cost Equalization Fund to help balance the state budget gap. This fund serves a specific need and purpose, and I would not use this fund to help balance the state budget gap.

VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTIONS

Alaska Natives were among the last in the nation to achieve suffrage, and continue to experience unequal treatment under the law, which prevents full access to the ballot box.

Q. What measures will you take to improve the Language Assistance Program?

BEGICH

The State must provide all voting materials and ballots in the languages that Alaskans use. In the US Senate, I worked closely with Native leaders and voting rights experts to introduce legislation to improve language assistance in Alaska and across the country. While my *Native Voting Rights Act* hasn't been passed yet, its key provisions are now part of the consensus bill to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act in the US Senate. I'll listen closely to Native leaders about the shortcomings of our current program and will ensure every Alaskan has all the information they need, in the language they use, to make informed voting decisions. My administration will provide every resource necessary, including all voting materials, in Native languages to ensure equal voting access.

DUNLEAVY

The fundamental foundation of our democracy is our right to vote. I am committed, as is Lieutenant Governor candidate Kevin Meyer, to uphold and protect every eligible Alaskan's opportunity to cast a ballot. We will work to rebuild trust in the integrity of Alaska's elections, by ensuring that the process is fair, accurate, secure, and impartial.

WALKER

I would, in partnership with the Lieutenant Governor, continue to expand the number of bilingual outreach workers and continue to enhance the Language Assistance Program with the Division of Elections.

Per the Alaska Constitution, the Lieutenant Governor oversees the Alaska Division of Elections. Both he and I are committed to expanding our Language Assistance Program in the state.

Under the direction of Alaska Native Election's Director Josie Bahnke, a more diverse workforce has been hired and trained. We now have 141 bilingual outreach workers for the 2018 general election. Under the Walker/Mallott Administration, the division expanded its language assistance to include Inupiaq, Alutiq and Aleut and will continue this effort by expanding the translated Official Election Pamphlets to rural villages, and recruiting additional local bilingual outreach workers. For more information check out the Division of Elections' website: www.elections.alaska.gov/Core/languageassistance.php

In 2018 the Division of Elections hosted its first Language Summit at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, focused on learning ways to enhance language assistance for Alaska voters and planning for future elections.

Furthermore, when we came into office, Lt. Governor Byron Mallott immediately began to work with the Division to settle a lawsuit filed against the state for failure to provide language assistance. The resolution of the 2013 Toyukak vs. Treadwell case, filed on behalf of Alaska Native elders Mike Toyukak of Manokotak, Fred Augustine of Alakanuk, and the tribal governments of Arctic Village, Hooper Bay, Togiak, and Venetie, was hailed by the parties, Alaska state officials, and Alaska Native groups throughout the state.

The landmark settlement provided a number of Election tools to enhance access to elections. Examples include pre-election dissemination of information in the Official Election Pamphlet to Alaska Native voters in their language and dialect; translation of election information into Gwich'in and several Yup'ik dialects in addition to the translations already made in the Central Yup'ik dialect; a requirement for increased collaboration with tribal councils to meet the needs of Alaska Native voters who need to receive election information in their native languages and dialects; and a full-time employee responsible for administering and coordinating all of the Division's language assistance activities. Other requirements included providing sample ballots in Gwich'in and Yup'ik that voters can bring into the voting booth with them; making Gwich'in and Yup'ik dialects available on touch-screen voting machines; increased pre-election outreach by bilingual election workers; preparation of glossaries of election terms and phrases in Gwich'in and several Yup'ik dialects to guide bilingual poll workers providing language assistance; and mandatory bilingual poll worker training on how to provide language assistance to voters.

We will continue to use these and other tools to expand access to elections moving forward.

Q. What measures will you take to improve early voting in rural Alaska?

BEGICH

Rural Alaska presents unique logistical challenges to voting, particularly early voting. All Alaskans deserve the same opportunity and access to voting. Now, early voting locations in rural Alaska aren't always as open and available as urban locations, largely because of a lack of staffing. The state doesn't pay poll workers enough to staff rural locations based on the false premise that it isn't a full-time job. That's just wrong. As governor, I will make sure the Division of Elections pays rural poll workers enough to keep early vote locations open to allow all voters the opportunity to early vote, and I will work closely with tribal and rural leaders to address other challenges. I'll also support vote-by-mail to increase voter participation and time to vote.

DUNLEAVY

The fundamental foundation of our democracy is our right to vote. I am committed, as is Lieutenant Governor candidate Kevin Meyer, to uphold and protect every eligible Alaskan's opportunity to cast a ballot. We will work to rebuild trust in the integrity of Alaska's elections, by ensuring that the process is fair, accurate, secure, and impartial.

WALKER

Currently, there are 187 early voting communities in Alaska for the upcoming November 6, 2018 general election. The effort to expand voting access and language assistance across the state began four years ago when Lt. Governor Byron Mallott initiated the Elections Policy Work Group (EPWG). The initial group included native leaders such as EPWG Chairwoman Liz Medicine Crow, Native American Rights Fund attorney Natalie Landreth, and former Alaska Lieutenant Governors, including Fran Ulmer. The group has expanded overtime to include rural and urban city clerks, members of the Alaska Legislature, the League of Women Voters, the US Postal Service, and Get Out the Native Vote representatives.

