

RESOLUTION 25-30

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH IN SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATIVE COMPANY (USAC) PROGRAM AND ITS FUNDING FOR ESSENTIAL BROADBANDS AND TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES FOR EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE, AND LIFELINE SERVICES IN RURAL ALASKA

WHEREAS, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) program plays a vital role in providing critical funding for internet and phone services that support education, healthcare, and Lifeline phone services across the Aleutians East Borough; and

WHEREAS, our borough encompasses a geographically remote region where the cost of broadband services remains prohibitively high, and access to reliable, high-speed internet and telecommunications is often limited, unlike in more urban areas of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the USAC program has made it possible for the school districts in Aleutians East Borough to provide students with access to digital learning tools and resources, ensuring that they have equitable opportunities for academic success and preparing them for a digital future; and

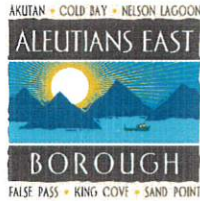
WHEREAS, healthcare providers in the Aleutians East Borough rely on USAC funding to maintain essential broadband services that support telehealth, remote diagnostics, and other critical services, enabling timely medical assistance and specialist care that would otherwise be inaccessible to our residents; and

WHEREAS, the Lifeline program, supported by USAC, provides phone services to low-income residents in our community, ensuring that they have access to essential communications for emergency services, employment opportunities, and connection with family; and

WHEREAS, the USAC program is currently being challenged in federal court, jeopardizing the future of its funding and the essential services it supports in our region; and

WHEREAS, a reduction or elimination of USAC funding would have a destabilizing effect on the ability of the Aleutians East Borough to provide reliable, affordable internet and phone services, which are critical for education, healthcare, and emergency communications in our region;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Aleutians East Borough hereby expresses its strong support for the USAC program and its continued funding of broadband and telecommunications services for school districts, healthcare providers, and Lifeline phone services in rural communities like ours; and



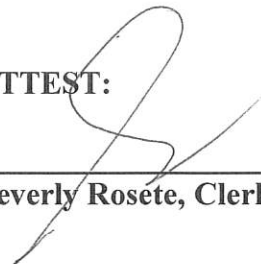
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Aleutians East Borough calls on federal policymakers, regulatory bodies, and the judiciary to recognize the importance of the USAC program in bridging the digital divide for rural and underserved communities, and to protect the program from actions that would undermine its ability to support essential services in Alaska and similar regions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Aleutians East Borough will work alongside other municipalities, school districts, healthcare organizations, and community advocates to raise awareness of the critical importance of USAC funding for maintaining essential broadband and telecommunications infrastructure in rural Alaska.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Aleutians East Borough on this 14th day of November 2024.



Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

ATTEST:


Beverly Rosete, Clerk