

By: Committee of the Whole
Introduced: August 27, 2026

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 – 25

A RESOLUTION IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

WHEREAS, The Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly identifies and supports the following legislative priorities for 2027:

State Legislative Priorities

PERS contribution rate and retention strategies

Maintain a 22% PERS contribution rate or less, as was agreed to by PERS employers and the state in allocating the unfunded liability, providing for certainty of set rates for all employers. Principles to consider:

a. Reinstatement of defined-benefit plans for public employees: Address the significant challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified public servants, particularly in critical areas such as education, public safety, transportation, and other essential public services. High turnover rates and recruitment difficulties have exacerbated staffing shortages, negatively impacting the quality and reliability of services provided to our community. Reinstating defined benefit plans will mitigate these challenges by offering more attractive and stable retirement benefits, thereby improving retention and recruitment of public employees.

b. Focused efforts on liability reduction: Develop strategies to reduce the unfunded liability and overall liability through cost reduction programs as well as risk and liability sharing with employees.

c. Funding and sustainability: Develop a comprehensive funding strategy for the defined benefit plan that includes regular assessments of the plan's health and

adjustments as necessary to maintain long-term sustainability without burdening future generations.

d. Do not support changes that add to the unfunded liability of the program or increase contribution percentages.

The State of Alaska should alter the funding formula to incentivize economic development and continue to increase the Base Student Allocation

Permanently increase the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to at least \$7,768 and incorporate an inflation-adjustment mechanism into the funding formula to ensure long-term sustainability and alignment with the rising cost of education.

Natural gas pipeline to Fairbanks

A natural gas pipeline of any diameter from the North Slope to Southcentral Alaska must include, either as part of its base design or as a fully funded addition after completion of the main line, a spur line to Fairbanks such that Interior residents are not bypassed by the project. Rates for gas from the line should be “postage stamp” rates; that is, the same price for all Alaskans served by the line regardless of their location.

Support for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons

Increase funding to support the resolution of cold cases, as well as information campaigns publicizing the need for Alaskans’ help in solving cases of missing and murdered people across the state.

School bond debt reimbursement

In accordance with longstanding commitments made by the Legislature, the state should return to paying its full share of school bond debt taken out with the explicit promise that the state would pay its share.

Community revenue sharing

The State should restore funds to its Community Assistance Program (a.k.a. Community Revenue Sharing) to help provide essential services that local communities may not be in a position to fund themselves without undue burden on local property taxpayers.

Public records exception for animal adopter information

Animals are occasionally impounded and adopted out after the appropriate holding time. Through a public record request, the identity of the new owners of the animal may be disclosed to the previous owner. New owners are occasionally harassed by the previous owner of the animal. A change in state law that would allow for adopter information to be withheld from a public records request would prevent this type of abuse.

Alaska Long Trail

The FNSB supports the continued development of the Alaska Long trail through federal, state and private grants and access through state and borough land.

Roads and Highways Advisory Board

The Governor's Board on Roads and Highways, which sunsetted on June 30, 2025, provided valuable local input to the state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities and should be permanently created in statute to avoid future lapses in input. While that legislation works through the committee process, we encourage the Interior Delegation to strongly urge Gov. Mike Dunleavy to reinstate the board through executive action, allowing it to meet virtually if necessary for budget reasons. This board is a vital source of public input and feedback in matters related to surface transportation.

Next Generation 911

The State should establish Next Generation 911 (NG911) as its emergency services standard, establish a sustainable model to fund that standard and clarify authority between different regions and levels of government. In furtherance of this effort, the

state should establish common GIS standards across jurisdictions, as well as standards for sharing information to maintain that GIS data.

Full Funding of Real Property Tax Revenue Reimbursement

Prioritize the full funding of real property tax revenue reimbursements as outlined in AS 29.45.030(9). The state has not met its statutory obligation to reimburse boroughs and cities for the property tax revenues lost due to mandatory exemptions. This shortfall has placed an undue financial burden on local governments, which rely heavily on these funds to provide essential services to our communities.

Statewide Spay and Neuter Program

The FNSB recognizes the significant challenges that communities across Alaska face in addressing pet overpopulation, animal welfare, and the costs associated with sheltering and caring for unwanted animals. Spaying and neutering are proven, humane strategies for reducing the number of stray and abandoned animals, lowering shelter intake, decreasing euthanasia rates and related health safety issues. Expanded access to affordable sterilization services by utilizing proceeds from the sales of specialty license plates and Pick-Click-Give to fund grant and voucher programs would help reduce the financial burden on municipalities, nonprofits, and taxpayers. The FNSB supports the establishment of a statewide spay and neuter program, administered in partnership with municipalities, veterinarians, and animal welfare organizations.

Moratorium on Data Center Development in Alaska

The FNSB supports a moratorium on the permitting, leasing, or construction of new commercial data centers on state-owned or municipal lands in Alaska until the State of Alaska and local governments have developed and adopted standards addressing electrical demand, water consumption and shortages, environmental impacts, noise, air quality, and land use pollution, and other public interest considerations associated with data center development.

Re-establish and implement an external, local citizen review panel for permanency planning, substantially as it was originally enacted State Law, Ch. 117, SLA 1990

The Fairbanks North Star Borough supports reestablishing the Citizens' Review Panel for Permanency Planning for certain children in state custody, consistent with 117 SLA 1990.