The group realized that paper ballots continue to be an important part of election security and maintaining voter confidence that their ballot is counted accurately in rural and urban Alaska. New voting machines to replace our state's 20 year old Accuvote machines will mean better technology for audio translations and improved language assistance. We plan to have those new machines ready for the 2020 election. Replacement of old technology with new voting equipment is just part of expanding access to the ballot and improving language assistance in early voting expansion. The new automatic voter registration that occurs when Alaskans file for their annual Permanent Fund Dividend is also another way rural Alaskans can be sure they are eligible to vote.

The EPWG has initiated research, surveys and rural focus groups to discover what Alaskans want in regards to expanded voting opportunities such as vote-by-mail and early voting. Lt. Governor Mallott has said if the new system doesn't work for rural Alaska it won't work at all. Therefore the EPWG continues to expand its statewide conversation to determine what unique ballot delivery system will work for all Alaskans.

AFN delegates are encouraged to stop by the Alaska Division of Elections AFN booth this week to meet some of their bilingual workers, and get more information on their voting rights.

SUBSISTENCE

A vast majority of Alaska's 120,000 Native people (nearly 20% of the general population) participates in hunting, fishing and gathering for food during the year. Subsistence remains central to the nutrition, economies, and traditions of Alaska's Native villages. The ability of Alaska Natives to continue to pursue subsistence activities is closely linked to food security.

Q. What do you know about subsistence?

BEGICH

I support a subsistence priority for Alaska Natives, whether the lands and waters are state or federal. I've visited fish camps throughout rural Alaska, spending time with elders and families and learning how subsistence sustains communities and creates a connection between families and across generations. Subsistence is a traditional and customary way of life essential to the nutritional, economic, and cultural well-being of Alaska Natives and rural Alaskans. I'll oppose federal lawsuits that threaten subsistence, like the Sturgeon case, and federal judges, like Brett Kavanaugh, who are hostile to subsistence rights. I'll fight to make preserve Katie John's legacy. And I'll use the power of the governor's office to force the Legislature to protect Native subsistence rights under state law.

DUNLEAVY

As mentioned before, I am married to an Inupiaq and for 19 years we lived in rural Alaska. We raised our children on subsistence foods and I fully understand its cultural, nutritional and economic importance.

Subsistence use of fish and wildlife resources is the highest priority under state law and my priority is the same as yours—ensuring fish and game are available for our children and grandchildren. Sustainability and conservation must be assured. As Governor, I'll ensure the state protects subsistence use and harvest patterns across Alaska, providing for abundance through predator management to support moose and caribou populations, and improving fishery assessments and supporting new research and use of local and traditional knowledge to understand and responsibly manage our resources. We should all be working together towards increased abundance, good science, and improved communication.

WALKER

Subsistence is more than a providing sustenance for the indigenous peoples of Alaska. Subsistence or as the Alaska Native Brotherhood/Sisterhood refers to it, traditional and customary hunting, fishing, and gathering, is the way of life for indigenous people of Alaska. The same salmon that Alaska Natives have depended upon for thousands of years continues to sustain them to this day. It is the history, traditions, and culture tied to the land, ocean, and waterways of Alaska. I have always said our local fishermen are the most important, and you cannot get more local than our subsistence fishermen and women.

I also understand the cost of living in our rural communities is unequally high. Groceries should not cost as much as they do, and this is also another reason why subsistence is so important. Not only is the subsistence gathering a manner to hold onto traditions, but it also provides the most nutritious and healthy food one could ever hope to consume. We are lucky to live in a state where we are still able to hunt, fish, and gather in our backyard.

Q. How would you improve the present dual federal-state management system for subsistence hunting and fishing?

BEGICH

Ideally, the legislature will act to change the Alaska constitution to recognize subsistence priority and reclaim our right to manage subsistence as a state, and as governor, I'll fight to make that change. But in the meantime, we are left with the dual management system. As governor, I will personally engage with the federal government to protect subsistence hunting and fishing. The State needs to consult with tribes to elevate this discussion and ensure rural voices have a true mechanism to participate. Federal subsistence board meetings are too hard to get to and too bureaucratic for Alaskans to have a true opportunity to influence the outcome. We need to send the board to rural Alaska to get tribal and rural Alaska input.

DUNLEAVY

As mentioned before, I am married to an Inupiaq and for 19 years we lived in rural Alaska. We raised our children on subsistence foods and I fully understand its cultural, nutritional and economic importance.

Subsistence use of fish and wildlife resources is the highest priority under state law and my priority is the same as yours—ensuring fish and game are available for our children and grandchildren. Sustainability and conservation must be assured. As Governor, I'll ensure the state protects subsistence use and harvest patterns across Alaska, providing for abundance through predator management to support moose and caribou populations, and improving fishery assessments and supporting new research and use of local and traditional knowledge to understand and responsibly manage our resources. We should all be working together towards increased abundance, good science, and improved communication.

