

Sample Letter of Support – please use talking points outlined here to draft your letter

- It takes a bit more time, but to the extent you use your own words the letters have greater value
- Support for the whole trail is appreciated and helpful. But particularly valuable are letters you send to your local legislators, referencing specific projects in your area that are part of this package and the benefits they would bring to local residents and businesses.
- In addition to contacting your local legislators please consider sending letters to key leaders in the legislature - Senator Bishop, Senator.Click.Bishop@akleg.gov; Representative Merrick Representative.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov; Senator Micciche Senator.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov

Dear **Senator/Representative**

I am writing to ask you to support [a set of projects](#) for the planned Seward-to-Fairbanks Alaska Long Trail, submitted into CAPSIS for inclusion in the FY2023 state capital budget. These investments will create much needed construction jobs in the near term and provide lasting benefits for Alaska's economy, communities, health, and our unique outdoor recreation lifestyles.

See more details on the 15 Alaska Long Trail projects submitted for FY2023 capital budget: www.alaska-trails.org/funding-for-the-alaska-long-trail

Overview of the Alaska Long Trail: <https://www.alaska-trails.org/the-alaska-long-trail>

2021 article about the Long Trail by Alaska Business Magazine - digital.akbizmag.com/issue/march-2021/attractions-gaining-traction/

Possible Intro ideas

- Recommendations have come from a broad group of partners working together.
- Goal is a world-class multi-braid trail system connecting spectacular Alaskan landscapes and communities from Seward to Fairbanks, attracting Alaska residents and people from all over the world.
- The trail system will incorporate a variety of year-round uses (motorized and nonmotorized) along different braids.
- Many sections of the proposed trail already exist or are currently planned, and the route is almost entirely on public lands, enormously reducing the complexity and cost.

Themes to Emphasize

- **Economic Benefits** – outdoor recreation is essential infrastructure, supporting local jobs, business opportunities, and an overall stronger, more durable AK economy. If just half of a typical year's out-of-state travelers had reasons to spend one more day in Alaska, the result would be an additional \$137M in annual spending in our state.
- **Health Benefits** – this trail will provide more opportunities for a larger portion of Alaskans to be active, healthy, happy outside
- **Most Projects are "Shovel-Ready"** – funding will get Alaskans back to work in the near term.
- **Broad Bipartisan Support** – trail projects were identified and are supported by tourism businesses and tourism marketing organizations, local governments, state and federal agencies, trail organizations, and individual trail users. Projects span five legislative districts and benefit both Alaskans and visitors.
- **Use and Users** - the trail aims to support diverse trail users. Uses on specific trail segments will be determined by the realities of terrain and the management policies of individual landowners and agencies. The ultimate goal is a braided network of routes accommodating a variety of uses, including some braids open to motorized use, and others for non-motorized hiking, biking and skiing.

Specific benefits that would come from the Long Trail project include:

- More reasons for businesses, residents, retirees to stay in or relocate to Alaska
- Increased visitor spending that generates revenues for local governments to support schools, roads, public safety, and leads to more and better jobs for Alaskans

- A response to the dramatic increases in demand for outdoor recreation, providing more chances for Alaska residents to be active, healthy and happy outside

I ask that you support the inclusion of Alaska Long Trail projects in the FY2023 capital budget.

Thanks for all your continuing hard work for our district and Alaska.

Please call or write if you have questions.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION