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ACEC

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

*of Alaska*

## Alaska's Leaders are Bringing Infrastructure Improvements to the State

Last week, Congressman Don Young joined both Alaska Senators, Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, in voting to pass the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – a bill that will improve the lives of Alaskans and all Americans. This law will finally provide the long-overdue funding we need to improve our roads and bridges and prepare America for the future.

Drivers in Alaska know our infrastructure is due for an upgrade. Our state has 141 bridges and 570 miles of roads in poor condition. That failing infrastructure costs time and money. Commute times for Alaskans have increased 7.5% since 2011, and each driver is paying more than \$400 per year due to maintenance from deteriorating roads.

With the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Alaska can expect to receive \$3.4 billion to fix highways and traffic congestion, and improve safety. It has another \$225 million for the state to replace and repair bridges.

Beyond the money already slated, the state can compete for some of the \$12.5 billion Bridge Investment Program, which is set aside for bridges that are vital to the economy, and almost \$16 billion of national funding for big projects that have economic benefits for local communities. The Port of Anchorage will be eligible for the \$2.25 billion in port improvement grants over the next five years, and Alaska airports are slated to receive approximately \$390 million.

In addition to modernizing transportation networks, this bill invests in next-generation infrastructure like reliable high-speed internet. With many of us working and learning from home over the past few years, we know internet isn't a luxury, it's a necessity. Still, more than 100,000 people in Alaska don't have internet access.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will bring at least \$100 million to Alaska to help folks across the state get online. Plus, now more than 200,000 people in the state – nearly 30% – will be eligible for the Affordability Connectivity Benefit to help low-income families afford internet access.

It also addresses the need for safe water across the country. Today, up to 10 million households and 400,000 schools and childcare centers lack access to clean drinking water. This is unacceptable in 2021. This bill will invest \$368 million over five years to ensure every Alaska family has access to clean drinking water.

Alaska's engineering firms will be the ones designing these improvements to our state. We know that these real-world improvements to our daily lives would be impossible without the leadership and support from Senators Sullivan and Murkowski and Congressman Young to get this bill signed into law.

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