



# YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION

*“Working Together to Achieve Excellent Health”*

January 9, 2018

The Honorable Richard Robb and Bethel City Council  
City of Bethel  
P.O. Box 1388  
Bethel, AK 99559

Dear Mayor Robb and City Council Members,

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) administers a comprehensive health care delivery system on behalf of 58 tribes throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region. YKHC respectfully submits the following information for your analysis as you consider whether to support, protest or place restrictions on the renewal of any liquor licenses and whether to submit to the voters of the City of Bethel a proposition to vote on a local option during the next eligible municipal election cycle.

In a December 20, 2017, report from the Bethel City Manager, he indicated no objection to the renewal of the Bethel Spirits liquor license due to “no ill effect to the neighborhood.” Because alcohol sales reach beyond neighborhoods and even Bethel, YKHC requests you also consider the social and health impacts the legal sale of alcohol is having on our region at-large.

Through partnership with the City of Bethel, State of Alaska, Bethel Community Services Foundation and Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, in February 2011, YKHC opened its Sobering Center. Since that time, YKHC has offered intoxicated individuals a safe environment, available 24 hours a day and seven days a week, to sleep off inebriation and access resources about how to address alcohol use.

YKHC monitors the number of encounters in our Sobering Center. In 2017, the number of encounters at the Sobering Center increased by 32 percent over the prior year. It is also YKHC’s understanding that the need for law enforcement, search and rescue and other Bethel area services has increased as well.



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YKHC requests the City of Bethel to work with the leadership of nearby villages, the Alaska Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, law enforcement and liquor license holders to restrict sales of alcohol in both type and quantity.

Cheaper-priced vodka and whiskey are favored by bootleggers and public inebriates. These cheaper-priced vodka’s and whiskey’s should be restricted from sale or at least the quantity of sales of cheaper-priced vodka and whiskey should be limited to individual customers.

YKHC asks the City of Bethel to fully consider this request and its accompanying service data when addressing all liquor license renewals and future voter propositions to sell alcohol within the City of Bethel.

Sincerely,

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION

Dan Winkelman

President & CEO