



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Public Safety

DIVISION OF ALASKA STATE TROOPERS
Office of the Director

5700 East Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-1225
Main: 907.269.5511
Fax: 907.337.2059

April 12, 2017

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly Members
144 N. Binkley St.
Soldotna, AK 99669

RE: Ordinance 2017-09, An Ordinance Creating the Eastern Peninsula Highway Emergency Service Area ("EPHESA")

Dear Members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) Assembly,

As the Director of the Alaska State Troopers and a resident of the KPB, I am writing to express my support for KPB Ordinance 2017-09, proposing the creation of the Eastern Peninsula Highway Emergency Service Area. Through this effort, the Kenai Peninsula Borough can work to ensure consistent coordinated coverage for the almost 90 miles of heavily traveled Seward and Sterling highways bordered predominately by unoccupied land. I fully support the efforts of the Kenai Peninsula Borough to identify and implement a local solution to this problem.

The proposal by the Kenai Peninsula Borough to create a highway corridor service area funded by federal PILT payments presents a unique solution with many benefits for communities and the state. This will allow the Kenai Peninsula Borough to provide resources, support, and coordination to supplement struggling volunteer and other agencies in sparsely populated areas, and will greatly improve the efficiency of the services that do exist.

Currently, local communities, nearby EMS service areas, and other response organizations respond to accidents in the region in an inefficient patchwork manner. Local communities have few volunteers, and those they do have are overburdened with accidents on the highway that can require long transport times. When a local agency is unable to respond due to lack of resources, agencies as far as 60 miles away may be called on to respond. This can result in multi-hour waits for care, and the current system does not ensure a response. This legislation would allow for the borough to establish consistent and coordinated response to roadway accidents.

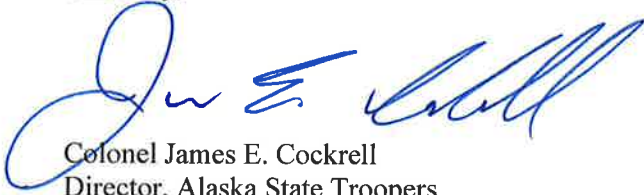
Many service areas within the KPB and throughout the state have long histories of providing quality service to their region. Restructuring these organizations in order to address a specific gap creates unnecessary obstacles for municipalities attempting to ensure emergency care for the travelers on their roads. For the Kenai Peninsula Borough, this corridor solution would allow the borough to provide resources to a specific roadway without requiring a much larger change, such as the adoption of borough-wide powers. While the adoption of borough-wide powers may be technically possible, the complexities of such an overhaul would be extremely extensive with the potential for numerous roadblocks along the way.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly Members
Page 2
April 12, 2017

The solution in Ordinance 2017-09 allows the Kenai Peninsula Borough to determine the best solutions for this important stretch of highway. Improved emergency response within EPHESA will benefit residents and visitors to the borough.

I support the passage of Ordinance 2017-09, establishing an emergency service highway corridor. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James E. Cockrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "E".

Colonel James E. Cockrell
Director, Alaska State Troopers

Cc: Walt Monegan, Commissioner
Bill Comer, Deputy Commissioner
Allison Hanzawa, Special Assistant to the Commissioner
Mayor Mike Navarre, Kenai Peninsula Borough