WALKER

I am fully supportive of meaningful Alaska Native engagement and input into the stewardship and management of hunting, fishing, harvesting, and gathering in Alaska. I believe there is a solution to allow for an Alaska Native or rural preference. I know if the State were to work closely with the Alaska Native community and other stakeholders, we could identify solutions to protect the way of life for Alaska Native people into the future.

I have also engaged with Commissioner Cotten to identify other avenues of collaboration. We have worked hard to improve relationships along the Yukon River, but we need to find an avenue to spread a similar collaborative management method throughout Alaska. Local and indigenous input must be a part in the day to day management activity of ADF&G.

All fisheries are important, but we can gauge our success and the overall health of our fishery by our subsistence fishermen. If they are unable to fish, then we have not done our job to sustainably manage the fishery. I know there is a good balance, but that can only come through communication at the local level in a meaningful and consistent manner. Our fishermen know when and where the fish will arrive. Local and traditional knowledge can and should aid ADF&G in the management of our fisheries statewide.

Q. With Sturgeon pending again in the US Supreme Court, what is your position on protecting the legal status of the subsistence fishing priority in federal law?

BEGICH

I would immediately withdraw the State from the Sturgeon case, which the Walker administration is supporting. The subsistence fishing priority in federal law must be maintained, and I strongly oppose the plaintiffs' argument. Katie John fought hard to protect this right, and I am disappointed both of my opponents have supported Sturgeon. We cannot jeopardize subsistence rights, and as governor, I'll fight back with every legal tool available and make sure our state protections at least match federal ones. I'll fight to break through the gridlock and enact a permanent Native preference –we must preserve this traditional and customary way of life for Alaska Natives. With threats to our fish from climate change, it's more important than ever that we preserve subsistence rights.

DUNLEAVY

As mentioned before, I am married to an Inupiaq and for 19 years we lived in rural Alaska. We raised our children on subsistence foods and I fully understand its cultural, nutritional and economic importance.

Subsistence use of fish and wildlife resources is the highest priority under state law and my priority is the same as yours—ensuring fish and game are available for our children and grandchildren.

Sustainability and conservation must be assured. As Governor, I'll ensure the state protects subsistence use and harvest patterns across Alaska, providing for abundance through predator management to support moose and caribou populations, and improving fishery assessments and supporting new research and use of local and traditional knowledge to understand and responsibly manage our resources. We should all be working together towards increased abundance, good science, and improved communication.

WALKER

We have discussed one solution with Alaska Native leadership which is the possibility of hunting and fishing management or co-management by Alaska Native leaders on ANCSA land. It may be possible to root this special designation in the political recognition of Alaska's Tribes. This land should be founded and recognized not on a racial, but a political designation.

The original design of ANILCA was meant to provide for a subsistence priority. We will continue to work with our congressional delegation and AFN to push for a fix in ANILCA to protect the subsistence priority identified in legal precedence of the Katie John cases.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE

Protecting women, children, and vulnerable citizens from violence and abuse is a key ingredient in ensuring rural Alaskans are safe in their home communities. Many villages lack adequate law enforcement or have none at all.

Q. What is your view of how well the state is doing protecting rural families, particularly Native women and children?

BEGICH

Our state is currently failing when it comes to public safety – we are tragically #1 in crime, and our state has the highest rate of women being killed by men. Native women experience domestic violence at three times the national average. I believe the state has dual standards for public safety, with rural public safety not receiving the attention it deserves – but right now, the state is failing all communities. We cannot and must not accept this. The Native Justice Center continues to issue reports showing the disparate treatment of Alaska Natives by the criminal justice system, and I am committed to fixing it.

DUNLEAVY

We live in a land of laws where public safety should be the first priority of government. As Governor, I will make it Alaska's first priority again. The current administration inherited one of, if not the most, robust Alaska State Troopers and Village Public Safety Officer programs in the history of our state. Both have dwindled to pre-2010 numbers and I attribute this to a lack of leadership. I will restore this leadership so Alaskans will once again feel and be safe. Alaska now leads the nation in almost every category of crime, making our state the most dangerous in the country. As a State Senator, I voted against SB91, the catch and release crime bill. There must be consequences for criminals and I am the only candidate calling for the repeal of SB91.

WALKER

I knew coming into this office that addressing the striking inequity in Alaska's Public Safety system was a key problem. I have heard the cry for justice and equitable law enforcement from our rural communities and I am committed to strengthening the government to government relationship with Tribes and communities to create solutions that are impactful, whether it is compacting public safety or other solutions the community supports. We know one broad solution is not the answer; if it is about providing services to rural Alaska, but doesn't work for rural Alaska, than we need to address that.

