Introduced by: Mayor Watson
Date: March 26, 2019
Action: Passed
Vote: 6-0

# CITY OF BETHEL, ALASKA

## Resolution #19-02

### A RESOLUTION BY THE BETHEL CITY COUNCIL OPPOSING GOVERNOR DUNLEAVY'S PROPOSED FY 2020 BUDGET

**WHEREAS,** the proposed budget released February 13, 2019 proposed 1.6 billion in State funding cuts;

**WHEREAS,** while it is important to align spending and revenues at the state level, the Bethel City Council vehemently opposes the cuts contained in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal;

**WHEREAS;** the threat of losing the Power Cost Equalization (PCE) program is expected to shift 971,701 to the residents of Bethel alone, with a population of 6,000 the increases to the electrical costs to our residents would be devastating;

**WHEREAS,** as a historical note, the PCE program was established for rural communities as an offset to the urban areas being provided more state funds to construct major energy projects- more road connected communities were seeing higher benefits from major state-subsidized high cost energy projects in urban areas such as Four Dam Pool, Bradley Lake and the Alaska Intertie;

**WHEREAS,** the significant reduction in Public Broadcast funding will hurt our regional radio station KYUK which is slated to lose $150,000, which represents 10% of their budget or two of their ten positions;

**WHEREAS,** any amount of funding reduction to KYUK jeopardizes the continued services which includes regional, state and federal news, music, weather and emergency broadcasting alerts, announcements, broadcasting of governmental and tribal meetings, broadcasting of sports events and more, the services provided by KYUK link this vast but collective region additionally, the costs for cable and internet services prevent many families from obtaining the information otherwise;

**WHEREAS,** our region is already facing significant shortfalls with public safety, the Alaska Village Council Presidents report having eight Village Safety Police Officers within the 48 villages, this means 88% of the communities in this region do not have public safety presence, to propose a reduction of 22 percent of Village Public Safety Officers from their already deficient funding level is abysmal and will irrefutably negatively affect a region which is known to have one of the highest crime rates in the country;

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**WHEREAS,** the community of Bethel has a large homeless population, with the proposed cuts the Bethel Winter House, a nonprofit agency that provides a safe place to sleep for adults who would otherwise not have a place to sleep, may not be able to operate as $29,700 of their $57,7663 operating expenses come from state grants;

**WHEREAS,** specific to the City of Bethel as an organization, we are expected to lose $193,287 with the Community Assistance funding which totals close to 2% of our budget coupled with $200,000 increased costs for electricity, it is inevitable significant cuts to services would have to be cut as we have already pared down to essential services with prior budget reductions;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Bethel City Council opposes Governor Dunleavey's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2020.

**ENACTED THIS 26th DAY OF MARCH 2019 BY A VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR AND 0 OPPOSED.**

ATTEST:

Thor Williams, Vice-Mayor

Lori Strickler, City Clerk