



LAYDOWN: Mayor's Report

NEWS RELEASE

# LISA MURKOWSKI

## UNITED STATES SENATOR | ALASKA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Murkowski's Interior Work Boosts Alaska Wildfire Prevention, Suppression**

#### *Chairman Ends "Fire Borrowing" Which Undercuts Threat Response Capability*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senator Lisa Murkowski today released the 2016 Interior spending bill that reins in federal overreach at agencies like the EPA, promotes responsible public lands management and contains several provisions that directly address Alaska's needs. As Chairman of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, Murkowski leveraged her position on the subcommittee to improve the capabilities and capacity for the nation's wildland firefighters.

"Wildfires consistently pose a threat to life and property in Alaska. We are currently dealing with two dangerous fires in Southcentral. In addition, last year residents on the Kenai Peninsula dealt with the destructive Funny River Fire and residents in the Interior faced several other wildfires. Because of this we need to provide forestry managers and brave firefighters the tools they need to keep Alaskans safe." said Murkowski. "That means not only increasing their ability to fight fires as they become threats, but also pre-emptively dealing with contributing factors that we can deal with beforehand – by creating defensible space around communities, building fire breaks, and thinning overly dense tree stands. I thank my colleagues for working with me on this important priority."

Alaska-focused forest provisions of the FY2016 Interior Appropriations bill include:

**Wildfire Prevention and Suppression:** Senator Murkowski was able to fully fund our nation's wildland firefighting efforts at \$1.126 billion, the 10-year national average needed for the effort. She also effectively ended the pattern of "fire borrowing" and increased the budget for preventative measures that can be taken in advance by \$30 million for Interior and the Forest Service.

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