



## **Highlights of the Fiscal Year 2023 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill**

*(Numbers reflect nationwide program funding levels)*

### **Addressing Safety and Responding to Disasters**

- **Wildfire Prevention and Suppression:** Provides a total of \$5.151 billion in wildland fire management funding, which includes \$2.55 billion in wildfire suppression funding from the fire cap adjustment, for the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior for significant investments related to prevention, response, and recovery.
- **3D Alaska Mapping:** Provides \$10 million for Alaska mapping initiatives, including for modernization of Alaskan hydrography, topography, and imagery datasets, which will enhance safety for aviation and other activities.
- **USGS Earthquake, Volcano, and Landslide Hazards:** Provides funding for Alaska to develop and enhance earthquake monitoring capabilities, as well as operational funding to upgrade volcano monitoring equipment. Also provides funding to continue work with federal, State, and local partners on a site-specific landslide hazard assessment and a long-term monitoring strategy for landslides and tsunamis in Prince William Sound and surrounding Southeast areas.

### **Prioritizing Public Safety and Justice**

- **Missing, Trafficked, & Murdered Indigenous Women:** Provides continued funding to BIA to improve the federal response to the epidemic of missing, trafficked, and murdered indigenous women. Maintains funding for cold cases, equipment needs, and victim witness specialists.
- **Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative:** Continues funding for an IHS initiative that promotes culturally appropriate prevention and treatment approaches to domestic and sexual violence from a community-driven context. Provides funding for projects related to

victim advocacy, intervention, case coordination, policy development, community response teams, sexual assault examiner programs, and community and school education programs. The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Chugachmiut, Copper River Native Association, Kodiak Area Native Association, Maniilaq Association, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Southcentral Foundation, and Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium will all receive funds through this initiative to continue their efforts to address domestic violence and sexual assault in their communities.

- **Tribal Court Funding (PL280):** Includes an additional \$2 million for Public Law 280 states, such as Alaska, to help them develop tribal court systems for communities.
- **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA):** Maintains \$3 million for training and specific VAWA tribal court needs.
- **Small and Needy Tribes:** Maintains funding to ensure all tribes have a base level of support to run tribal governments. Almost 90 percent of national funding goes to Alaska.
- **Tiwahe Initiative:** Maintains funding for existing pilot programs to help communities design a comprehensive approach for the delivery of social services programs, which includes funding for the Emmonak Women’s shelter. Includes funding to expand the initiative.

## **Investing in Communities and Economic Opportunities**

- **Payment in Lieu of Taxes:** Provides \$535 million (full funding) for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. The PILT program provides monetary compensation to local governments throughout Alaska that contain federal lands that are not subject to state or local taxation. The revenue helps local governments provide vital services, such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations.
- **Increasing Public Access:** Makes investments in the Department of the Interior and Forest Service to improve the ability of public land managers to maintain recreation sites like cabins, trails, and campgrounds, and to help recreation-based businesses expand their operations in the Chugach and Tongass National Forests.
- **Alaska Red Cedar and Economic Timber Sales:** Continues current law requiring that timber sales in Alaska be economic and requires that Alaska and West Coast sawmills be given the first right to process the timber to keep these jobs in the United States.

- **Timber Industry in Alaska:** Dedicates resources critical to programs that support jobs and opportunities in the timber industry in Southeast Alaska. Spotlights the harm that retaliatory Chinese tariffs are having on the Alaska timber industry and encourages the Department of Agriculture to include domestic timber products on the list of agriculture commodities eligible for tariff relief.
- **Mineral Resources and Critical Minerals Programs:** Strengthens America's mineral security by continuing support for onshore and offshore resource management agencies to inventory and evaluate sources of critical minerals including in the Outer Continental Shelf. Includes \$10.8 million for a critical minerals initiative that will improve topographic, geological, and geophysical mapping in order to identify domestic deposits of critical minerals. Continues funding for critical mineral mapping efforts in Alaska.

