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RE: Alaska House passes FY23 state operating budget with encouraging support for the UA System

April 13, 2022

Over the weekend, the House passed the state operating budget (HB281 & HB282), which includes \$281.7 million for the University of Alaska – a \$9 million increase over our current state-supported operating budget. In addition, key programs that help all of Alaska were funded, including \$10 million in support for our drone program, \$7.8 million for important critical mineral and rare earth development, \$5 million for heavy oil recovery, \$3.8 million for health programs, and \$7 million to support mariculture research and development. The House budget also includes \$395 million for the Higher Education Investment Fund [HEIF] for student merit-based scholarships and needs-based grants, and a two-year, \$1.6 million appropriation to expand the WWAMI Medical Education Program.

While we are optimistic about our budget outcome, we realize it still has many steps to go before it is final. These steps include Senate passage of the operating budget, a conference committee between the two bodies to negotiate and agree on a final version, and executive branch review.

At all times, we believe the UA System is doing what's best for fueling our economy and we're grateful for support.

Sincerely,
Pat Pitney