Q. What actions will your administration take to improve public safety?

BEGICH

I've put forth a comprehensive public safety plan, with elements specifically targeted to villages and rural communities. I'll make sure that Village Public Safety Officers and village police have the training and support they need, including strengthening training and recruitment for these important officers, as well as for troopers, prosecutors, and parole officers. We must modernize recruitment to make sure we are getting committed, qualified individuals that we can train comprehensively to provide these essential services. Rural Alaska also needs district attorneys to bring charges that get criminals off our streets – too many communities aren't served at all by DAs. Finally, we must strike the balance between being tough and providing necessary treatment for those who want to get their lives back on track.

DUNLEAVY

We live in a land of laws where public safety should be the first priority of government. As Governor, I will make it Alaska's first priority again. The current administration inherited one of, if not the most, robust Alaska State Troopers and Village Public Safety Officer programs in the history of our state. Both have dwindled to pre-2010 numbers and I attribute this to a lack of leadership. I will restore this leadership so Alaskans will once again feel and be safe. Alaska now leads the nation in almost every category of crime, making our state the most dangerous in the country. As a State Senator, I voted against SB91, the catch and release crime bill. There must be consequences for criminals and I am the only candidate calling for the repeal of SB91.

WALKER

We have also been working closely with GTAC and the Chair of the Public Safety Committee, Jody Potts, to identify ways we could work better. One area of improvement is to ensure an effective VPSO program. A subcommittee was formed with the Department of Public Safety, Department of Law, TCC, and Tlingit & Haida to evaluate next steps to build concrete steps to improve this system. I also instructed the Attorney General to produce a public safety strategy, the Public Safety Action Plan (PSAP), to improve overall safety for Alaska. The PSAP has identified numerous improvement areas and many goals have already been achieved. Each iteration of the plan has included input and feedback from tribal leaders. Even with all the work to date, I realize we have only scratched the surface of where we should be with public safety.

Geographically, 98% of Alaska is not covered by a basic 911 service—so when you travel outside the core areas (Fairbanks, Anchorage, Mat-su, Juneau, and Kenai) there is a low likelihood of being able to contact help. The Governor's office has made it a priority to identify a successful route to build a statewide 911 system to allow better access for all Alaskans.

I fully intend to fund public safety to whatever means necessary to ensure every man, woman, and child in Alaska is safe.

OPIOID CRISIS

The national opioid pandemic has struck Alaska particularly hard at a time when state funding, services, and resources are stretched thin. The crisis is one of the main factors that has caused and uptick in crime.

Q. What is your proposed course of action to address this serious threat to Alaskans' health, safety, and well-being from opioids?

BEGICH

My proposal to tackle the opioid crisis combines elements from my crime and health care plans, as we must provide treatment for those who have become addicted while destroying the criminal business model that feeds addiction. We must have dedicated funding for treatment beds in local communities. We need to deliver real resources to build and increase capacity throughout our state, not just promises – we can't ask someone battling addiction to travel hundreds of miles from their family after they have already made the difficult step of seeking help. We cannot allow wait times for treatment to continue. The state must include wrap-around services that help individuals who receive treatment for substance abuse and are looking to transition back into healthy living within the community.

DUNLEAVY

This problem must be confronted on both the supply and demand fronts. I will seek stiffer penalties for drug dealers. We must work closely with the federal government on interdiction efforts. We must collaborate with health care providers to reduce prescription opioid abuse. For those who are addicted, it's my intention to ensure treatment programs exist to assist them. Drug abuse not only contributes to our crime problem, it further burdens our health care system, it undermines our economy, it wounds our families. Confronting this problem will be among my top priorities as Governor.

WALKER

Alaska, like every other state has been hit hard by the opioid epidemic over the last several years. Untreated substance use disorders impact crime rates, child neglect, emergency room overutilization and a host of other public safety issues.

This is one of the reasons I took executive action to expand Medicaid. Medicaid expansion now provides over 44,000 Alaskans with access to health care. Over \$1 billion in services have been provided since September 2015, almost all of it via federal dollars. Over \$80 million in behavioral health services have been made possible with expansion dollars during this same time period.

One of the key components of the Public Safety Action Plan is ensuring that we have sufficient access to mental health services throughout Alaska. Bottom line, we need more treatment.

That's why I included an additional \$18M for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Funds in my FY 19 budget. While the Legislature only funded \$12M, these funds will provide for more detox, treatment and crisis stabilization services in Alaska.

It's also why we have submitted an 1115 waiver for SUD services that allows us to waive the IMD (Institutions for Mental Disease) rule. Without the waiver, our providers cannot bill Medicaid for inpatient treatment if their facility has more than 16 beds. Medicaid is one of best opportunities to pay for SUD treatment, so we need this waiver to ensure that all of our facilities can be paid for these critical services.

Finally, we will be requesting an additional \$9.1M to expand treatment options in state FY 20.

SELF-GOVERNANCE, TRIBAL RELATIONS

Tribal nations are America's first governments and our role in the American family of governments is written into the Constitution, codified in treaties, executive orders, acts of Congress, and court decisions. Like state governments and foreign governments, Indian Tribes have the inherent power to govern their people and their lands.

Q. How do you plan to use your role to improve government-to-government relationships between tribes and the state government?

