

February 26, 2017

Dear Homer City Council Members,

First of all, let me take a moment to thank you for your service to our community. It is far too easy to get caught up in the fervor of national elections and forget that the truest service is provided by those who work to make their local communities healthy and strong. Thank you for all the hard work, time, and heart you have given to Homer.

When I moved to Homer in 2000, I had already lived in big cities and small town all across the United States. Here in Homer, I immediately fell in love with the generous people who had chosen this small place with big scenery. My neighbors, my friends, the folks I shopped alongside, walked with on the beach, taught, everyone brought their own talents and diversity into my life. It is my pleasure and my privilege to count among my friends and neighbors people of all political parties, religious affiliation, racial background, national origin and sexual orientation. We dance together, eat together, grow and share vegetables, teach each other where the best berry patches are, pick up mail, watch children, and sometimes we disagree. But we are a community that is built on diversity.

It is a proven fact that biological communities (including humans) are stronger when they are diverse. Scientist and writer David Suzuki writes, "Monoculture — the spreading of a single gene, species, ecosystem or idea — runs counter to the biological principle that diversity confers resilience. It creates vulnerability to change, especially sudden change." There are very few constants in life, but one of them is that the world and everything in it is always changing. In order for Homer to remain the vibrant community it is, it must embrace diversity.

Having read Resolution 17-019, I can think of no reason why our community would not wholeheartedly support it. I was raised in a household where we took care of the poor, the traveler, the sick, the dispossessed, the vulnerable. We did so because it was the right thing to do, and because the God in which we believed had indicated that taking care of each other was of the highest good. We were to protect and support each other, no exceptions.

Do we need a codified resolution to take care of each other? No, of course not. But, Resolution 17-019 is like a flare sent up from shore beside a stormy and dark sea. It says, "Look, this is what we as a community believe in. We believe that everyone is worthy of respect and protection. We believe that intolerance and hatred have no place here."

I hope that our community, in all its diversity, in all its strength, will be that light.

Sincerely

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