

Presented by: The Manager
Presented: 05/16/2022
Drafted by: R. Palmer III

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Serial No. 2984

A Resolution Expressing Concern of a Constitutional Convention and Educating the Public and Policy Makers about its Potential Impact.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Municipal League's (AML) mission is to strengthen local governments, and AML's principles include to support the Alaska Constitution's mandate "to provide for maximum local self-government"; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's Constitution contains numerous provisions that provide for and enhance maximum local self-government; and

WHEREAS, Art. XIII, sec. 3 of the Alaska Constitution provides that

If during any ten-year period a constitutional convention has not been held, the lieutenant governor shall place on the ballot for the next general election the question: "Shall there be a Constitutional Convention?" ...; and

WHEREAS, Alaska voters overwhelmingly rejected the call for a constitutional convention in 1972 and in successive elections held in 1982, 1992, 2002, and 2012; and

WHEREAS, Alaska voters will be asked to vote on whether to convene a constitutional convention at the next general election on November 2, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Constitution's system has been flexible, allowing cities and boroughs to merge when appropriate, and allowing for classes of municipalities, including home rule municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Constitution commits the State to support public education, public health, public welfare, and for the University system; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Constitution provides a statewide court system that relieves local governments of the responsibility for operating county courts, and allows for local prosecutions and defenses when and if a local government chooses to support them; and

WHEREAS, during the more than 60 years since statehood, the AML has supported Alaska local governments in thoughtfully choosing among the options that the Alaska Constitution has offered them, and in making sure that there is revenue sharing from the State that will support the local governments that people choose to have; and

WHEREAS, where local government is concerned, the Alaska Constitution as written provides a necessary and empowering legal framework within which to exert local control and respond to resident priorities; and

WHEREAS, if voters were to authorize a convention, convention delegates elected at a subsequent election, would have plenary power to change any and all aspects of the constitution for submission to the voters; and

WHEREAS, there have been numerous proposals advanced over the years to shift public funding for education from the state to local governments, to alter public retirement programs, modify the selection of judges, alter the taxing power of government and other similar proposals that could fundamentally harm Alaska's local governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, ALASKA:

Section 1. The Alaska Municipal League and the City and Borough of Juneau believe that a Constitutional Convention is unnecessary at this point in time and may negatively impact local governments.

Section 2. The Alaska Municipal League and the City and Borough of Juneau express concern about any campaign for calling a Constitutional Convention, to which municipalities would educate voters of the value of the Constitution as currently written and the numerous options available to address perceived or real needs; and

Section 3. The Alaska Municipal League and the City and Borough of Juneau encourage all local governments to work toward correcting any misinformation or misperception as may exist or that develops as part of the election cycle ahead.

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately after its adoption.

Adopted this 16th day of May, 2022.

Attest:


Elizabeth J. McEwen, Municipal Clerk


Maria Gladziszewski, Deputy Mayor