BEGICH

I support tribal recognition. The most important thing to improving government-to-government relationships is leading by example, and as governor, I will directly engage with tribal leaders and governments to prove my commitment to strengthening these relationships, as I did as mayor with Eklutna. I will charge every state agency to develop a tribal consultation plan within the first 90 days, based on conversations with tribes and rural communities, and I will require each agency to issue an annual report regarding the consultation that took place on their projects, specifically stating they responded to the advice received. I reject the idea that government-to-government consultations are something that should occur without adequate follow-up and true responsiveness from the state government, and I will hold all members of my administration accountable.

DUNLEAVY

Tribes have an important role in Alaska and with sound advice from qualified Alaskans, I intend to strengthen these relationships.

WALKER

The best example of a successful model of compacting tribal services I have seen is the successful model of compacting Tribal services with Alaska's world class tribal health care system. Thanks to DHSS Commissioner Val Davidson and her extraordinary team, we have advanced compacting through Health and Social Services, in Child Welfare Compacting. My Cabinet has also expressed interest to compact other services, such as Education, Parole/Probation, Half-way Houses, National Guard recruitment, and Public Safety. These discussions are ongoing and we will continue to update Tribes to the progress of these initiatives.

The Commissioner of Education is working to create a compacting opportunity with Tribes. Once Alaska Native sovereignty is fully acknowledged and utilized through compacting, we can expect to see an education system that is culturally-centered and trauma-responsive, with high expectations for all students in that system to succeed. This also requires the State to do its part in acknowledging the linguistic emergency of Alaska Native languages and help to restore and revitalize them. I am working with the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council to identify solutions in our education system and beyond to reawaken the languages in Alaska. I am also committed to providing an acknowledgement that is long overdue that Alaska is a Native place, and we should honor and embrace that heritage. Signage is one area where we can start to improve the recognition of Alaska Native peoples and the distinct languages that have grown from the lands of Alaska. I know it will make a difference for Alaska's indigenous youth to see their heritage acknowledged and celebrated by all Alaskans.

One issue that has prevented many opportunities for the State and Tribes to act on behalf of all Alaskans through government-to-government agreements has been the issue of Sovereign Immunity Waivers. Law has been identifying solutions to the barriers of Sovereign Immunity Waivers. We have already changed the culture throughout our departments by changing the culture of requesting a blanket sovereign immunity waiver.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Alaska Natives face many barriers to adequate health care and wellness. There are many terrible statistics that demand attention by our community and our leaders in all governments. Alaska leads the nation in deaths by suicide, these statistics demonstrate that Alaska Natives are particularly vulnerable.

Q. What will you do as governor to improve suicide prevention?

BEGICH

The high rate of suicide among Alaska Native peoples is a tragedy and an emergency that demands strong action from state government, as it has for years. As US Senator, I introduced legislation to fund training for teachers and others to recognize and address signs of mental health and self-harm issues to provide the quickest-possible intervention. This is a complex problem involving mental health, substance abuse, and economic opportunity, and we need a comprehensive response to address the root causes. I will never pretend to have all the answers, but I will work closely with Alaska Native communities to provide the resources needed to prevent suicide, from early intervention treatment to methods of reporting warning signs that account for the logistical challenges of rural Alaska.

DUNLEAVY

I believe every Alaskan should have access to quality health care, but we should be working toward market-based solutions to improve access and reduce costs. Medicaid was created to provide care to those who cannot afford it. Unfortunately, the program has a long track record of being riddled with problems. By expanding Medicaid prior to fixing it, we are taking away from those who really need the assistance and incentivizing able-bodied adults to not work. At this rate, it will be impossible to sustain Medicaid's growth. I support the Senate's action this year in passing SB 193, which would require able-bodied Medicaid recipients to work or volunteer. It is very revealing that the Walker Administration fought this common-sense measure.

WALKER

We now know that adverse childhood experiences (ACE) significantly increases the likelihood of behavioral health challenges, including suicidal thoughts and addiction. High ACE scores also increase the likelihood of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. We need to reduce childhood trauma in Alaska.

Last month, I along with Lieutenant Governor Mallott, and our First Ladies, Donna Walker and Toni Mallott convened a two day meeting on ACES and Trauma Informed Care. Every State Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and other leaders attended, including Tribal representatives.

Eliminating or reducing the number of traumatic experiences that our children experience improves their health outcomes. While this won't happen overnight, we need to begin the work today. We all need to do our part to make sure that our children grow up safe, healthy and happy.

It is one of the reasons I created the Alaska Children and Youth Cabinet, whose vision is, "Alaska is the best place to be a child." This sub-cabinet of Commissioners across numerous departments focuses on placing kids first in all decisions at the State level. Their first year of focus, in part, will include addressing childhood trauma.

In the meantime, we need to make sure that Alaskans receive the care that they need now.

Children and their families at risk of entering the child welfare system will gain much needed and expanded services under the 1115 Waiver. Identifying families at risk as soon as possible will ensure access to needed physical health and behavioral health services to help create a safer and healthier environment for children.

