

350 BONANZA AVENUE  
HOMER, ALASKA 99603  
U.S.A.

TELEPHONE: (907) 235-1007  
FAX: (907) 235-2029

## Haas & Spigelmyer Inc.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
& MEDIATION SERVICES

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly  
144 North Binkley  
Soldotna, AK 99669

February 21, 2017

Re: Policy on Invocation for Assembly Meetings

Dear Madam or Sir,

I would like to voice my opposition to the Assembly providing an invocation. You have unnecessarily backed yourself into legal problems. Since I have been a lawyer in Homer for 25 years, let me briefly explain why the problem is intractable.

The law on invocations was most recently and most clearly written in 2014 by the US Supreme Court. In *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, the Supreme Court allowed sectarian invocations to be given when the City Council had drawn its speakers at random (and who all happened to be Christian). It held that to require the invocations to be neutral would impose religious beliefs on the pastors. But along the same line, it ruled that while the City Council need not seek a Jewish prayer, it cannot reject it. The City Council must not discriminate against other religions:

The town made reasonable efforts to identify all of the congregations located within its borders and represented that it would welcome a prayer by any minister or layman who wished to give one. That nearly all of the congregations in town turned out to be Christian does not reflect an aversion or bias on the part of town leaders against minority faiths. So long as the town maintains a policy of nondiscrimination, the Constitution does not require it to search beyond its borders for non-Christian prayer givers in an effort to achieve religious balancing.

With all due respect, your policy does discriminate against Jews when you prohibit a Jewish invocation. There are a lot of us who do not pray in Jesus' name. That's not to detract from those who do. But when we are asked to do so, that removes us and tells us that we should not participate. And that is just wrong. A Judeo-Christian concept speaks of a shared background; it does not mean that Jews accept Christ.

So how are you going to fix this? Here are your choices:

- 1) Maintain the current policy and lose to the ACLU; pay their legal fees; and have the current law struck down. Bad choice.
- 2) Revert to the earlier policy of allowing anyone to give the policy. I don't have a problem with this. But a lot of people do.
- 3) Eliminate invocations. Use the money that you would spend on legal fees to do something that glorifies God as a constant reminder to you—let's say hire

a teacher.

Candidly, those are your choices. Obviously, choice # 3 is the best. Please consider it. You have more important things to do than to spend money on yourselves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andy Haas', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Andy Haas

RECEIVED

FEB 21 2017

2-16-17

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Borough Clerk's Office  
Kenai Peninsula Borough

RE: Paul Vos

144 N. Binkley St

Ph. 260-6660

Soldotna, AK

Dear Mr. Bagely

From what I recently discovered there is a request for input on the contentious "invocation" policy at the beginning of public related decisions and borough business.

I, along with my better half, have respect for peoples belief in some sort of "spiritual guidance" in their personal lives.

We, along with many ~~rational~~ rational thinking people, believe prayer to be a very personal thing and not to be propagated in a normal secular government decision dealing with public matters....

In other words; prayer and "invocations" belong in a house of worship or home, with silent personal reflections, or the third literal definition, "crystal ball" parlors "set of magic words to call forth spirits"

These are literal definitions of "INVOCATION" not some thing that should be vocal in a very secular setting... Separation of church and state comes to mind...

Sincerely Myma and Paul Vos

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Janet Fink <janetfink17@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 21, 2017 6:49 AM  
**To:** G\_Notify\_AssemblyClerk  
**Subject:** Ordinance 2017-2

February 21, 2017

Dear Borough Assembly,

I am writing in support of the ordinance 2017- that would eliminate an invocation at the beginning of Borough Assembly meetings for two reason. The first is that the invocation, as it stands, is unconstitutional. For example, as a person that is Jewish, I would be unable to lead an invocation since there is no temple on the list of approved religious organization on the peninsula. The meetings are supposed to be a place where all residents feel welcome. It is not very welcoming when the first thing on the agenda alienates a portion of the population.

Secondly, It is going to cost the borough a great deal of money to defend the constitutionality of the law against the lawsuit filed by the A.C.L.U. This is money that is not available in this time of a very tight economy in Alaska.

