



Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

February 18, 2021

The Honorable Lora Reinbold
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room 427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Reinbold:

As public officials, we both swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Alaska.¹ That oath reads, in part, that public officials will “*faithfully discharge [my] duties as....to the best of [my] ability.*”² That premise, of faithfully discharging duties, is the basis of public service; that those empowered by the citizens of a land can be trusted to act in good faith on their behalf.

It is clear you have abdicated the tenets of your oath as a public servant. Out of respect for Article II of the State of Alaska Constitution, I will not outline in detail your violations of the Legislature’s Uniform Rules,³ the Legislative Ethics Act,⁴ the manual of legislative procedure guiding conduct on the record,⁵ and the Alaska Legislature Professional Workplace Conduct Policy,⁶ your continued qualification as a member of the Legislature is a matter best determined by the voters.

What does fall within my purview, as the Governor of the State of Alaska, is the daily administration of government. An essential part of how state government functions is the interaction between its Legislative and Executive Branches. The laws and budget passed by the Legislature are enacted by the Governor.

¹ Article XII, Section 5, Constitution of the State of Alaska.

² Ibid.

³ Uniform Rules 20 (standing committee jurisdiction) and 26 (decorum in debate) of the Alaska Legislature.

⁴ AS 24.60.010(1) *Standards of Conduct*: “The Legislature find that (1) high moral and ethical standards among public servants in the legislative branch of government are essential to assure the trust, respect, and confident of the people of this state.

⁵ Mason’s Manual of Legislative Procedure, 2010 edition, Chapter 13, Section 121 (2): “No person may indulge in personalities, impugn motives of members, use indecent or profane language, or participate in conduct that disrupts or disturbs the orderly proceedings of the body.

⁶ http://www.akleg.gov/basis/get_documents.asp?session=30&docid=56186 “The Alaska State Legislature is committed to providing a safe and respectful workplace in which all legislators, legislative employees, interns, and third parties are treated with dignity and respect.”

That relationship, like the oath of office all public officials swear, is predicated on individuals conducting themselves in good faith and in the public interest. People can disagree, and do so vehemently; that marketplace of ideas is intrinsic to a republican democratic form of government. When those entrusted by the people, imbued with the dignity and authority of an office affording them the power to change the laws of the land, and to hold the power of the public purse, engage in direct affronts to those responsibilities, they dishonor their office and should be publicly condemned for their conduct.

You have used your position as a member of the Alaska State Senate to publicly misrepresent the State of Alaska's response to a global health crisis.⁷ You impugned the motivations of unelected and non-political employees working for the State of Alaska with baseless allegations that, on multiple occasions, were demonstrated to you to be false.⁸ Time and again, when provided the information unequivocally illustrating the blatant inaccuracies in your public statements about the State of Alaska's health responses, you persisted in continuing to betray the public trust with those statements. You deceived the people of Alaska about their government's response to the largest public health crisis in a century. In doing so, you violated the obligation you have, as a member of the Legislature, to promoting and protecting public health.⁹

The misinformation must end.

Since you have been, up until now, either incapable or unwilling to read the responses from employees in the various agencies under my constitutional authority, let me be clear with you:

- I have never imposed martial law or forced Alaskans to take the COVID-19 vaccine. My administration instead coordinated with local governments, hospitals, businesses, and volunteer organizations so that as many Alaskans as possible have access to the vaccine if they so wish. Alaska has through this pandemic had one of the best sets of health outcomes in the United States, with some of the least restrictive measures of any state in the country.
- My administration suspended regulations, as authorized under AS 26.23.020, so that Alaskans would not have to subject themselves to increased risks of contracting the virus. This administration also suspended dozens of regulations affecting businesses, to assure that our economy could withstand the shocks it was subjected to in 2020. Our government suspended imposing fees on thousands of Alaskan businesses and prevented increasing fees on our neighbors who were struggling to keep their staff employed and their doors open.

There are certainly many Alaskans, and colleagues within the Legislature, who had desires and demands for my administration to take more invasive and drastic measures, such as implementing a statewide mask mandate, or overriding the constitutional rights of First Class cities to manage the public health of residents. To those groups' mutual frustration, I adhered to

⁷ Senator Lora Reinbold Facebook Posts: October 25, 2020; November 12, 2020; January 15, 2021; January 28, 2021; January 30, 2021; February 2, 2021; and February 6, 2021.

⁸ Senator Reinbold Facebook Post, February 1, 2021.

⁹ Constitution of the State of Alaska, Article VII, Section 4 "The legislature shall provide for the promotion and protection of public health."

my stance that the State of Alaska Constitution defers to local control, because the best government is that closest to the people.¹⁰ As a self-professed small government conservative, you should know this. You do know this, because my administration has responded to you, repeatedly, in answer to your accusations on this subject.

The resources brought to bear in responding to your many superfluous inquiries have been costly, time consuming, and most importantly, distracting from the public duties of the many employees attempting to do the business of the people of Alaska. While it is undoubtedly the rightful place of the Legislature to hold the Executive Branch of government accountable, that process of inquiry must be consistent with the laws, procedures, and within the structured functioning of the Legislature. More importantly, the requests, or demands, must be based in fact, and not in idle speculation, and must be with a public purpose in mind.

It is clear, from the unrelenting correspondence between yourself and the members of my administration, that your demands are not based in fact, or in concert with the intent granted legislative oversight. Your baseless, deleterious, and self-serving demands on government resources amounts to an abuse of public services and will no longer be endured.

This letter serves as notice that all officials and staff, employed and serving the State of Alaska's Executive Branch of government, will not be responding, or participating, in any matter that pertains to yourself, your office, or, currently, in your capacity as the chair of a committee. The resources of the State of Alaska are not yours to abuse for your own, as yet undiscernible, personal benefit. It is lamentable that the good citizens of Eagle River and Chugiak are deprived of meaningful representation by the actions of the person holding the office of Senator.

I will not continue to subject the public resources of the State of Alaska to the mockery of a charade, disguised as public purpose.

Sincerely,



Mike Dunleavy
Governor

cc: The Honorable Peter Micciche, Senate President, Alaska Senate
The Honorable Tom Begich, Senate Democratic Leader, Alaska Senate

¹⁰ Constitution of the State of Alaska, Article X, Sections 1, 11.