Through the public process for the 1115 Waiver, we identified gaps in the continuum of care for behavioral health services. The 1115 Waiver will expand services covered by Medicaid to fill these gaps, ensuring Alaskans have access to the appropriate level of care.

Last year, it was my honor to sign the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact with 18 Co-signers representing over 150 Alaska Tribes and Tribal Organizations. This government to government agreement is a recognition that Alaska Native cultures keep Alaska Native children safe. When we provide care as close to home as possible in a culturally appropriate manner, we have much better outcomes. Tribes are in the best position to do that and we look forward to more opportunities to extend the work beyond child welfare into other aspects of state government, like education and public safety.

The Affordable Care Act included permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, which brought the entire Indian Healthcare System (HIS) including tribal and urban programs and clinics, into the new system of health care delivery. Successful and seamless Implementation of the ACA will increase health care access for American Indians and Alaska Natives, support the IHS system of care, broaden services provided in rural communities, and strengthen an integral network of providers.

Q. Do you support the Affordable Care Act? Why or why not?

BEGICH

I've been reminded many times that the *Affordable Care Act* wouldn't have passed without my vote – and I've never regretted my vote. The ACA wasn't perfect, and the system still has challenges, but it's important that we remember the status quo before the ACA: lack of coverage, Alaskans thrown off their health plans by insurance companies when they got sick, Alaskans with pre-existing conditions denied all coverage, and outrageous insurance costs. The ACA has expanded coverage, protected Alaskans with pre-existing conditions, and slowed the growth of costs. The ACA allowed for Medicaid expansion, which has covered more than 40,000 Alaskans with minimal cost to the state, and I was able to include permanent reauthorization of IHS to provide Alaska Natives stable, comprehensive, and culturally-acceptable health services.

DUNLEAVY

I believe every Alaskan should have access to quality health care, but we should be working toward market-based solutions to improve access and reduce costs. Medicaid was created to provide care to those who cannot afford it. Unfortunately, the program has a long track record of being riddled with problems. By expanding Medicaid prior to fixing it, we are taking away from those who really need the assistance and incentivizing able-bodied adults to not work. At this rate, it will be impossible to sustain Medicaid's growth. I support the Senate's action this year in passing SB 193, which would require able-bodied Medicaid recipients to work or volunteer. It is very revealing that the Walker Administration fought this common-sense measure.

WALKER

Yes, I support the *Affordable Care Act*. I believe that every Alaskan should have meaningful access to health care. That's why my administration has taken affirmative steps to both reduce costs for consumers and expand Medicaid.

Those of us who were born here and those with the good sense to move here know that Alaska is a wonderful place to live. Not everyone agrees because we have a small population compared to other states. Our small population has made insurance coverage challenging. With only 18,000 Alaskans on the individual insurance market, our size just hasn't been large enough to attract and keep other insurers.

Ensuring affordable access to private insurance has been a priority for my administration. After a 40% increase in health insurance premiums, we created the Alaska Reinsurance Program through a federal Innovation Waiver. This program helps to cover the cost of care for Alaskans with high cost medical conditions. Premiums decreased 20% in 2018 alone for the 18,000 Alaskans in the individual insurance market. Other states are now following Alaska's lead in implementing similar reinsurance programs.

At the same time, we have also implemented innovative Medicaid refinancing initiatives that have allowed us to serve over 55,000 more Alaskans for about the amount as general funds that we spent in 2015 (approximately \$690 million). I'm not aware of any other state that has been able to accomplish that.

Q. Will you protect Medicaid coverage and the recent expansion in Alaska?

BEGICH

Absolutely. And I support equal access to care for every Alaskan covered by Medicaid. As governor, I will look for innovative ways to improve the Medicaid delivery system.

DUNLEAVY

I believe every Alaskan should have access to quality health care, but we should be working toward market-based solutions to improve access and reduce costs. Medicaid was created to provide care to those who cannot afford it. Unfortunately, the program has a long track record of being riddled with problems. By expanding Medicaid prior to fixing it, we are taking away from those who really need the assistance and incentivizing able-bodied adults to not work. At this rate, it will be impossible to sustain Medicaid's growth. I support the Senate's action this year in passing SB 193, which would require able-bodied Medicaid recipients to work or volunteer. It is very revealing that the Walker Administration fought this common-sense measure.

WALKER

Access to health coverage has been a priority of my administration. It is one of the reasons I took executive action to expand Medicaid. Medicaid expansion is providing over 44,000 Alaskans with access to health care. Over \$1 billion in services have been provided since September 2015, almost all of it federal dollars. At the same time, over \$80 million in behavioral health services have been made possible with expansion dollars.

Alaskans can't work, they can't hunt or fish and provide for their families if they are not healthy enough to do so. That's why health care has been such a priority during my Administration. Healthy Alaskans create a healthy Alaska. I'm proud to do my part to make sure that Alaskans continue to call Alaska home throughout their lives.