Please vote to adopt ordinance 2017-2.

Sincerely,

Janet Fink

64957 Da Mar Loop

Homer Alaska 99603

907-235-6890

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2017 3:10 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Ed Oberts

**Your Email:** ed@redoubtrealty.com

**Subject:** Invocation

**Message:**

Please support keeping the invocation. I strongly believe in the taking time for an invocation is good for the borough assembly, just as it is good for the State of Alaska and our country.

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2017 2:15 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Charlie Franz

**Your Email:** kachemakcharlie@gmail.com

**Subject:** Ordinance 2017-02

**Message:**

Dear Assembly Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Ordinance 2017-02, "An Ordinance Amending KPB 22.40.080 and repealing KPB 22.40.090, which Provide for an Invocation During Assembly Meetings."

I am not a particularly religious person, but I am an American to my very core. Religious beliefs and our Judeo-Christian values are essential elements of our country. Efforts by secular members of our society to eliminate any reference to God or religion from activities of our government are wrong and should not be condoned or encouraged.

The founders of our great country made frequent references to God and often asked for God's guidance in accomplishing their important work. The Borough Assembly faces challenging issues in much of its work and needs all the help it can get in making the best decisions possible. Having an invocation given by a representative of an organized religious group, as is the current practice, should be considered beneficial to all concerned.

Faith in God has always defined our nation. Every significant monument in Washington, D.C. bears witness to this indisputable fact. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and many other American heroes have written about how our nation's belief in God has sustained us in good times as well as bad times. Our government is premised upon a deeply religious ideal. The proposition that "all men are created equal" expresses a profound religious principle that recognizes God as the ultimate authority over any government. We are only equal if we are, in fact, created. Only if we assume we have a Creator can we assert that our rights have been "endowed" to us by God – and only then are those rights "unalienable."

Now, it's not only the courts, but also the executive and legislative branches, as well as the administrative bureaucracies, which have acted to ignore history and dramatically undermine our religious traditions and liberty. Please do not follow this path. Vote against Ordinance 2017-02.

Respectfully,  
Charlie Franz

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Rika Mouw <rikamouw@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2017 12:23 PM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** Ordinance on invocations at assembly meetings

Dear Kenai Borough Assembly members,

I would like to voice my complete support of Willy Dunne's ordinance regarding eliminating invocations at the Borough Assembly meetings.

Some years back, the City Council of Homer entertained the idea of introducing an invocation at the beginning of their council meetings. Discussions around the idea took up a tremendous amount of time and was needlessly controversial. After several meetings, it was decided to hold a moment of silence at the beginning of the meetings. Then after a while, that practice was eliminated.

I do not see a reason to mix borough business with any sort of invocation, silence or pledge. The borough assembly meetings are not a venue or time to do anything but get borough matters accomplished in an efficient, courteous, inclusive public manner.

Continuing with invocations, as controversial as they are, not only has taken a tremendous amount of time and expense, it is divisive, unnecessary, and now, possibly even more expensive with a pending ACLU lawsuit. Why would the borough assembly invite such division, diversion and expense? These are not the issues this body is tasked with addressing. The borough assembly's job is to handle matters of government.

Please return to that job and leave invocations out of the meetings.

Thank you,

Rika Mouw

P.O. Box 4084

Homer, Alaska 99603

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Deborah Smith <ton@xyz.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 19, 2017 8:04 PM  
**To:** G\_Notify\_AssemblyClerk  
**Subject:** to all Borough Assembly members

Dear Assembly Members,

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of the Ordinance amending KPB 22.40.080 and repealing KPB 22.40.090 to eliminate invocations prior to assembly meetings and thus end the lawsuit which the Borough is now involved in.

As a taxpayer I do not want my tax dollars to be wasted on this issue. You Assembly members have important issues such as roads, buildings, schools, and waste management which you need to focus your time on. These are where our tax dollars need to be spent, on items that help the citizens of the Borough, not a divisive lawsuit.