### **Protecting Land, Improving Access, and Supporting Recreation**

- **National Parks:** Invests in visitor services and infrastructure improvements on federal lands and provides the National Park Service with an additional \$156 million to address critical operations in our nation's parks.
- **Denali Park Road:** Provides funding to complete repair to Denali Park Road, addressing both transportation safety and restoring access into the park for locals and visitors alike.
- **Forest Inventory Analysis:** Includes funding required to partner with states to inventory forests across the nation, including interior Alaska. This provides the State with important information about the condition of Alaska's forested lands, and dovetails into funding made available for education and management of spruce bark beetle infestations that threaten Alaska communities with greater risk of devastating wildfires.
- **Contaminated Lands:** Dozens of exploration wells and core tests drilled decades ago by the federal government remain abandoned in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska. Provides \$28.9 million for legacy well cleanup, an increase of \$6.8 million. Also creates an ANCSA Contaminated Lands Grant at EPA and provides \$20 million to it for the assessment and remediation of ANCSA contaminated sites.
- **Alaska Land Conveyances:** Includes \$31.7 million, an increase of \$5.4 million, for the Alaska Land Conveyance Program. This increase will help fulfill requirements to transfer lands to the State and Alaska Natives under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and help with implementation of the Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment program.
- **Invasive Species:** Provides increases for programs that help combat and eradicate invasive species like elodea and Northern pike that threaten Alaska's waters.

## **Improving Air Quality, Protecting Watersheds, Investing in Infrastructure**

- **Targeted Airshed Grants:** Increases programmatic funding to \$69.9 million to ensure that communities like Fairbanks are eligible for grants to support wood stove change-outs to help reduce air pollution.
- **Transboundary Water Quality:** Allocates \$3.9 million to address transboundary water issues, specifically for stream gauges and a baseline water quality strategy. Directs the U.S. Geological Survey to work cooperatively with local tribes, stakeholders, and relevant federal agencies to help develop the water quality strategy.
- **Alaska Native Villages Water Program:** Increases funding to \$39.7 million for the construction of new drinking water and wastewater systems, or the improvement of existing systems in rural Alaskan communities.
- **Assistance to Small and Disadvantaged Communities Water Program:** Provides \$30.1 million for a grant program to help bring basic water and sewer infrastructure to communities in need.
- **State Water Revolving Funds:** Maintains funding for the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Funds at \$2.76 billion to help facilitate clean, safe drinking water in local communities across the country. This will address drinking water and wastewater infrastructure challenges, including health threats like lead content in water.
- **Indian Healthcare Facilities Construction:** Continues \$3 million for technical assistance, training, and guidance to sanitation operators and communities for the operation and maintenance of water supply and sewage disposal facilities. Also maintains \$3 million to support preliminary engineering reports for facilities construction.

## **Reducing Regulatory Burdens and Cutting Unnecessary Spending**

- **Lead Bullets and Fishing Tackle:** Continues to prohibit EPA from regulating lead content of ammunition and fishing tackle.
- **Small Remote Incinerators:** Prohibits EPA from implementing its small, remote incinerators rule in Alaska while Alaskans work with the agency to develop a rule that will work better to address the state's rural, unique needs.

- **Kagalaska and Chirikof:** Prohibits the Fish and Wildlife Service from conducting a costly caribou hunt on Kagalaska Island in the Aleutian Chain. Prohibits costly and impractical efforts to remove cattle from the remote Chirikof Island.