EDUCATION

Alaska's public education system is failing Alaska Native children. Alaska Natives constitute 19.5% of the state's population, and 23% of its school population. Alaska Native students are dropping out of school at a rate of 7.8% which is twice the rate of other students. Native youth are graduating from high school at a rate of only 47%. In the past several years, regions with Native enrollments greater than 80% often had the lowest proportion of schools meeting the adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks under the No Child Left Behind Act, and the percentage of Native students passing the reading, writing and math benchmark exams lag behind all other students statewide.

Q. What is your view of the current formula and method for funding Alaska's schools?

BEGICH

While the current funding formula does a good job of allocating resources based on the number of students, there are flaws that must be corrected. "Flat funding" while inflation and increases in healthcare and energy costs continue has squashed school performance. Small, two-year increases in funding passed by the legislature are helpful, but meaningful improvements must come from funding in the base student allocation, where it will be reflected year after year.

School funding is a battle in the Legislature each year, and it shouldn't be. My plan to constitutionally protect the PFD would also constitutionally implement a new formula for funding Alaska's schools that protects against inflation. Our state currently ranks 46th in educational performance – that's unacceptable, and the solution must include reliable funding.

DUNLEAVY

Our education system is in trouble. Alaska ranks worst in the U.S. on the 4th grade reading test. Children who can't read by the fourth grade won't be able to master other subjects – science, history, even math. We must demand better outcomes in reading, mathematics, and career-tech education. More money won't necessarily change outcomes. We must shift resources to prioritize learning in the early years, so that no child leaves third grade unable to read. We need to reduce burdensome administrative mandates on educators that take away time and energy from classroom teaching. We need better collaboration between schools, corporations, local communities and tribes to help achieve the outcomes that will prepare our students for happy and productive lives, regardless of where they live and what vocation they choose.

WALKER

Though the current formula addresses the increased cost of providing an education in rural Alaska, it does not provide adequate stability for small schools in a subsistence context. Closing small schools because enrollment may drop below ten deprives students of educational opportunities in those communities. A formula that allows temporary fluctuations in enrollment is needed.

The method for funding Alaska's school further destabilizes the public education system. The Legislature's current practice of delaying funding decisions until the end of session prevents districts from retaining effective educators, planning for efficient use of resources, and fostering creative solutions to education challenges.

Waiting to fund Alaska's schools at the last minute is unacceptable. I was heartened this year that we were able to forward fund education. We need to keep doing this in the future. Teacher performance lacks if there is uncertainty on pink slips. We must prioritize our kids, and place them at the center of our decisions. This means forward funding education.

Q. Will you commit to protecting school funding at its current level or increasing it? What solutions would you pursue to ensure that school funding is fair and equitable?

BEGICH

Yes. Young Alaskans are our state's greatest resource, and we must fix our educational system and take a new approach, including guaranteed funding - education cannot be a political football for the legislature. My plan to constitutionally protect the PFD also guarantees pre-K-12 funding to make sure that politics stay out of education funding. To recruit and retain the best teachers, we must forward-fund education and provide stability - as my plan would do. 90% of brain development happens by age five, which shows the importance of investing in early education. Every dollar invested in quality early childhood education saves \$7 down the line in reduced public services, increased economic activity, and savings from Alaskans not entering our criminal justice system.

DUNLEAVY

Our education system is in trouble. Alaska ranks worst in the U.S. on the 4th grade reading test. Children who can't read by the fourth grade won't be able to master other subjects - science, history, even math. We must demand better outcomes in reading, mathematics, and career-tech education. More money won't necessarily change outcomes. We must shift resources to prioritize learning in the early years, so that no child leaves third grade unable to read. We need to reduce burdensome administrative mandates on educators that take away time and energy from classroom teaching. We need better collaboration between schools, corporations, local communities and tribes to help achieve the outcomes that will prepare our students for happy and productive lives, regardless of where they live and what vocation they choose.

WALKER

During the worst fiscal crisis Alaska has faced over the past four years I have worked hard during each legislative session to protect school funding. My administration aggressively pushed back on annual calls for reductions to education dollars. I will continue that fight and work with the Legislature to increase funding to meet our current challenges and future needs.

Closing schools when enrollment drops below ten is inequitable. We must work with the legislature to provide a quality education for every single student in our state, regardless of the size of their community. I will work to establish an endowment for public education that transcends the price of oil and provides a stable funding source that grows with Alaska's students.

I will commit to protecting school funding and increasing it. Beyond forward funding education, I will commit to investing in key initiatives that are known to have successful outcomes.

Pursuant to the Alaska Education Challenge, I will work to ensure that there is funding to meet the needs of key priorities identified across the state, detailed more below.

I will also work with the GTAC Education Committee and other stakeholders to make sure that needs are being met across the state.