If this case were lost the Borough liability could be catastrophic. Please use reason and vote in favor of this ordinance.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Smith  
41589 Spruce Knoll St  
Homer, AK 99603



## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Cynthia Morelli <cmorelli@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 18, 2017 9:02 AM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** eliminate the Invocation

Dear Borough Clerk,

Please distribute this email to all on the Borough Assembly.

To All Borough Assembly Members,

Separation of church and state is part of the fundamentals of the United States of America.  
Please eliminate the invocation from all Borough meetings. I strongly support Ordinance 2017-02.

Sincerely,  
Cynthia Morelli  
60159 Lookout Ridge Ave.  
Homer, AK 99603

Dear Assembly Members,

I wholeheartedly agree with Willy Dunn's Ordinance.

Personally, i think, a moment of silence for people to tune into their Higher Nature, at the start of your meetings would be a beneficial focus and a perfect individual "invocation". But as an Assembly, you have seen fit not to allow that. So in order to get past this divisive issue AND to save the Borough residents the cost of a court battle with the ACLU, i strongly suggest that Mr. Dunn's Ordinance be accepted. The potential cost of this court battle to the KPB residents is really unconscionable!!

Maybe one day we will recognize, as the wise Sufi Master Rumi has said, "The lamps may be different, but the light is the same".

Thank You,

Kate Finn

POBox 3364 Homer 99603

235-5329

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Kevin Walker <homerkev@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2017 10:11 AM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** Invocation; Resolution 2017-012

To: All Assembly Members

Reject the invocation, and get on with the business of government!!!

Each Kenai Borough Meeting is:

A. Called to Order

B. All stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, which ends with "one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

We pledge our allegiance to God, and verify that there is JUSTICE FOR ALL. Not justice for those with approved religious beliefs. The purpose of the meeting is to govern the borough. Many of these meetings are very long, and several members have long drives home. Adding several minutes of religious invocation by an "approved" chaplain has nothing to do with governing the borough.

I strongly object to spending valuable assembly time and tens of thousands of dollars to try to justify a policy that discriminates against many borough citizens. And I often listen to the meetings on the radio, and turn it down / off for the invocation - a waste of time. I'm interested in the borough government, not approved (probably discriminatory) secular sermons.

Delete the invocation!

Kevin Walker, Kachemak City

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough, <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2017 12:00 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Lee Post

**Your Email:** boneman@xyz.net

**Subject:** invocation

**Message:**

As much as it seems silly to be spending such amounts of time arguing over who should be able to say what for the pre- meeting invocation talk, it is totally irresponsible to gamble spending public money on an issue that will ultimately likely lose when it gets to the courts. If those assembly members that think otherwise want to put up their own money in a gamble that the courts will agree that having government sanctioned religious pep talks is not a conflict between religion and government - let them pony up the defense fund . Otherwise I'm against tax-payer money being used for this purpose. You should know by now you will never be able to define what religious groups are acceptable and which are not in a way that the courts will agree. Just write this whole issue off as another sign that things aren't the way they used to be .

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 27, 2017 3:31 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Nicky Szarzi

**Your Email:** njszarzi@gmail.com

**Subject:** Invocation policy

**Message:**

I have long chaffed at the Christian invocations read at the beginning of Assembly meetings. I don't think religious invocations of any kind are appropriate accompaniments to a government meeting. Religious belief is a personal choice and should not be foisted on others without their consent and I do not consent to have any religion called upon publicly at a Borough Assembly meeting or other government meeting. If assembly members feel the need to invoke something before a meeting why doesn't a designated member ask the other assembly members to keep an open mind, listen to one another and empathize with each others opinions.

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Nina Faust <fausbail@horizonsatellite.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 01, 2017 10:36 AM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** ORDINANCE 2017-02

Hi Johni,

Please send to the Assembly Members and Mayor Navarre and include for the public hearing on this ordinance. Thank you.

Nina

P.O. Box 2994  
Homer AK 99603

March 1, 2017

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly  
Mayor Mike Navarre  
144 N. Binkley Ave.  
Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Assembly Members and Mayor Navarre:

**RE: ORDINANCE 2017-02: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING KPB 22.40.080 AND REPEALING KPB 22.40.090 WHICH PROVIDE FOR AN INVOCATION DURING ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

I am strongly in favor of this ordinance and urge the Assembly to pass it. There are many reasons I favor doing away with the invocation.

