

**Senator Lisa Murkowski**  
**March 2018**

**Alaska Provisions in the Interior Bill Contained in the FY2018 Omnibus Appropriations Act**

**Prioritizing Our Land**

- **Legacy Wells:** Provides an additional \$10 million for the BLM to clean up exploration wells drilled at the direction of the federal government in NPR-A between 1944 and 1982. While Senator Murkowski secured significant funding to clean up these abandoned wells through the Helium Stewardship Act of 2013, 26 wells still require remediation. Murkowski's bill provides enough funding to complete remediation of 9 of the remaining wells, and compels BLM to craft a long-term strategy to finally complete this effort.
- **ANCSA Contaminated Lands:** Directs BLM to coordinate with all responsible federal agencies to implement a long-term solution to clean up contaminated Alaska Native lands as quickly as possible.
- **Tribal General Assistance Program:** Maintains funding for the Tribal General Assistance program. In FY 2016, Senator Murkowski included language to authorize the backhaul program to operate through FY 2020. This year's bill includes language to make the backhaul program permanent.
- **Transboundary Water Quality:** Allocates \$120 thousand for transboundary river stream gages, including for Unuk River, and directs the USGS to enter into a formal partnership with local tribes and other agencies to help develop a water quality strategy for transboundary rivers.
- **National Park Service:** Includes a historic \$180 million increase for National Park Service construction and deferred maintenance, the largest percentage increase ever in an annual appropriations bill.

**Honoring and Caring for our Veterans**

- **Healing Arts Program:** Supports the efforts of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to expand the Healing Arts Program, developed by the NEA and the Department of Defense (DoD) to help our nation's wounded and injured service members and their families in their transition into civilian life.
- **Jay S. Hammond Wilderness:** The bill designates 2.6 million acres of National Wilderness Preservation land located within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve as the "Jay S. Hammond Wilderness." The land will be named after former Governor Jay Hammond, a decorated World War II Marine Corps fighter pilot.

## Investing in Communities

- **Payment in Lieu of Taxes:** Fully funds the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program at \$530 million, to provide monetary compensation to local governments throughout Alaska that contain federal lands that are not subject to state or local taxation. The revenue helps local governments provide vital services, such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations.
- **Secure Rural Schools:** Reauthorizes the Secure Rural Schools program for two years to help provide funds for school and local budgets across Alaska.
- **EPA Targeted Airshed Grants:** Provides increased funding at \$40 million to ensure that cities like Fairbanks are eligible for grants to support wood stove change-outs in order to help reduce air pollution.
- **Tongass National Forest Management:** Directs the Forest Service to gather sufficient data about the timing and availability of young-growth timber before developing a plan revision or new amendment to the Tongass Land Use Plan.

## Safe Drinking and Wastewater

- **State Water Revolving Funds:** Provides \$2.86 billion, increased funding to help facilitate clean, safe drinking water in local communities. Funds can be used to address drinking water and wastewater infrastructure challenges, including addressing problems posed by lead.
- **Alaska Native Villages Water Program:** Provides \$20 million for the construction of new drinking water and wastewater systems, or the improvement of existing systems in rural Alaskan communities.
- **Assistance to Small and Disadvantaged Communities Water Program:** Includes \$20 million for a new grant program to help bring basic water and sewer to communities in need.
- **Lead in Drinking Water:** Funds two new programs by providing \$20 million to help reduce lead in schools and child care facilities and \$10 million to help communities reduce lead in other water systems.

## Boosting Economic Opportunities

- **Arctic Priorities:** Supports the Arctic Council and directs federal agencies to focus on economic opportunities in the region, as well as science and subsistence issues.
- **Energy and Minerals:** Provides \$4.7 million for USGS to conduct studies that would significantly expand the public's knowledge of the minerals resource potential in Alaska and provide state-of-the-art data for current and future use.