Q. What policy changes will your administration pursue to improve education for Alaska Native students?

BEGICH

I'll invest in preserving and revitalizing Alaska Native languages, which is part of my education plan for our state. I'm proud of the work being done at UAF – and we cannot allow our state's indigenous languages to become extinct, which could happen by the end of the century if the state continues to ignore this problem. I'll leverage the expertise of language experts in tribal communities and universities to develop a comprehensive strategy to revitalize traditional languages. I'll ensure Native students have access to educational opportunity at the university, in career and technical education, and with apprenticeships. In consultation with tribes, I'll make sure Alaska Natives who want to become teachers have access to education and incentives to bring their knowledge and expertise to villages, and I'll develop a real teacher retention program for rural schools that includes proper pay and benefits so we end high turnover and grow our own teachers.

DUNLEAVY

Our education system is in trouble. Alaska ranks worst in the U.S. on the 4th grade reading test. Children who can't read by the fourth grade won't be able to master other subjects – science, history, even math. We must demand better outcomes in reading, mathematics, and career-tech education.

More money won't necessarily change outcomes. We must shift resources to prioritize learning in the early years, so that no child leaves third grade unable to read. We need to reduce burdensome administrative mandates on educators that take away time and energy from classroom teaching. We need better collaboration between schools, corporations, local communities and tribes to help achieve the outcomes that will prepare our students for happy and productive lives, regardless of where they live and what vocation they choose.

WALKER

As Governor, we successfully partnered with Tribes to sign the first Child Welfare Compact. Tribes know best what will work for their children and can design education programs that really work just as they have done in healthcare, and make it better. The State has failed our children in many ways, but initiatives like compacting will have a positive impact now and into the future. The Commissioner of Education is working to create a compacting opportunity with Tribes. Once Alaska Native sovereignty is fully acknowledged and utilized through compacting, we can expect to see an education system that is culturally-centered and trauma-responsive, with high expectations for all students in that system to succeed. This also requires the State to do its part in acknowledging the linguistic emergency of Alaska Native languages and help to restore and revitalize them. I am working with the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council to identify solutions in our education system and beyond to reawaken the languages in Alaska. I am also committed to providing an acknowledgement that is long overdue that Alaska is a Native place, and we should honor and embrace that heritage. Signage is one area where we can start to improve the recognition of Alaska Native peoples and the distinct languages that have grown from the lands of Alaska. I know it will make a difference for Alaska's indigenous youth to see their heritage acknowledged and celebrated by all Alaskans.

I firmly believe that those closest to the problem are closest to the solution – and the solution to increase performance of Alaska public schools must come from communities and school districts themselves. This process has been ongoing over the past several years via the Alaska Education Challenge. Under this challenge, stakeholders from all 54 school districts, as well as other educational agencies, have set the stage to embrace priorities for the State moving forward with education. The State Board of Education approved a recommendation to pursue Tribal Compacting in education. The Challenge has identified key priorities: Cultivate Safety and Well Being, Increase Student Success, and Support Responsible and Reflective Learners. The momentum from this challenge and continued engagement with schools and stakeholders will lead to increased performance of Alaska public schools.

Already, the Alaska Education Challenge has helped the State identify 5 key trajectories: (1) that all students should read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade; (2) increase CTE and culturally relevant education; (3) close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources; (4) prepare, attract, and maintain professional teachers; and (5) improve the safety and well-being of students. We must continue to support these trajectories through our policies but also through the work of the newly created Children and Youth Cabinet – which focuses on placing kids first in all decisions at the State level.

Q. Do you support regional boarding schools?

BEGICH

NO. I strongly oppose both school vouchers and public funding for regional boarding schools. Our state has a constitutional obligation to provide a high-quality public education for every child, no matter where they live – and families should not be forced to send their children away to receive that education. I support efforts to work with tribes and create compacts for education.

DUNLEAVY

Our education system is in trouble. Alaska ranks worst in the U.S. on the 4th grade reading test. Children who can't read by the fourth grade won't be able to master other subjects – science, history, even math. We must demand better outcomes in reading, mathematics, and career-tech education. More money won't necessarily change outcomes. We must shift resources to prioritize learning in the early years, so that no child leaves third grade unable to read. We need to reduce burdensome administrative mandates on educators that take away time and energy from classroom teaching. We need better collaboration between schools, corporations, local communities and tribes to help achieve the outcomes that will prepare our students for happy and productive lives, regardless of where they live and what vocation they choose.

WALKER

I support Tribal Compacting and the right of tribes and families to make educational decisions for their students. I do not support adding State operated regional boarding schools.

While Mount Edgecumbe appears to be a successful model, I do not support adding regional boarding schools. Alaska's history of the boarding school model is troubling, and I think it would be a significant step backwards to move towards that model. Keeping kids in communities is essential to the vibrancy and health of those communities. Kids need to know where they come from, and be connected to their culture and their community.

AFN Federation of Natives

THANK YOU

**Thank you to the AFN Media and Elections
Committee for all of their hard work.**

Richard Peterson, Chair

Elizabeth Medicine Crow

Tom Panamaroff

Mary Sattler Peltola

Margaret Pohjola

Kim Reitmeier





Alaska Federation of Natives

3000 A Street, Suite 210

Anchorage, AK 99503

(907) 274-3611

afninfo@nativefederation.org

nativefederation.org