First, times have changed. We are a much more diverse nation and state than we were 30 years ago. With multiple religious organizations and many ethnic groups now in our Borough, it is difficult to please everyone. This issue has now become contentious and divisive with some wanting only one religion to give the invocation, some wanting all comers, and some wanting to restrict which groups can say the invocation. At least two of these options are likely unconstitutional. Separation of church and state helps avoid these sorts of disagreements. I believe this is a strong argument to drop the invocation and just get to Assembly business.

Second, the Borough cannot afford to spend \$50 to \$75 thousand dollars defending an unconstitutional ordinance. We have so many important ways to spend our dollars providing core services, such as education, health and public safety, transportation, and more. I think this is a serious waste of our tax dollars.

Third, we as a Borough stand to gain a huge black eye by having hired the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) to handle this issue. ADF was recently added to The Southern Poverty Law Center's active anti-LGBTQ hate groups list. I do not believe it appropriate for the Borough to hire an Outside group with such a divisive reputation. Why are we even hiring an Outside organization? There are not plenty of Alaskan lawyers and our own Borough lawyer?

The solution to this matter is simple--follow the example of other municipal bodies, like Homer, Kenai,

Soldotna, Anchorage, or Mat-Su, and simply do away with the invocation. I urge you to pass this ordinance.

Sincerely,

Nina Faust



Kenai Peninsula  
Borough  
@Kenai.Peninsula.Boroug  
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MOST HELPFUL

MOST RECENT

STAR RATING

Tell people what you think



Chris Morgan reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough —  
January 23

How much more taxpayer money are you going to waste on defending your unconstitutional invocation policy? If you are so dedicated to your beliefs, you should be paying for the ACLU lawsuit out of your own pockets. Stop using our money to discriminate against us!

[imgur.com>/fbBb196.jpg](#) (sorry, I can't directly post the URL)  
Is this the kind of misogyny you want giving invocation? Is this what you have been wasting our tax money on? For shame! I guess it makes sense. The bible does seem to really hate women.....

Like Comment Share



Kasey Adorhold reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough —  
December 18, 2016

Thank you to our assembly members Kelly Cooper and Willy Dunne for their common sense on this invocation ordinance. I sure hope that the whole organization will start listening to them and see this as the unconstitutional waste of money and time that it is before too long.

2  
Like Comment Share

1 Comment



Sam Gray reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough —  
December 18, 2016

You would think elected officials would be smart enough not to write illegal laws and get sued by the ACLU but sadly we live in a time where the Borough is more concerned with special interests and the benefits of serving them over doing what is right for their constituents.

1  
Like Comment Share

1 Comment



Shari Mark Shinn reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough —  
December 4, 2016

If the dump has to be closed one day a week that's fine but why can't it be on a week day like Monday. This is ridiculous closing on a Sunday!!!

Like Comment Share

1 Comment



Michael Wilson reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough —  
September 21, 2016

Search



They need a general contact email or messenger contact for those who do not know which department or person to contact. This on both the Facebook page, and on their site.

Like Comment Share



**Kenai Peninsula Borough** Our general office number is 907-714-2150 8:00AM-5:00PM. How can we help?

Like · Reply · September 21, 2016 at 7:42pm



**Dave Soybert reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough** —  
August 13, 2016 ·

You must want it if you allow it...shame on you...wondered about what people will say or whatever, but instead of quitting your job or standing up for God, you caved in and invited Satan in...What do you think God will do with your souls now?

Like Comment Share



**Kirsten Baltz reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough** —  
December 18, 2016 ·

I do not pay property tax so you can waste my money by passing unethical and unconstitutional ordinances.

1

1 Comment

Like Comment Share



**Stuart Schmidt reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough** —  
December 18, 2016 ·

I though we were supposed to be "Tightening our belts", not wasting tax payer money fighting the ACLU.

