



INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER

*“Promoting choice, independence and quality of life
For persons and families living with disability.”*

HOMER
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PORT GRAHAM
NANWALEK
ANCHOR POINT
NINILCHIK
CLAM GULCH

August 19, 2019

To: Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly
From: Joyanna Geisler
Independent Living Center, Inc. (ILC)

KASILOF
SOLDOTNA
KENAI
NIKISKI
STERLING
COOPER LANDING
MOOSE PASS
SEWARD
HOPE
KODIAK
GLENALLEN
COPPER CENTER
VALDEZ
CORDOVA

This letter is to offer my support of the Final Recommendations of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Election Stakeholders Group that will be presented to you tonight. I was a member of this group that met bi-monthly since February of this year. I am heartened and encouraged by the commitment and results of this group. Throughout these six months of meetings, there was genuine interest and support for inclusive, private and accessible voting for persons with disabilities. The work done by the Group, especially by Johni Blankenship and Michele Turner, is extensive, well thought-out and commendable.

Please consider and accept these recommendations that will make voting on the Kenai Peninsula Borough inclusive, accessible and private for all. As with any barrier removal undertaken to meet accessibility guidelines of the American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA), not only will individuals with disabilities and their families benefit, but the general public will as well.

I look forward to hearing the discussion and again encourage your support of the civil rights for all residents of the Kenai Peninsula Borough to vote and our right to privacy.

Sincerely,

Joyanna Geisler

Joyanna Geisler
Executive Director
Independent Living Center, Inc.

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Blankenship, Johni

From: Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>
Sent: Sunday, August 18, 2019 7:32 PM
To: BoroughAssembly
Subject: New Public Comment to Assembly Members

Your Name: Donna Aderhold

Your Email: donnaaderhold@ci.homer.ak.us

Subject: Support for Election Stakeholder Group Final Report

Message:

Dear Assembly Members,

As a member of the Election Stakeholders Group (ESG) for the past seven months I am writing to express my full support of the group's final report and 6 recommendations to you. I appreciate Chair Ostrander and Co-chair Ahlberg presenting our report to you and this letter is in support of their presentation.

The ESG was comprised of a diverse group representing constituencies from across the borough. Our numbers included elected officials and city managers from municipalities throughout the borough, two borough assemblymembers, members of the KPB election canvas board, an Independent Living Center representative, and a member of the League of Women Voters. We were supported by subject matter experts with responsibility for running local elections: city and borough clerks, a borough attorney, and staff from the borough's IT and GIS departments. Each person brought a unique perspective and set of skills. Combined we asked detailed questions and explored many options and possibilities; and in the end we gained full consensus on all substantive decisions.

As a fundamental right of our form of government, all eligible voters should have full access to voting. The ESG was formed around ensuring that right for individuals with disabilities and all other voters who may be disenfranchised. During the course of our meetings, I learned that the borough municipal clerks and other staff are committed to conducting elections that are secure and accessible to all eligible voters. This knowledge gives me comfort in the overall integrity of elections on the Kenai Peninsula. I also learned about the barriers to secure and accessible voting; the largest barrier being the age of the existing voting equipment and the difficulties in providing accessible and independent voting with the current system.

Through presentations by the Department of Elections, Municipality of Anchorage (which recently converted to a vote-by-mail system), two different election software system vendors, and the borough's ballot and election packet printing vendor, and based on learning that the borough currently has a successful vote-by-mail system for remote communities such as Tyonek, Halibut Cove, Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, I have come to believe that it is time for the borough to adopt a borough-wide vote-by-mail system. New voting equipment is needed now, making now the optimal time to take this step.

Assemblymembers Hibbert and Dunne, who participated on the ESG, expressed to the ESG that they would co-sponsor ordinances needed to enact the group's recommendations. I hope each of you will work with Assemblymembers Hibbert and Dunne to pass the ordinances in a timely manner. As the ESG member from the Homer City Council, I stand ready to sponsor ordinances to enhance the election partnership between the

borough and the City of Homer based on the additional recommendations in the final report.

I am happy to speak with any of you about my experience on the ESG and my enthusiasm for moving forward with the ESG's recommendations.

Thank you for your service to the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Donna Aderhold
Homer City Council
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