



SB 7 & HB 166

Museum Construction, Expansion, and Major Renovation Matching Grant Program

Museums and Cultural Centers are anchor institutions in Alaskan communities of every size. They educate children and adults through history dissemination, community events and cultural identity. They are caretakers of public trust collections that document our statewide history. They contribute to our economy and wellbeing through employment and cultural tourism.

Foresight: Museums Alaska clearly recognizes the fiscal challenges our state and communities are facing.

- ❖ We advocate for the passage of **SB 7 & HB 166** to establish an effective framework to support current and growing capital needs of Alaskan museums as state and local economies improve and capital funding becomes available.
- ❖ **This bill is void of a fiscal note.** Future capital funding requests will be ranked by the Department of Community and Regional Affairs subject to appropriation of funding through the legislative process. The matching grant program is designed to award up to 50 percent of proposed costs to help build, expand, or renovate existing facilities exhibit and preserve Alaskan collections held in the public trust.

Goal: Advancing **SB 7 & HB 166** will establish a construction and major expansion matching grant program to successfully build, expand, or renovate facilities that exhibit and preserve Alaskan collections.

Reality: A 2014 McDowell Group survey for the Foraker Group demonstrated critical infrastructure needs for our cultural institutions that care for and exhibit Alaskan collections.

- ❖ Of the 36 museums contacted 75% identified significant capital improvement needs within the next five years. Exhibition space or improvement; increase in facility size; collections storage expansion; and security improvements were listed as the top priorities.

Basis: Since the passage of **SB 119 in 2008**, the Library Construction and Major Expansion Matching Grant Program has successfully provided fourteen Alaska communities with financial assistance to help construct and expand public libraries.

- ❖ **SB 7** sponsored by Senator Stevens has passed out of the Community and Regional Affairs Committee and continues to Finance to create an act establishing a museum construction grant program in the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.
- ❖ **HB 166** sponsored by Representative Justin Parish is a companion bill to SB 7 to create an act establishing a museum construction grant program in the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

Museums Alaska is a statewide association of Alaska's museum professionals who work to provide opportunities and improvement for Alaskan Museums and Cultural Centers.