Dear Governor Parnell,

On behalf of the City of Unalaska and her 4,000 residents, I am writing you to strongly endorse the University of Alaska’s operating budget request for FY11. In particular, the funding amount to make 6 MAP positions permanent faculty in the University. The Cities and schools of Petersburg, Cordova, Nome, Dillingham and Unalaska are all currently reaping the benefits of this exceptional program, and could not be happier with the educational services that this program brings our community members and youth.

Our MAP agent, Reid Brewer has created wonderful partnerships with our schools, museum, local divers and an after-school and summer program that has resulted in a continued thirst for learning about local coastal communities and fisheries issues across the board. The program links us with research around the state, encourages youth toward workplace opportunities in the seafood and fishing industry, responds to needs of communities in cases of oil spills, marine mammal strandings and the effects of climate change on our marine environment.

Unalaska recognizes and appreciates the value of the MAP in a predominantly fisheries dependant region such as ours, and we strongly support the permanent position as an essential commitment by the University in our community and region. A quick aside, the Alaska Conference of Mayors passed a Resolution in support of the permanent nature of these positions last week at our annual meeting, an unusual step as there are many different educational opportunities that the University provides and as a general rule we do not advocate for them individually. However, the support for this particular program was so strong and widespread that we made a decision to do so during the meeting.

Sincerely,

Shirley Marquardt
Mayor, City of Unalaska

CC: President Hamilton
Unalaska City Council