Like Comment Share

1



**Chris Morgan** This is exactly why they should be paying for the lawsuit out of their own pockets!

Like · Reply · 1 · January 23 at 2:29pm

Write a comment...

Press Enter to post.











**Joseph Womochil reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough** —  
August 13, 2016 ·

Why would you allow a prayer to Satan in your city council?

1

2 Comments

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	<b>Karaboo Steele</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — August 15, 2016 ·	
I think any office supporting satan worship in an entity like the KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH..SHAME ON YOU ALL		
Like	Comment	Share
	<b>Chris Morgan</b> I think any office supporting religion in an entity like the KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH..SHAME ON YOU ALL FTFY Like · Reply · January 23 at 2:33pm	
	<b>Cheryl Setse</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough. March 28, 2013 ·	
I just finished marching in the Govenor's "Choose Respect" march here in Seward!		
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	<b>Keith Baxter</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — September 20, 2016 ·	
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	<b>Delores Riekema</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — June 20, 2015 ·	
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	<b>Dea Arb Leslie</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — May 21, 2014 ·	
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1		
	<b>Anna Boze</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — December 28, 2013 ·	
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	<b>Sylvia Deese</b> reviewed Kenai Peninsula Borough — October 29, 2013 ·	
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RECEIVED

Feb. 27, 2017

Kenai Peninsula Borough  
ATTN: Assembly Clerk  
144 N. Binkley  
Soldotna, AK 99669

MAR 02 2017

Borough Clerk's Office  
Kenai Peninsula Borough

Suzie Kendrick  
P.O. Box 4502  
Soldotna, AK 99669

To the Honorable Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly members,

It is with a great deal of thoughtfulness and purpose that I send this letter. Because I have no option to define my intent within the official format to apply for the right to provide an invocation to the body, I am appealing for an "exception" to the Borough requirements for being a recognized "association."

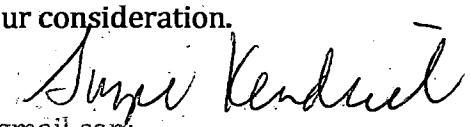
I feel compelled to express my dismay at the Assembly's failure to recognize that an official, "approved," religious pre-meeting invocation "for the benefit of the assembly to accommodate their spiritual needs" has no place in government.

As someone who claims neither faith nor disbelief in God, I, along with many other Borough residents, feels strongly that assembly meetings be called to order and immediately begin doing the people's business. If any assembly member wishes to "accommodate their spiritual needs," they should do so privately. It is inappropriate to incorporate a protocol that has and will continue to alienate anyone who does not share in those beliefs.

In an effort to raise awareness among the assembly, as someone who does not participate in "meetings for the primary purpose of sharing a religious perspective," my agnostic invocation will deliver a solemnizing message to members to use the official meeting for the purposes they were elected by their constituents.

As a 37-year resident of the borough, I respectfully ask that I be allowed to deliver my non-religious, invocation. I will respectfully make the case that non-inclusive, religious-based invocations are a distraction from the vital issues currently facing the Kenai Peninsula Borough and Alaska.

Thank you for your consideration.

Suzie Kendrick  
  
suzie.kendrick@gmail.com  
907-987-7661

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Konrad Schaad <schaad@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 02, 2017 10:15 AM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** Prayer before assembly meetings

To whom it may concern:

I've lived on the peninsula since the early 80ies and have seen quite a few controversies come and go. Quite frankly, I'm appalled that our borough is wasting so much energy, time and our money to fight for something that has no business in government.

Religion is very personal choice, and as we all learned from the woman hailing satan at a meeting: it is very offending to have a "prayer" of a different faith at any public meeting. That's what churches are for. Quit wasting our money and your time on this subject; you will lose in court anyways since the law is quite clear.

No more invocation, or government sponsored prayer at assembly meetings. Pray at home before you get there!

Sincerely,  
Konrad Schaad  
53200 N McNeil Pt  
Homer, Ak 99603

--

Konrad Schaad  
907 299 2790

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Donna Martin <donnioak@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 01, 2017 4:42 PM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** INVOCATION--GET RID OF IT!