- **Forest Service Recreation:** Provides \$257.8 million for the Forest Service's recreation programs to issue additional special use permits, helping to expand recreation-based businesses in the Chugach and Tongass National Forests in Alaska. Also funds Forest Service recreation assets like cabins, trails, and campgrounds.
- **Alaska Red Cedar and Economic Timber Sales:** Continues current law that requires that timber sales in Alaska be economic, and requires that Alaska and West Coast sawmills be given the first right to process the timber, in order to keep these jobs in the U.S.
- **Forest Inventory Analysis:** Increases funding to \$77 million to partner with states to inventory forests across the nation. Includes significant expansion for interior Alaska.

### **Fighting Wasteful Government Spending and Overreach**

- **Lead Bullets and Fishing Tackle:** Continues to prohibit the EPA from regulating lead content of ammunition and fishing tackle.
- **Kagalaska and Chirikof:** Prohibits the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from using funds to conduct a costly caribou hunt on Kagalaska Island in the Aleutian Chain. The legislation also prohibits costly and impractical efforts to remove cattle from the remote Chirikof Island.
- **Small, Remote Incinerators:** Provides an exemption for small, remote incinerators in Alaska to help manage waste in remote areas of Alaska.

### **Health and Wellness**

- **Village Built Clinics:** Maintains \$11 million for Village-Built Clinics, a program unique to Alaska that supports 150 healthcare clinics in rural areas which often serve as the only health facility in the respective region.
- **Contract Support Costs:** Funds contract support costs at \$959.57 million for operational and overhead costs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service, to ensure tribes have the necessary resources they need to deliver programs and services. This is especially important to Alaska because all healthcare for Alaska Natives is directly provided by tribal organizations. The account is continued as an indefinite appropriation so that if estimates made by the respective agencies are too low, funds are available to pay these costs without taking funds from other programs which reduce their capacity.
- **Zero Suicide Initiative:** Provides \$3.6 million for an IHS program aimed at preventing suicide by providing tools and support for organizations with patients receiving care. The initiative's premise is that suicide deaths for people receiving care are entirely preventable.
- **Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative:** Includes \$4 million for an IHS initiative that promotes culturally appropriate prevention and treatment approaches to domestic and sexual

violence from a community-driven context. This includes funding projects that provide victim advocacy, intervention, case coordination, policy development, community response teams, sexual assault examiner programs, and community and school education programs. The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Chugachmiut, Copper River Native Association, Kodiak Area Native Association, Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Southcentral Foundation, and Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium all receive funds through this initiative to continue efforts in addressing domestic violence and sexual assault in their communities.

- **Alcohol and Substance Abuse:** Increases funding to \$227.7 million for IHS alcohol and substance abuse prevention programs to focus on tribal youth and the incorporation of more holistic healthcare models. Programs within tribal communities to combat alcohol and substance abuse include inpatient and outpatient treatment, and rehabilitation services in both urban and rural settings.
- **Behavioral Health Integration:** Provides \$21.4 million to support IHS programs to address issues such as mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and behavior-related diseases among American Indians and Alaska Natives, ensuring a comprehensive system of preventative care to encourage community support and strong collaborative relationships with other agencies.
- **Small Ambulatory Clinics:** Increases funding to \$15 million to provide additional resources to make infrastructure improvements across the nation for providing healthcare delivery to American Indians and Alaska Natives.

### **Improving Safety**

- **Tribal Court Funding (PL280):** Increases Tribal Court funding to Public Law 280 states to \$13 million, such as Alaska, in order to help develop tribal court systems for communities.
- **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA):** New this year, provides an additional \$2 million for training and specific VAWA tribal court needs.
- **Tiwahe Initiative:** Provides \$15 million for this program to help communities design a comprehensive approach for the delivery of social services and justice programs. The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) is a Tiwahe Initiative pilot site. The bill also sets aside \$200 thousand under the initiative for women's and children's shelters.
- **3D Alaska Mapping:** Maintains \$7.7 million for Alaska mapping initiatives that will help gather data to improve maps, enhancing safety for activities such as aviation. Currently much of the terrain data in Alaska is more than 50 years old and hand-sketched from photos shot from World War II reconnaissance craft.

- **USGS Earthquake and Volcano Hazards:** Includes \$45 million to bring Alaska volcano equipment into compliance and provides funds for the purchase of earthquake sensors to incorporate for use in Alaska.