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Description of document: **Communications in the office of the Executive Director
Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
received from Governor Palin or her Chief of Staff 2007
– 2008**

Requested date: 06-October-2008

Released date: 09-October-2008

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Source of document: Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
PO Box 110505
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0505
Phone: (800) 441-2962
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Note: UPDATE 22-October-2008: Additional 09-October-2008
release of seven items of correspondence from the office of
the Executive Director of the Alaska Commission on
Postsecondary Education raging from 15-Feb-2007 – 26-
Feb-2008 appended to this file.

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STATE OF ALASKA

ALASKA COMMISSION ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

PO BOX 110505
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0505
VOICE (800) 441-2962
In Juneau (907) 465-6740
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FAX (907) 465-3293

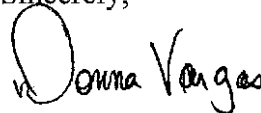
October 9, 2008

In response to your e-mail to Executive Director Diane Barrans dated October 6, 2008, enclosed please find hard copies of communications in the office of the Executive Director received from Governor Palin or her Chief of Staff for the period January 1, 2007, to present.

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If you need additional information, please provide a written request.

Sincerely,



Donna Vargas
Executive Assistant

/dv

Enclosures

Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)

From: Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 3:48 PM
To: Tibbles, Michael A (GOV)
Cc: Rehfeld, Karen J (GOV); Morrison, Charlene L (ACPE); Brown, Joan A (GOV)
Subject: ASLC action
Attachments: Gov's staff talking points.doc

Greetings Mike,

I wanted to confirm that ASLC board members did act today to suspend the corporation's return of capital project prior to completing the third and final phase. As you know, ASLC intended to return an additional \$60 million to the state for use in FY09. Based on serious concerns about the implications to the corporation of the extended disruptions of credit markets, ASLC has determined it is necessary to retain the assets that would otherwise have been obligated to Capital Project Bonds.

Please find attached some talking points which may be helpful in the event questions are posed to you or others of the governor's staff about this issue. I do not expect there to be a public reaction to this but if you would like me to prepare a press notice of some kind, I would be happy to.

Best regards,
Diane

Talking Points re: ASLC Action to Suspend Return of Capital Project

- 2/26/08 action of the board was to suspend related activity until summer of 2010 at which time ASLC management will review the corporation's capacity to return assets to the state without putting mission-related aid programs at risk.
- Board action was reasonable and appropriate in light of recent events in the credit markets. Corporation financial advisors have counseled ASLC to focus all available resources on ensuring it is best positioned to respond as needed to effect the financings necessary to fund its education loan programs for the 2008-09 and subsequent school years.
- While the state enjoyed the benefit of the large returns made by the Corporation in FYs 2005 and 2006 (\$75 and \$85 million, respectively), state leadership and policy makers have always understood that these returns occurred only when it was without risk to core programs of the Corporation and its partner agency, the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education.
- The focus evident in this decision is right where it should be, which for this administration is on the best interests of Alaskans and their families as they engage in postsecondary education and training programs to prepare to be active citizens and part of our state economy.
- This timing is unfortunate in that the governor's 2009 capital budget was built in expectation of these funds, however, we are fortunate to be at a point in time when alternative resources are available to fill the gap.
- It has only been in the past two months that the full and apparently long-term impact of the subprime mortgage industry collapse on other credit markets has become clear.
- By its action, the board has called for a hiatus of approximately two and a half years, during which time education loan bonds will be issued and hopefully markets will stabilize and return to some semblance of normalcy. Leaving these assets available to ASLC helps guard against the risk of having insufficient collateral to efficiently and effectively issue bonds and finance AlaskAdvantage programs to the benefit of their Alaska customers.
- It is worth noting that ASLC, in addition to its Return of Capital initiative, since FY01 has annually paid a dividend to the state. Through FY2008 the total paid to the state from that source is in excess of \$32 million. Suspension of the ROC initiative does not impact the annual dividends and the Corporation has already approved a dividend for FY2009 of \$4.1 million.

Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)

From: Diane Barrans [diane_barrans@acpe.state.ak.us]

Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2007 8:14 AM

To: 'michael_tibbles@gov.state.ak.us'

Cc: 'Lynne Smith'

Subject: authorization

Mike,

If you have no objection, since we believe the paper is in route, I'd like to move ahead with negotiating with our CFO candidate and let the paper catch up. With interviews now more than two weeks in the past, I'd hate to lose this person.

Thanks,

Diane

Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)

From: Smith, Lynne M (GOV)
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2007 3:58 PM
To: Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)
Cc: Tibbles, Michael A (GOV)
Subject: FW: Interest from ADN
Attachments: RedFlag PR.doc

Diane,

If you just keep us in the loop as you proceed that would be great.

Lynne

From: Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2007 2:27 PM
To: Smith, Lynne M (GOV)
Cc: Butler, Stephanie (ACPE)
Subject: Interest from ADN

Hi, Lynne,

As I mentioned we are working on a press release regarding federal ed. loan situation and the Department's efforts to clean up the industry. We received an inquiry from Matt Zencey on ADN's staff and he is interested in covering Alaska's "differences" in what I believe to be a positive light. Attached find a draft of the PR. He has asked for copies of our formal comments to the Dept. and we'll be sending some information to him this p.m. Please let me know if you want any direct involvement w/3rd floor on this issue.

Thanks,
Diane

Alaska Urges Caution in Federal Government “Red Flagging” Alaska Schools

September 17, 2007 (Juneau): This month, in a letter to United States Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) Executive Director Diane Barrans urged Secretary Spellings to consider the larger picture in reviewing Alaska schools. Barrans' letter was in response to the Secretary's August 9, 2007 Dear Colleague Letter and related media reports that the Department of Education considers a single lender's issuance of more than 80% of an institution's FFELP volume as a red flag, which may be construed to mean the institution is improperly limiting students' choice of lenders. Barrans suggests these Alaska schools should be commended for putting their students' needs first by ensuring students' awareness of their lowest-cost federal loans.

Barrans noted that, as the Department begins its review of institutions which appear to have strong affiliation with single lenders, it may be most efficient to first identify and recognize lenders with the strongest borrower benefit programs. Institutions advising Alaska students about the availability of ACPE loans are providing their students with a service that will result in aggregate student savings of millions of dollars over their college careers. This is because ACPE is mandated by state law to keep costs for Alaska's borrowers as low as possible. To comply with this mandate, ACPE returns 100% of federal lender benefits paid to the Commission as cost reductions on loans to Alaska borrowers. In the six years since ACPE began federal lending in program year 2002, ACPE has returned over \$17 million to borrowers as loan cost reductions, and ACPE has been consistently rated as the lowest cost lender in the nation.

Specific to the Alaska institutions having more than 80% of their federal loan volume with ACPE, Barrans points out that, rather than being a red flag, this statistic actually underscores that these institutions are serving their students best. While applauding the Secretary and her staff for their leadership in encouraging financial aid officers to actively educate their

students about the costs of borrowing, Barrans expresses concern relative to Alaska institutions that "it would be truly unfortunate if institutions felt compelled to diversify students' borrowing patterns to the detriment of the very students we seek to serve best."

More information about all programs and benefits is available online at www.alaskadvantage.state.ak.us, or by calling 465-2962 in Juneau or 1-800-441-2962 outside of Juneau.

About AlaskAdvantage® Programs

AlaskAdvantage® Programs are a package of financial aid and higher education awareness services offered by the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, an enterprise agency of the state of Alaska, to assist Alaska students and the Alaska economy in taking advantage of the benefits of higher education. AlaskAdvantage® Programs are self-sustaining and are funded by the Alaska Student Loan Corporation, a public corporation and enterprise instrumentality of the State of Alaska since 1987.

Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)

From: Diane Barrans [diane_barrans@acpe.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2007 10:03 AM
To: 'Ivy Frye'
Cc: 'michael_tibbles@gov.state.ak.us'
Subject: Follow up

I was able to reach Mr. Simmons. His intent is to have his resignation faxed to you, Ivy, today.
Diane

Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)

From: Diane Barrans [diane_barrans@acpe.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2007 7:40 AM
To: 'Ivy Frye'
Cc: 'michael_tibbles@gov.state.ak.us'
Subject: RE: Post Secondary Education

Thank you, Ivy. We'll get a welcome packet out to Ms. Reeves.