Please eliminate the invocation from the Assembly meetings. I respect everyone's right to their own religious beliefs, but I respect the separation of church and state more. I resent having my taxpayer dollars spent on this lawsuit, which could have been avoided by eliminating the invocation.

Donna Martin  
PO Box 3283  
Homer AK 99603

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Carol Griswold <cgriz@ak.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 03, 2017 9:32 PM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** for the Assembly

Hi Johni,

This is a repeat letter, but it sounds like some members of the Assembly need to hear it again.

Thank you!

Carol

> Dear Mayor and Assembly,

>

> Re: invocations

>

> "This meeting is called to order" is the most logical way to start the

> Assembly meeting.

>

> I completely agree with the excellent article submitted by Thomas

> Pease in ADN.

> <[https://www.adn.com/opinions/2016/12/28/drop-the-invocations-and-get-](https://www.adn.com/opinions/2016/12/28/drop-the-invocations-and-get-down-to-business/)

> down-to-business/>

>

>

> I urge the Assembly to drop the invocation and moment of silence, and

> get down to business.

>

> Thank you very much.

>

> Carol Griswold

> Seward

--

Please visit my Sporadic Bird blog for photos and bird reports at:

<<http://sporadicbird.blogspot.com>>

Diana Conway  
PO Box 6429  
Halibut Cove, AK 99603-6429

alaskadiana@gmail.com  
907-296-2225

TO KENAI PENNINSULA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY MEMBERS:

The question of invocations at Assembly meetings will again be addressed with public testimony on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Judging from past public testimony there will be strong opinions expressed on both sides of the issue. It's good that our Assembly allows for public debate on this issue, however the matter cannot be decided merely by counting how many testify.

Please keep in mind that more important than the number of pro and con voices is the underlying constitutional mandate of separation of church and state. It has proven very difficult to draw up an Assembly policy that meets court ordered fairness. The result has been litigation. That is why I as a secular citizen favor eliminating spoken invocations at Assembly meetings. I propose the Assembly change its traditional out loud prayer into a minute of silent contemplation.

I will be unable to testify in Soldotna or by phone at the Homer Annex on March 21<sup>st</sup> due to sudden family obligations that call me to Anchorage, and am therefore submitting this statement as part of the official record.

DIANA CONWAY

On March 16, 1776, after a defeat at the Battle of Quebec, "the fledgling Congress sensed the need to rededicate themselves to God's vision," and "put forth a proclamation setting May 17, 1776, as a 'day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer.' 'A day of national repentance to obtain God's 'pardon and forgiveness'. Dr. John Witherspoon, a Presbyterian minister, president of the College of New Jersey (later to become Princeton University) and one of the eventual fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence," spoke of "God's staggering vision for this country".

"He saw it in the hopes and dreams of his peers – no, his brothers – in Congress. They were statesmen rather than politicians – men whose private morality and public discourse were true to each other and true to God." He recognized as "the three indispensable elements of a statesman and patriot: First, you had to be an active and sincere promoter of '*true and undefiled religion*.' Second, one must '*bear down profanity and immorality of every kind*' because if the people were profane and immoral, then the government would be profane and immoral. Finally, he declared that if an individual oppose what God stood for, he opposed the very foundation upon which America had been built."

"*But observe that if your cause is just, if your principles are pure, and if your conduct is prudent, you need not fear the multitude of opposing hosts. What follows from this? That he is the best friend to American liberty who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion. . . .*" pp. 216-218

*Dr. John Witherspoon*

*"America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves."* p. 252

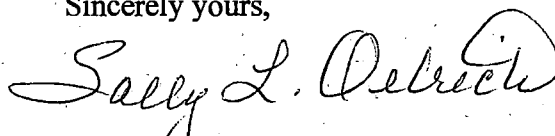
*Abraham Lincoln*

*"It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare."* p. 284

*Mark Twain*

I believe with all my heart that this is indeed a nation under God, and that we as a people must acknowledge our Protector and defend Him against all the onslaughts of the adversary. To call upon Him to watch over our meetings and to lend us His Spirit as concerns are discussed and as decisions are made is wise and prudent and in keeping with the standards of those whom we call the Founding Fathers of this nation, those patriots and statesmen to whom we owe our freedoms. He is the Creator, not the Destroyer, and it is His approval we should seek in prayer before each public meeting. It will make all the difference.

