Governor Sean Parnell  
State of Alaska  
PO Box  
Juneau, AK

Dear Governor Parnell:

We are writing in support of the Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program (MAP) program request for $614,000 for Economic Sustainability, Application of University Research, and Response to Community Needs in Coastal Alaska. This request is part of the University of Alaska's Draft FY11 Operating Budget and provides a permanent funding source for 6 positions, including the MAP agent located in Petersburg.

With nearly 50% of Petersburg's annual employment tied to the commercial fishing industry, our local MAP agent is a vital resource in our community. Petersburg's MAP agent works in partnership with industry, local groups and residents on important issues including: economic development and diversification, linking research and researchers to coastal communities, building capacity in youth and adults, and connecting youth with science and educational and employment opportunities through University linkages and workforce development.

In the coming years, Alaska's coastal communities will experience a transfer of ownership of fishing and processing businesses from one generation to the next. Without leadership and careful planning, our coastal communities are in danger of seeing many of their local businesses (i.e. processors, boats, and permits) sold off to nonresidents. MAP is one of the few entities actively working to develop the next generation of Alaska's seafood industry through their Young Fisherman's Summit, and the Alaska Seafood Processing Leadership Institute. Their efforts are instrumental in ensuring the seafood industry continues to be an economic engine for our state, and a source of employment and opportunity for young Alaskans.

We appreciate the interest your administration has shown in planning for Alaska's economic future, and we believe the Marine Advisory Program is an excellent example of an organization working with communities in coastal Alaska to explore new opportunities and plan for future success.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Liz Cabrera  
Coordinator

cc: Karen Rehfeld, Office of Management and Budget  
Cora Campbell, Office of the Governor