



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of
Health and Social Services

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

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March 6, 2017

Representative Chris Tuck
Alaska State Capitol, Room 7
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subject: Support for HB 1, Election Registration and Voting

Dear Representative Tuck:

The Alaska Commission on Aging is pleased to offer our support for HB 1, a bill authored by you and co-sponsored by Representative Harriet Drummond, designed to increase voter participation and access to voting statewide. The right to vote is the most effective way for citizens to have a voice in the democratic process by electing officials to make decisions about government operations and policies that guide our great state and nation. Seniors are "super voters" as they are proud to exercise their right to vote in almost every election. The Commission supports many of the provisions in HB 1 to improve voter participation among all Alaskans, particularly in places such as rural and remote areas of the state, and among younger voters, where voter participation can be lower.

While we agree with most of the provisions in HB 1 to increase voter access, we are concerned about the statute change that would allow for same day registration and voting for two reasons. First, citizens who register and vote on the same day do not receive and have time to consider the brochures and political information that are sent to registered voters prior to elections. This information prepares citizens to cast their ballots responsibly as informed voters for the election of officials and consideration of ballot initiatives. Second, same day registration and voting has the potential to lead to accusations of voter fraud. Pending passage of this legislation, we recommend that the Office of the Lieutenant Governor implement safeguards, such as separating ballots casted by voters who registered and voted on the same day for greater scrutiny as is currently done with absentee ballots, to ensure that all votes are legitimately cast.

The Commission supports HB 1 and appreciates your consideration of our concerns. We thank you for your leadership of this legislation to promote greater voter participation in Alaska. Please feel free to include the Commission's letter in the bill packet for HB 1.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of David A. Blacketer in blue ink.

David A. Blacketer
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Denise Daniello in blue ink.

Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director

Cc: Representative Harriet Drummond