Sincerely yours,



Mrs. Sally L. Oelrich



Ms. Sally Oelrich  
PO Box 4  
Soldotna, AK 99669





To the Members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly:

If you have any doubts about the power of prayer or the heavenly hand which guided the founders of this great nation, let me recommend for your reading an amazing book called Under God written and compiled by Toby Mac and Michael Tait. In it you will meet the well-known and the scarcely remembered men and women who, in helping to build this nation in which we are privileged to live, relied upon and gave credit to the God who was at the helm. This is a God who builds up, who edifies, and who blesses those individuals and nations who call upon Him. Surely, we as a people have not gone so far astray in the guise of political correctness to give voice to the pretender, the father of all lies, the Lucifer of the Old Testament and the Satan of the New Testament, the devil himself, he who will do anything he can to undermine that which is good and correct. Allow me to share with you some quotes from a few of those who understood the relationship between this nation and her Divine Protector. These are taken from Under God.

*"If God be for us, who can be against us? The enemy [the British Army] has reproached us for calling on His name and professing our trust in Him. They have made a mock of our solemn fasts and every appearance of serious Christianity in the land . . . May our land be purged from all its sins! Then the Lord will be our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble, and we will have no reason to be afraid, though thousands of enemies set themselves against us round about." p. 147.*

*Rev. Samuel Lanagdon, Pres. of Harvard College, May 31, 1775*

*"No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency." p. 32*

*Pres. George Washington, Inaugural Address*

*"The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scripture ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evil men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible." p. 87*

*Noah Webster*

*"We have no government armed in power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a religious and moral people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other." p. 87*

*John Adams*

*"My great concern is not whether God is on our side. My great concern is to be on God's side." p. 169*

*Abraham Lincoln*

*"If the power of the Gospel is not felt through the length and breadth of the land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness will reign without mitigation or end." p. 215*

*Daniel Webster*

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Lynn Spence <ltakeokaspence@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 06, 2017 8:28 PM  
**To:** Blankenship, Johni  
**Subject:** Ordinance 2017-02- In support

I am writing to say I am a voter in the KPB and I support Ordinance 2017-02. I encourage all Assembly members to vote yes. This will end the law suit that appears to be unconstitutional. It will save the borough money and time. And it will restore some faith that the Assembly will make wise decisions for the good of the borough.

It is my belief that the invocation has been all about the Assembly and not the residents of the borough. Please vote for the people.

Lynn Spence  
331 Mountain View Drive  
Homer, AK 99603

March 8, 2017

Dear Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly Members  
Kelly Cooper, President, Wayne Ogle, Vice President  
Brent Hibbert, Jill Schaefer, Kenn Carpenter,  
Dale Bagley, Stan Wells, Paul Fisher, Willy Dunne

Re: Ordinance 2017-02

Please Do Not enact Ordinance 2017-02 as this would set a bad precedence for our democracy for the following reasons:

**1) Promotes Cultural Cleansing**

Ordinance 2017-02 promotes cultural cleansing for the Kenai Peninsula Borough. Doing away with the invocation will do away with a cultural voice that an invocation provides at Assembly meetings. Like it or not the cultural voice that an invocation brings to our assembly meetings is part of the fabric of our democracy and our local government and deserves a seat at the table. Doing away with the invocation is simply an attack on the customs and culture of American citizens. This ordinance is an attempt to siphon off, marginalize, and tease out a particular cultural voice from our assembly meetings. This kind of targeting sets a bad precedence and threatens the liberties and freedoms of our democracy.

**2) Infringes Upon Freedom of Speech**

Ordinance 2017-02 does not conform to neither the First Amendment of our U.S. Constitution nor the Constitution of the State of Alaska (Article 1, Section 5) as this ordinance is an infringement upon the freedom of speech for American citizens, especially for the citizens of our local community.