RE: Randy Simmons, he has just been waiting for a word from me and I'll try to reach him this a.m.

Regarding, the corp. member appointment, just a reminder there that the other Commission member currently appointed to the Corp. is Mr. Jorgenson.

Thanks,
Diane

From: Ivy Frye [mailto:ivy_frye@gov.state.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2007 7:16 AM
To: Barrans, Diane M (ACPE)
Cc: 'Michael Tibbles'
Subject: Post Secondary Education

Diane,

Governor Palin has appointed Ramona Reeves of Fairbanks to the vacant seat. I will need a letter of resignation from Mr. Simmons before we can replace him.

Thanks,

Ivy Frye
Director, Boards and Commissions
Office of Governor Sarah Palin
ivy_frye@gov.state.ak.us
(907) 465-3500 office
(907) 465-8110 fax

SARAH PALIN
GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR@GOV.STATE.AK.US



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STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

June 25, 2007

Ms. Diane Barrans
3030 Vintage Boulevard
Juneau, AK 99801-7100

Dear Ms. Barrans:

I am pleased you accepted reappointment to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

I appreciate your continued willingness to serve Alaska in this important capacity. Your commitment can make a difference as we work together to ensure an efficient and effective state government. Thank you, again, for giving your time and consideration to serve the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Palin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Sarah Palin
Governor

cc: Ivy Frye, Director, Boards and Commissions

STATE OF ALASKA

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May 30, 2007

The Honorable Sarah Palin
Governor
State of Alaska
P. O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-001

Re: Reappointment to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

Dear Governor Palin:

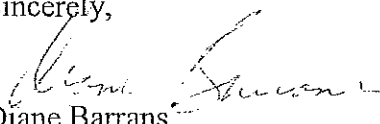
My appointment as a member of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is due to expire June 2007. My terms with the Commission have provided opportunities to coordinate benefits and strengthen the relationship between WICHE and the State of Alaska.

As the executive officer of the agency responsible for both administering WICHE-related programs and paying Alaska's annual compact dues, I want to express my interest in reappointment to the Commission. Because of ACPE's statutory role related to WICHE, it has been the practice since 1974 to have the incumbent in this position serve in one of Alaska's three seats on the Commission, and I do believe state citizens have been well served by the programs and services coordination provided through the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education over the past three decades.

In 2005, I served as the organization's Chair and am currently a member of the Executive Committee. Also in 2005, WICHE's annual meeting was held in Alaska for the first time in its 50-year history. In the event I am reappointed it would be my objective to ensure this regional organization continues to serve Alaska's higher education interests. I respectfully request your consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Diane Barrans
Executive Director

cc: Lynne Smith, Special Assistant

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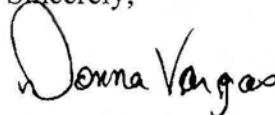
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STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

June 25, 2007

Ms. Diane Barrans
3030 Vintage Boulevard
Juneau, AK 99801-7100

Dear Ms. Barrans:

I am pleased you accepted reappointment to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

I appreciate your continued willingness to serve Alaska in this important capacity. Your commitment can make a difference as we work together to ensure an efficient and effective state government. Thank you, again, for giving your time and consideration to serve the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Palin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a distinct "P" at the end.

Sarah Palin
Governor

cc: Ivy Frye, Director, Boards and Commissions

STATE OF ALASKA

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

ALASKA COMMISSION ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-0505
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May 30, 2007

The Honorable Sarah Palin
Governor
State of Alaska
P. O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-001

Re: Reappointment to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

Dear Governor Palin:

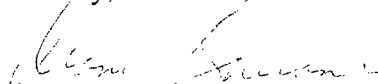
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Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,


Diane Barrans
Executive Director

cc: Lynne Smith, Special Assistant