

**Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 12, 2017 10:52 AM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Name:** Ann Agosti-Hackett

**Email:** homeraha@gmail.com

**Subject:** Opening Prayer

**Message:**

I am opposed to opening meetings with a public prayer. I am in favor of a moment of silence, in which each person is free to pray in their own manner, if they so choose. I am opposed to the use of tax revenues to defend public prayer from the ACLU challenge to its constitutionality. Many of the people from whom this tax money comes do not share the belief in religious prayer during government meetings.

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 4:06 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Name:** Lynda Ann Martin Paquette

**Email:** lyndalamp@lampinalaskallc.com

**Subject:** Invocation and Brandi's Resignation

**Message:**

I apologize for submitting comments this way; ecomment was not working for me.

1) Regarding agenda item 2017-011: I am in full support of accepting Brandi's resignation. She has been absent from virtually day one and has left the SE side of the Peninsula in the dark and without representation for far, far too long. It's disappointing it's taken this long for her to step down. Any compensation she received should be requested reimbursed to the Borough. Our lack of representation leads me to a comment regarding the Invocation and lawsuit.

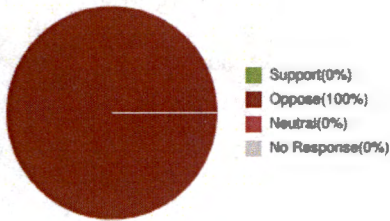
2) Because the SE side of the Borough has been without representation for months, I was completely unaware of the issue over the invocation until I started hearing about the lawsuit on TV News. I am completely shocked and certainly do not support any tax payer money to be spent on something so completely so out of order.

Our Country is founded on a separation of Church and State. I have never understood why there is an invocation at the beginning of a GOVERNMENT meeting. As soon as this became an issue the proper action would have been to cease and desist having an invocation. Just because there a bunch of religious people in the Peninsula does not give them the right to force the rest of us to have religion. That is why there is a division of church and state protected in our Constitution.

So, at this point you need to drop the lawsuit and cease and desist the invocation and this fight and stop wasting money, no matter whose money it is. Or as has been told to you over and over ~ you have to allow anyone to give the invocation. Since you are not willing to honor the other Constitutional protection, freedom of speech, you have to give up the invocation.

You CAN NOT have it both ways. And for all of you who think you can, you need to find a different Country to live in, because this country has protections that you obviously are not in favor of. We're not going to change our Constitution and Bill of Rights and give up what makes America so you can have a biased invocation at a government meeting. That's not this Country. Go find a country where that's how it works.

### Overall Sentiment



### Greg Andersen

Location:

Submitted At: 1:54am 01-18-17

It's obvious that this resolution was written by someone other than Mr. Bagley. Lawyer comes to mind first thing. All this appears to be is CENSORSHIP hidden in legalese text. This entire policy towards invocations has to stop. Why are you continuing to waste time and taxpayer money on fighting this arcane policy? Eliminate invocations entirely and get back to doing your jobs. It's criminal that my money is being wasted on this. Religious beliefs have no business here any longer.

Greg Andersen

Kenai

### Judy Gonsalves

Location:

Submitted At: 9:32pm 01-17-17

Dear Borough Assembly Members. You were elected to serve the business of the borough. Clearly and simply, your job is to tend to borough business. It appears that you take your role seriously in decision-making and attempting to represent the best interests of your diverse borough constituents. I commend you and thank you for that.

However, it seems to me that you were NOT elected as a borough assembly member to put yourself into a position of power to determine who gets to and who doesn't get to lead an invocation before a borough meeting. Your own beliefs notwithstanding, this invocation issue has turned into a matter that is taking too much time and money, and it needs to be resolved efficiently and fairly. And regarding the money, I am unduly disappointed in your decision to budget tax-payer funds to fight the ACLU lawsuit regarding this invocation. Do not waste my borough taxes on fighting this lawsuit. Doesn't our borough currently have enough financial restraints and responsibilities?

So, my recommendation is to do what's already been brought up. For those assembly members whose personal belief system relies on a form of spiritual guidance to help them with their borough business decision-making, call for a moment of silence, before the meeting starts. Do what you need to do to take care of yourself in preparation for your job for the evening. This moment of silence should work for anyone and everyone. Then call the meeting to order, and get down to business. The business of running the borough, to which you were elected. Thank you.

### Bruce Wall

Location:

Submitted At: 8:30pm 01-17-17

Several months ago when the subject of invocations at assembly meetings was first brought up, I was mostly neutral on the subject. However, after listening to bigoted comments from the public on this issue and rather strongly worded sectarian views from members of the assembly, I am no longer neutral on the topic.

To say that the rationale for supporting the current invocation policy is contained completely in the resolution



diminishes the role of comments from the public and the deliberative process of the assembly. It makes no sense to take public comments and then deliberate if the rationale for support is already contained in the pre-drafted resolution.

If during the deliberative process an assembly member expresses his sectarian views (sectarianism is a form of bigotry) and it goes unchallenged by other members of the assembly it is not appropriate for the assembly to dismiss those statements after the fact. The time to have clarified that the perspective of an individual assembly member was not part of the intent of the assembly was at the time those inappropriate comments were made. At this point the assembly as a whole needs to take ownership of the comments made during its deliberative process.

**Barrett Fletcher**

Location:

Submitted At: 7:33pm 01-12-17

It's too obvious that this resolution does NOT, in fact, express the view of the assembly, nor of the majority of the residents of the borough, but is solely an attempt by the author to deflect legitimate criticism of his personal views. It should be roundly rejected.

**Martin Schuster**

Location:

Submitted At: 7:13pm 01-12-17

I believe the only logical course of action for the assembly to take is to allow a moment of silence, which allows all beliefs or lack thereof to be represented, or to do away with the invocation all together. Any other course of action obviously results in needless controversy and wastes both the time of the assembly and the money of the tax payers.

**Eric Knudtson**

Location:

Submitted At: 7:12pm 01-12-17

Please eliminate this invocation policy. We need a separation of church and state because as our country based on religious freedom for ALL. Please don't impose religious beliefs on others and don't waste any more time and money on trying to implement this.

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 17, 2017 2:43 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Name:** Mary Trimble

**Email:** maryetrimble@gmail.com

**Subject:** 2017-012

**Message:**

To those of you who support spending tax payer funds for a lawsuit on this matter:

You must be crazy to choose to spend precious tax payer dollars for on this unnecessary issue. Please come to a sensible conclusion immediately! In my personal opinion, there should be no prayer before a government meeting. Those of you who are feeling so strongly about this should put your own funds up and not one penny of public money should go towards this. Even if we were rolling in dough, it would not be prudent to throw it away.

Please this is not an issue or principle that I support and you should not either. Settle it!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Trimble  
40 year Anchor Point resident  
and tax payer