

Memorandum of Understanding

Among the Following Agencies:

- Department of Administration; (DOA)
- Department of Community and Economic Development; (DCED)
- Department of Education and Early Development; (DEED)
- Department of Environmental Conservation; (DEC)
- Department of Health and Social Services; (DHSS)
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development; (DOL&WD)
- Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; (DMVA)
- Department of Natural Resources; (DNR)
- Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; (DOT&PF)
- University of Alaska; (U of A)
- Denali Commission;
- U. S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Alaska Office;
- U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service;
- U. S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, Western Region (EDA); U.S. Commercial Service;
- U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);
- U. S. Department of Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Alaska Office;
- Indian Health Service, Alaska Area Native Health Service;
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- Federal Aviation Administration;
- U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

Background

The Denali Commission Act of 1998, as amended (Division C, Title III, PL 105-277) (Act) states that the purposes of the Denali Commission are to:

1. Deliver the services of the Federal Government in the most cost-effective manner practicable by reducing administrative and overhead costs;
2. Provide job training and other economic development services in rural communities, particularly distressed communities; and
3. Promote rural development, provide power generation and transmission facilities.

The Act recognizes that these purposes can only be accomplished through a collaborative, coordinated effort by the State of Alaska and key federal agencies. The State of Alaska also recognizes the above benefits can be furthered if State agencies work in a collaborative and coordinated effort.

Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines some points of agreement that will facilitate the collaboration and coordination necessary for achievement of the purposes of the Denali Commission and related missions of agencies who are parties to this MOU.

Points of Agreement

The parties to this MOU agree the following are a key element in achieving shared goals:

- 1) **Community plans.** A single community strategic plan should be sufficient to identify and establish the priorities of each rural community. To be effective, the plan must be value-based; based on significant community participation and support; approved by the city and tribal councils and village corporation (if these entities exist); and take into account regional priorities.

The parties to this MOU agree to:

- a) Support the development of comprehensive community plans where an acceptable comprehensive plan does not now exist; (USDA Rural Development, in collaboration with the Denali Commission, has developed a model planning process);
 - b) Support the concept of a single comprehensive community plan and utilize comprehensive community plans (or other acceptable plans that currently exist) as the basis for determining priorities in a community;
 - c) Work to coordinate the timing for service and project delivery so that projects are “whole” and sequenced most effectively (e.g. constructing road, water, and sewer for housing project in an orderly fashion).
- 2) **Regional strategies.** Systematic planning and coordination on a local, regional and statewide basis are necessary to achieve the most effective results from investments in infrastructure, economic development and training. Because Alaska is so vast and the regions of Alaska are unique, ideally these needs and priorities would be based on community plans presented as a regional strategy.

The parties to this MOU agree:

- a) To develop a protocol that weaves together many existing regional planning efforts, maximizing development and delivery of resources.
- b) A State-recognized regional strategy should be:
 - Based on community strategic plans that are value-based and comprehensive (more than a project list) and approved by the city council, tribal government, and village corporation, if applicable;
 - A balance of local, regional, and State identified needs, including needs identified by existing regional and sub-regional economic development organizations; any borough in the region; the regional Native profit and non-profit corporations; any other significant economic development “drivers”; and State and federal agencies doing work in the region.

- Approved by the regional entities, (an entity recognized and agreed be it an ARDOR, native regional non-profit or some other regional structure; and
 - Reflect existing State and federal agency approved plans, or a written agreement by an agency to change the approved plan.
- c) To collaborate on the development of a single uniform federal and state funding application and reporting process. The purpose of this effort is to reduce the administrative burden on communities.

- 3) **Regional Funding Summits.** The USDA Rural Development, Denali Commission and DCED, have held and plan to organize future regional funding summits. While the purpose of the summits is to help communities and regions fund their priority project(s), another long-term goal of the summits is to provide an opportunity for agencies and local and regional participants to discuss community and regional economic development issues and opportunities. Projects discussed at the summit must have municipal and tribal support and must be the result of a community planning process. Each project is reviewed and potential funders are identified.

Communities present their priority project(s) and agencies and community and regional representatives jointly scope available resources and assign a lead agency contact.

The parties to this MOU agree to:

- a) Participate in the regional funding summits if the agency has funds or other available resources. (e.g. technical assistance)

- 4) **Rural Alaska Project Identification Delivery System (RAPIDS).** The RAPIDS database maintained by the state's Department of Community and Economic Development provides information on completed and planned projects for most rural Alaska communities. The goal is to expand RAPIDS to include appropriate information for all communities in rural Alaska and regional projects.

The parties to this MOU agree to:

- a) Participate in the enhancement of RAPIDS by providing ideas and information.
- b) Contribute all appropriate updated information at least annually.
- c) Utilize RAPIDS as a management tool to achieve coordination and maximize the efficient use of available resources.

- 5) **Alaska Economic Information System.** The goal is to create and provide for the maintenance of a system of information relevant to economic development in Alaska, ultimately web-based. Components of

the AEIS include but are not limited to DCED's Economic Data Mapping Project, Community Database, and Rural Alaska Project Identification Delivery System (RAPIDS); and, DOL's "Polaris" Project. The AEIS will provide information for decision-making and be a vehicle for coordination and collaboration between local, regional, State and federal entities.