Expansion of the Tanana Valley State Forest

Support the expansion of the Tanana Valley State Forest to protect public access, promote sustainable timber harvest, improve wildlife habitat, and preserve opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping and subsistence uses. Expanding the forest will provide long term certainty for multi-user management while simultaneously supporting the local economy and responsible stewardship of public lands. The Borough encourages the State of Alaska to identify and acquire suitable state lands adjacent to the existing forest where appropriate, ensuring that future management balances conservation, recreation, and public access for future generations.

Continued Funding for the Ruth Barnette Sport Fish Hatchery

Support continued funding for the Ruth Barnette Sport Fish Hatchery to maintain and enhance local recreational fishing opportunities throughout the Borough. The hatchery plays a vital role in supporting fisheries that contribute to local quality of life, tourism, education, outdoor recreation and the regional economy. Stable funding will ensure continued fish production, educational opportunities, and benefit residents and visitors while helping to sustain Alaska's outdoor heritage.

Increase Upriver Salmon Returns

The Borough supports State and Federal legislation and international agreements to ban bottom trawling and create regulatory reform and new management practices that reduce bycatch and improve salmon returns to Interior rivers. Healthy salmon populations are essential to our subsistence, personal use, sport and commercial fisheries as well as

deeply intertwined with cultural and economic well-being of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and Interior Alaska.

Forward funding for education

Support forward funding of Alaska's K–12 public education system to provide school districts with predictable, stable funding that allows for responsible budgeting, staffing, and long-term planning. Annual uncertainty surrounding education funding creates unnecessary instability for students, educators, families, and local governments. Forward funding improves fiscal planning, reduces administrative costs associated with delayed budgets, and allows districts to focus on educational outcomes rather than recurring financial uncertainty.

Restore National Board Certification Reimbursement

Support the State of Alaska restoring funding for the reimbursement of National Board Certification costs for teachers and counselors. National Board certification represents a highly desired national professional credential and has been shown to improve instructional quality and student achievement. Reinstating reimbursement demonstrates a commitment to professional excellence in our schools, supports teacher recruitment and retention, and shows a commitment to continued investment in our educational workforce.

Equitable School Testing Requirements:

Currently, only 13% of homeschooled students in Alaska participate in state assessments. To ensure equitable expectations for all Alaskan students and strengthen accountability for public education resources, we support establishing clear testing expectations for homeschool programs. Incentivize participation in the AK STAR assessment by linking allotment eligibility to students taking AK STAR: Alaska System of Academic Readiness.

Support State Funding for the 2028 Arctic Winter Games

The Fairbanks North Star Borough requests a state appropriation of \$3 million to assist the Borough in hosting the Arctic Winter Games. Established in 1969 by Governor Wally Hickel, the Arctic Winter Games are the premier international sporting and cultural event in the circumpolar North, bringing together thousands of athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, and visitors from across the Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Alaska, Northern Alberta, Nunavik, Greenland, and Sápmi regions. Hosting the Games will generate a significant economic impact for Alaska, estimated to be over 8 million dollars, while showcasing the state's culture, hospitality, and world-class winter recreation opportunities and providing a world class stage for athletes from around the world.

Federal Legislative Priorities

Urge the EPA to exempt vehicle emissions from PM2.5 control strategy requirements

The conformity freeze on local highway projects completed with federal funds has had outsized negative economic effects on the communities in the borough. These impacts are far out of keeping with vehicles' role in PM2.5 pollution, as the share of PM2.5 pollution caused by vehicles (and thus the potential air quality benefit from measures that limit road construction and maintenance) is small. We urge the EPA to exempt vehicle emissions from control strategy requirements for the area or to categorize them as de minimis, to remove or reduce the specter of future conformity freezes that would greatly harm the community without tangible offsetting air quality benefits.

Moratorium on Data Center Development in Alaska

The FNSB supports a moratorium on the permitting, leasing, or construction of new commercial data centers on state-owned or municipal lands in Alaska until the State of Alaska and local governments have developed and adopted standards addressing electrical demand, water consumption and shortages, environmental impacts, noise, air quality, and land use pollution, and other public interest considerations associated with data center development.

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208 **Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment**

209 Support for congressional action recognizing and ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment
210 to the US constitution, affirming that equality under the law shall not be denied or
211 abridged on account of sex. Equal protection is the fundamental American principal.
212 Ratification would provide clear constitutional recognition that all people deserve equal
213 treatment under the law and recognize the will of the vast majority of Alaskans.

214

215 **Oppose Harmful Tariffs**

216 the Fairbanks North Star Borough depends heavily on goods accessed through Canada
217 and opposes broad tariffs that increase costs for our families, businesses and local
218 government. Due to our geographic isolation and dependence on imports tariffs
219 disproportionately affect us in the interior. Higher costs for construction materials,
220 equipment, food and fuel have all resulted from these tariffs. The Borough supports trade
221 policies that strengthen our local industry and allow for open economic bonds allowing
222 for the growth and export of local products as well as driving down costs and reducing
223 inflationary pressure.

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225 NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks
226 North Star Borough supports these legislative priorities.

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228 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assembly requests the Clerk to
229 distribute a copy of this resolution to the Alaska Interior Delegation and the Honorable
230 Governor Dunleavy and the Alaska Congressional Delegation.

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232 ADOPTED THE ____ DAY OF _____ 2026.

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236 Scott Crass

237 Presiding Officer

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241 ATTEST:

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April Trickey, MMC

245 Borough Clerk