



## Associated General Contractors of Alaska

### 2023 Legislative Priorities

#### Priority: Workforce Development/Education

**Position Statement:** Workforce development and investment are vital to a healthy Alaskan economy, which benefits all Alaskans. Access to a vital, trained workforce ensures Alaska is ready to capitalize on economic opportunities for all regions and sectors in our state. AGC of Alaska supports legislation and administrative efforts focused on attracting and maintaining a quality workforce for the construction industry in Alaska. Recent reductions in program funding have resulted in fewer educational and training opportunities for Alaska's workforce. AGC supports increasing education and training in the STEM fields, both in school and in the trades.

This includes:

- Prioritizing funding for one-stop Alaska Job Centers
- Continuing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Youth), TVEP and STEP grant funding
- Promote the hiring of Alaska residents

#### Priority: Sustainable State Budget

**Position Statement:** AGC supports the continued focus on a responsible, sustainable and balanced budget, which includes strategies to enhance and diversify Alaska's economy and support and attract infrastructure investments. A sustainable and predictable state budget is vital for our industry; without it, our industry runs the risk of project cancellations, delays, reduced payments, layoffs, and more, which have far reaching and significant impacts to every sector of Alaska's economy and our way of life.

The construction industry continues to be significantly impacted by extreme reductions to the capital budget. In addition, failure to pass the capital budget in a timely manner has long-lasting negative impacts on our industry. The citizens of this state deserve a timely capital budget that provides for safe, economical transportation and infrastructure including; roads, bridges, airports, ports and state buildings.

AGC supports a long-term statewide plan which prioritizes the backlog of deferred maintenance projects for state owned facilities and infrastructure.

AGC also supports the Percent of Market Value approach for balancing public investments, permanent fund dividends and the state's budget.

AGC also encourages the legislature to:

- Prioritize funding for a timely capital budget and deferred maintenance program
- Maximize state match funds for federally funded projects
- Prioritize infrastructure development; we support prudent revenue generation to accomplish that goal

### **Priority: Responsible Resource Development**

**Position Statement:** AGC supports responsible resource development strategies to enhance Alaska's private sector, promoting and attracting investment in Alaska's infrastructure, which will provide the state with economic certainty into the future.

AGC encourages the Alaska Legislature and the Administration to streamline Alaska's regulatory and permitting laws and policies to facilitate additional exploration, site development, employment, infrastructure, research, reclamation and natural resource production in Alaska.

This includes:

- Minimizing state regulatory burdens
- Addressing term limits and timelines on permit review processes
- Supporting legacy projects, recognizing the State's investment thus far and ensuring those investments are not wasted.
- Maximizing AIDEA and other private/public partnership opportunities to promote and support resource development

### **Priority: Workers' Compensation Reform**

**Position Statement:** AGC of Alaska supports continued efforts to reform workers' compensation regulations. Alaska's workers' compensation insurance rates rank among the highest in the nation, affecting every Alaskan employer and making Alaska less competitive in creating and maintaining jobs.

The recent rate reductions were primarily due to the industry's efforts in reducing workplace injuries and mandating safety as an extremely important part of workplace culture. It's time for government to do its part. We support a series of changes to the Alaska workers' compensation insurance statutes, including:

- Emphasizing on return-to-work programs
- Incorporating directed medical care
- Reforming the current vocational rehabilitation program
- Focusing on outcome-based treatment options
- Addressing opioid abuse and prescription drug abuse