**3) Government-Sponsored Censorship**

Ordinance 2017-02 smacks of government-sponsored censorship in that some assembly members are actually entertaining the thought of how to censor the general public. This ordinance does not make the invocation more inclusive but rather just the opposite, it promotes censorship and infringes upon the freedom of speech for everyone.

**4) Bad Ideas**

*"People with bad ideas cannot be swayed with logic."* This whole issue started in June when Ordinance 2016-26 was introduced to do away with the invocation. This ordinance failed introduction. Now Ordinance 2017-02 aims to also do away with the invocation. Doing away with the invocation was a bad idea then and it's a bad idea now.

Again, please Do Not enact Ordinance 2017-02. Your consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Daniel A. Conetta*

Daniel A. Conetta  
708 Alder Court  
Kenai, Alaska 99611

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 07, 2017 12:07 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Melisa Miller

**Your Email:** ladyminak@gmail.com

**Subject:** Funding education means investing in KPB

**Message:**

Please fund KPBSD to the CAP in the coming budget cycle. No other investment could possibly yield greater economic benefit than a robust School District. As a nurse, parent, fisherwomen, coach and tax-payer, I know that our schools need and deserve the maximum level of support available by the Assembly. Thank you for your service.

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 07, 2017 2:11 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Adele Person

**Your Email:** Adelegroning@gmail.com

**Subject:** education funding

**Message:**

Education is both a short term and long term economic driver in our community. Strong schools attract strong families. Please fully fund the quality schools in our borough, especially as budgets pinch. This is an investment we can't afford not to make.

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 07, 2017 5:40 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** virginia moore

**Your Email:** ginger@kbaywhales.com

**Subject:** education

**Message:**

Please support ANY funding towards education. Teachers are struggling as it is. More and more children are falling through the cracks as classroom size increases. If we properly educate our youth, then future issues as unemployment, crime drugs and good parenting skills are all affected. Please do not take more away fro our children.

## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 07, 2017 7:20 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** H S Norwood

**Your Email:** rohobawr@alaska.net

**Subject:** KPBSD Funding to Cap

**Message:**

Delighted to hear the Assembly returning to the business of schools.

However, we will not jump on the bandwagon of raising our mill rate to fund KPBSD to the cap until unnecessary items are removed from the budget.

First and foremost \$75,000 dedicated to defending the totally unnecessary ACLU lawsuit. Adopt a moment of silence. Just do it.

Secondly, Larry Persily's salary.

The nat gas plant is in limbo. Mr Persily's expertise is no longer needed. Tough times call for tough measures. The Mayor needs an assistant ... not a Chief of Staff.

## **Blankenship, Johni**

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 09, 2017 11:55 AM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** mary griswold

**Your Email:** mgt@xyz.net

**Subject:** Ord 2017-02 Invocation removal

**Message:**

Please remove the invocation from the Assembly agenda and proceedings. It has proven that persons of strong religious beliefs are very intolerant of different beliefs. The invocation is not required at Assembly meetings. I urge Assembly members to calm their inner selves before the meetings and come prepared to conduct borough business to the best of their ability.



## Blankenship, Johni

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**From:** Kenai Peninsula Borough <webmaster@borough.kenai.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 08, 2017 7:35 PM  
**To:** BoroughAssembly  
**Subject:** New Public Comment to Assembly Members

**Your Name:** Leslie Rohr

**Your Email:** leslie@peninsulaloveinc.org

**Subject:** Invocation

**Message:**

As the Executive Director of a Faith Based Non-Profit, Love In the Name of Christ, I am concerned that the question of "should it stay or should it go" with regards to the opening of Assembly Meetings with an Invocation can't be put to rest. I believe the voice of the faith based community is being drowned out by a few. This is not a partisan issue, it is not an issue of denomination or theology. An Invocation is not an opportunity to make a political statement, it is simply asking for support and guidance over the proceedings by a higher power. "In God We Trust" & "God Bless America" are being selectively erased by a few at expense of many. Please do not stop the practice of opening assembly meetings with an invocation.