## **Prioritizing Health and Wellness**

- **IHS Advanced Appropriations:** Advance appropriations are included for fiscal year 2024 to prevent the interruption of healthcare related services in the event of a government shutdown.
- **Native Children’s Commission:** Provides funding for the Commission on Native Children, which was established to identify the complex challenges facing Native children in Alaska and across the country through an intensive study of issues such as high rates of poverty, unemployment, child abuse, domestic violence, crime, substance abuse, and lack of economic opportunities. Senator Murkowski, along with former Senator Heitkamp of North Dakota, sponsored the legislation creating the Commission.
- **Community Health Aids:** Maintains funding for the Community Health Aid Program (CHAP) at current levels and continues the \$2 million for dental health therapist training program for students in Alaska, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. CHAP is a multidisciplinary system of behavioral, community, and dental health professionals working alongside licensed providers to offer patients increased access to quality care in rural Alaska. The bill also continues to encourage the Indian Health Service (IHS) to look at programs that can help educate community health aides on trauma informed care and the collection of medical evidence, which has the potential to help communities address the crisis of missing, trafficked, and murdered indigenous women.
- **Tribal Clinic Operational Costs:** Includes an additional \$2 million for Village-Built Clinics (VBCs). The VBC program is unique to Alaska and supports 150 healthcare clinics in rural areas which often serve as the only health facility in their respective regions. Tribal lease payments are fully funded.
- **Small Ambulatory Clinics:** Maintains a nationwide total of \$25 million to make infrastructure improvements for healthcare delivery to American Indians and Alaska Natives. Grants have previously been provided to Shishmaref, Ninilchik, Kongiganak Village, Tok, and Tatitlek.
- **Zero Suicide Initiative:** Maintains \$3.6 million for an IHS program aimed at preventing suicide by providing tools and support for organizations with patients receiving care.
- **Alcohol and Substance Abuse:** Increases funding for IHS’ alcohol and substance abuse prevention programs, to focus on tribal youth and the incorporation of more holistic

healthcare models. Programs within tribal communities to combat alcohol and substance

abuse include inpatient and outpatient treatment, as well as rehabilitation services in both urban and rural settings.

- **Mental Health:** Increases funding for mental health and continues important programs for the behavioral health integration initiative for suicide prevention and for the Telebehavioral Health Center of Excellence. Together, these programs help facilitate integrated approaches between medical care, behavioral health, and tribal community organizations to provide the entire spectrum of preventative care to improve outcomes in mental health, substance abuse, and physical ailments.
- **Contract Support Costs:** Fully funds contract support costs, the operational and overhead costs in the BIA and IHS, to ensure tribes have the resources they need to deliver programs and services. This is especially important to Alaska because all healthcare for Alaska Natives is directly provided by tribal organizations. The account is continued as an indefinite appropriation so that if estimates made by the respective agencies are too low, funds are available to pay these costs without taking from other programs.
- **Additional Initiatives:** Provides an additional \$1 million to help support maternal health.

### **Supporting Subsistence and Fisheries Management**

- **Alaska Subsistence:** Provides over \$14 million for the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to conduct activities relating to the Federal Subsistence Board and collaborate with Alaska Natives to gather information, expand employment and capacity building, and assist subsistence users with law enforcement compliance activities, such as obtaining essential permits and meeting harvest reporting requirements.
- **Tribal Management:** Increases funding for the Tribal Management Development Program (TMDP), which provides for subsistence programs, extending critical pilot projects and ensuring additional opportunities for Alaska Native involvement in federal subsistence processes. Also continues support for subsistence pilot projects.
- **Polar Bear Co-Management:** Directs the FWS to work with and engage in meaningful consultation with Alaska Natives for their subsistence use of polar bears, including consulting with and incorporating the views of Kaktovik residents in decisions related to polar bear tourism. Encourages the FWS to explore co-management of the Beaufort polar bear population with Alaska Natives in region.

- **Pacific Salmon Treaty:** Continues funding for implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The Pacific Salmon Treaty allows for the bilateral, cooperative management of Pacific salmon between the United States and Canada, supporting commercial and subsistence fisheries in Alaska.

### **Investing in Culture and the Arts**

- **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH):** Provides \$27 million more than the last fiscal year to each endowment to support the arts. This includes support for NEA's Healing Arts Program, developed by the NEA and the Department of Defense (DOD) to help wounded and injured service members and their families in their transition into civilian life.
- **Cultural Arts:** Continues funding for an arts and cultural program with Sealaska and the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development.
- **Native Language Immersion:** Provides an additional \$2 million in BIA for Native language immersion grants for states that do not have Bureau of Indian Education-funded schools.
- **Native Handicrafts:** Encourages the FWS to do more to ensure that Native handicrafts can continue to be sold and increases funding to combat violations of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.
- **Sealaska Cultural Sites:** Maintains funding of \$450,000 for Alaska Native programs to certify claims for historical places and cultural sites.

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