The parties to this MOU agree to:

- a) Participate in the development of the AEIS by providing ideas and information.
- b) Contribute all appropriate updated information at least annually.
- c) Utilize AEIS as a management tool to achieve coordination and maximize the efficient use of available economic development resources.

- 6) **Regional Economic Development Initiative (REDI).** REDI is intended to 1) create links between job placement, training, and community and economic development; and 2) enhance the communication between a region and the Governor's Jobs Cabinet. The seven regions targeted by REDI are Southeast, Gulf Coast, Anchorage-Mat/Su, Southwest, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Interior, and Northern. Each region has a designated DOL/DCED captain and co-captain who are responsible for organizing the teleconference and compiling regional reports. In the teleconferences, DOL and DCED report on economic/workforce activities for and administration news and initiatives affecting economic and workforce development in the region. ARDOR executive directors and others are invited to participate.

The parties to this MOU agree to:

- a) Participate in the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) as requested;
- b) Participate in REDI-related follow up, as requested.

- 7) **Vocational and Career Training.** For purposes of state agency input and coordination with the Denali Commission, the Alaska Human Resource Investment Council (AHRIC) is the recognized lead agency in vocational and career training. (SB 289) This agreement also recognizes that the Balance of State Workforce Investment Board sets policy and provides the state job training and employment resources through the one-stop system (ACJN). The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development has been tasked with developing a statewide comprehensive vocational education training strategy. The Denali Commission will continue to collaborate with AHRIC, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, other federal and state agencies and organizations in the design of the state's process to identify vocational and career training needs in high unemployment areas of Alaska, and deliver training to meet the workforce needs for the

foreseeable future. The State and the Denali Commission believe that a collaborative, coordinated approach to delivering needed training will be most effective and efficient.

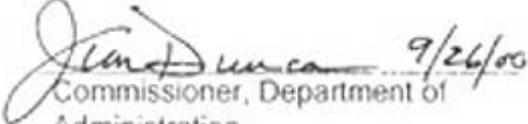
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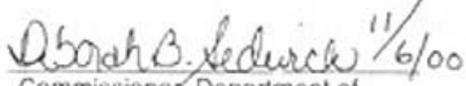
- a) Where applicable and practicable, utilize the AHRIC process and the combined resources of all agencies including the Denali Commission; to identify needs and deliver training in high unemployment areas of Alaska.

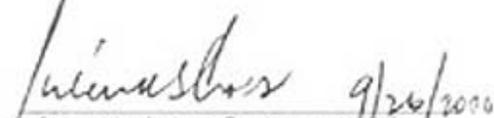
Implementation:

- 1) This MOU becomes effective immediately for participating agencies upon signature and will remain in effect indefinitely.
- 2) Any party to this MOU may withdraw upon 30-day notice to all other participants. The MOU will remain in effect for all other participants so long as two or more remain.
- 3) Nothing in this MOU shall be construed to limit or modify the authority or responsibility of any participating agency.

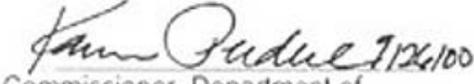
This list will be an amendable document to allow for other agency participation.


Commissioner, Department of
Administration 9/26/00

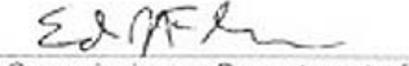

Commissioner, Department of
Community and Economic
Development 11/6/00


Commissioner, Department of
Education and Early Development 9/26/2000


Commissioner, Department of
Environmental Conservation 11/14/00


Commissioner, Department of
Health and Social Services 11/26/00

Commissioner, Department of
Law


Commissioner, Department of
Labor and Workforce
Development


Commissioner, Department of
Military and Veterans Affairs

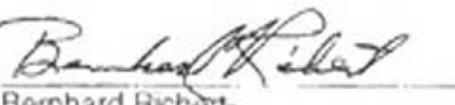

Commissioner, Department of
Natural Resources


Commissioner, Department of
Transportation and Public
Facilities 10/2/00


President, University of Alaska


State Co-Chair, Denali
Commission 10/2/2000


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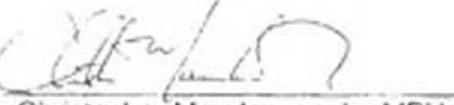

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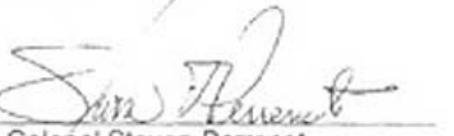

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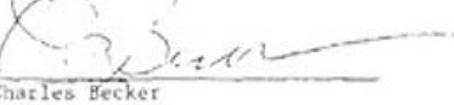

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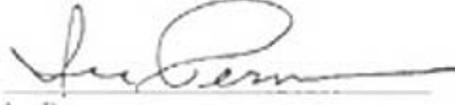

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Denali Commission


Charles Becker
Director
Alaska Export Assistance Center
U.S. Commercial Service
United States Department of Commerce


Ira Perman
President
Alaska Humanities Forum