



City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686

Meeting Agenda

City Council

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Work Session Legislative Priorities

WORK SESSION AGENDA - 5:30 pm

Transcribed minutes are not taken for Work Sessions. Audio is available upon request.

[Work Session: 2026 State and Federal Legislative Priorities and Strategy](#)



Legislation Text

File #: 26-0015, **Version:** 1

ITEM TITLE:

Work Session: 2026 State and Federal Legislative Priorities and Strategy

SUBMITTED BY: Elise Sorum-Birk, Deputy City Clerk

FISCAL NOTES:

Expenditure Required: n/a

Unencumbered Balance: n/a

Funding Source: n/a

RECOMMENDATION:

n/a

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The adopted 2025 State and Federal Legislative Priorities and 2026 Alaska Legislative Session Calendar are attached for review. Additionally, a summary of key updates on priorities from the past year is attached.

Federal Lobbyist Jack Victory and Eric Kros with Capital Hill Consulting Group will share updates with Council first.

City of Valdez Lobbyist Kim Hutchinson of Trust Consultants, Representative Garret Nelson and Senator George Rauscher will be present for the work session to share information on the upcoming state legislative session.

The intent of the work session is to discuss any changes in the policy landscape desired changes to legislative priorities and to hear about potential impact from changes in the Alaska Legislature.



2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SUPPORT LOCAL HOUSING AND CHILD CARE NEEDS

The City Council has identified housing and child care as their top two priorities. Valdez has been working hard on local initiatives and trying to find ways to support projects in both areas but addressing these dual crises will require ongoing support from all levels of government.

Take Active Steps to Stabilize Alaska's Child Care Sector

There is a need for sustained support from both state and federal governments to stabilize local child care economies. The state should consider helping providers navigate the licensure process by creating positions within the Child Care Program Office to provide direct support to those wishing to become licensed child care providers. Creating a statewide shared services alliance or similar organization to allow child care professionals access to health insurance, benefits and administrative support would also be a positive step. The state should continue to think about allowing for flexibility in how individual communities approach child care challenges.

Support Housing Initiatives and Funding

We ask that the legislature and the governor maintain and expand funding for initiatives that directly aid local communities in addressing housing scarcity and affordability issues.

STAFF AND SUSTAIN THE VALDEZ AREA STATE PARKS

The passive management of thousands of acres of State Park lands around Valdez since 2016 has caused a cost-shift to the City of Valdez. The local non-profit that holds the contract with the Department of Natural Resources to maintain our area parks relies heavily on non-state funding sources including an annual grant from the City of Valdez. Reinstating a full-time Park Ranger position in our area will help to address public safety and maintenance issues in our state parks, which are now serving ever increasing numbers of visitors each year.

LOCAL CONTROL IN MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAXATION

Assessed values of homes have dramatically increased in Valdez and this creates significant hardship for many residents. However, state law significantly limits how local governments can respond to offer taxpayers some relief. We urge the Alaska Legislature to reexamine AS 29.45 governing property taxation by local governments and support efforts to add flexibility in allowable local tax exemptions, especially for residential properties.

ADEQUATELY FUND PUBLIC EDUCATION

We urge the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to fund K-12 education adequately and equitably in Alaska as the Alaska Constitution mandates. Support for education accounts for 19% of the city's annual appropriations. A significant disparity exists between organized and unorganized areas in the state in the level of state support received for education.

Increase the Base Student Allocation

Years of the state funding schools at the same level and not accounting for major inflationary pressures equates to a cut to education funding by the state. The City of Valdez supports the legislature passing HB 69, SB 46 or a similar measure to adjust the education funding formula outlined in AS 14.17 to account for inflation.



Fund School Bond Debt Reimbursement and School Major Maintenance

The City of Valdez urges full funding of School Bond Debt Reimbursement as allowed under AS 14.11 and supports robust funding of the Department of Education and Early Development's School Major Maintenance Grant Program. In the Governor's proposed FY 2026 budget both essential programs are left unfunded. These programs ensure that funding for timely repairs for our aging school buildings can be reimbursed.

KEEP OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTED WITH RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

The Richardson Highway and Alaska Marine Highway are lifelines for our community and there are various other state-owned roads, bridges and facilities, including our local airport, in Valdez that require consistent upkeep and attention from the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

Thompson Pass staffing levels and significant weather events have led to frequent closures in the last two years that pose a risk to health and safety for our residents. Maintaining adequate snow removal in and around Valdez - including Thompson Pass- is imperative. Additionally, the City of Valdez supports ongoing maintenance or replacement of existing state roads and infrastructure as well as improvements to regular ferry service to the Marine Highway terminal in Valdez.

PRIORITIZE A STABLE PUBLIC RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The quality of Alaska's Public Retirement System is important for recruiting and retaining public servants, especially our first responders and teachers. We believe the creation of a new defined benefits option within the state retirement system (both PERS and TRS) is desirable and is especially important for attracting high quality professionals to our community. The city urges the legislature to pass SB 27 or a similar measure. Additionally, the current employer contribution of 22% required by AS 39.35.255 causes the City of Valdez and other municipalities to incur significant additional payroll costs with little direct benefit to our current employees. The City of Valdez also supports the state allowing for limited rehire of retired public employees.

SUPPORT FISHERIES AND MARICULTURE INDUSTRIES

Valdez is home to 41 permit holders and homeport to 91 vessels participating in various commercial fisheries and one of the largest purse seine salmon fisheries in Alaska. Each summer, up to 200 commercial vessels fish near the Solomon Gulch Hatchery, the Alyeska Marine Terminal and regulatorily closed waters. Additionally, Prince William Sound has an emerging mariculture industry with significant potential to drive economic diversification in the region.

Prince William Sound 2024 Fisheries Economic Disaster

2024 marked a year of historically low returns for the commercial salmon fisheries in Prince William Sound and will have lasting financial impacts on our economy moving forward. The 2024 Prince William Sound Pink Salmon total common property harvest was 85.4 % less than the recent 5-year average and the lowest harvest in the last 30 years. Area Purse Seiners were 85.3% and the drift Gillnet fleet came in at 89.6% below this 5-year average. Last November, the Valdez City Council passed Resolution 24-46 requesting that Governor Dunleavy designate by proclamation, as described in AS 44.33.285, the area of Prince William Sound pink salmon and any other applicable commercial fishery as an area impacted by an economic disaster and that the State of Alaska implement a recovery plan that provides private assistance and takes other actions that benefit commercial fisheries participants and others that rely on this important fishery resource. We urge the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission to waive permit fees for the 2025 season and as the state to push for assistance from the U.S. Department of Commerce.



Stable Funding of the ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division

The Valdez fishing fleet relies on the ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division to ensure maximum fishing opportunities and sustainable resource management. The legislature and the governor must recognize the need for a budget that minimizes adverse impacts on the core functions of this division. Successful commercial fisheries in our region hinge on the following: maintaining adequate staffing levels in Prince William Sound to provide for effective fisheries management; fully funding in-season data collection activities; maintaining the division's ability to conduct accurate in season reporting; and providing support for ongoing research projects.

Funding of the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

Alaska's seafood processors are experiencing unprecedented impacts to seafood markets due to increased production costs (inflation, interest rates, labor wages), reduced consumer demand post-pandemic, unfair trade policies, and geopolitical events. Global events have resulted in a weak Russian currency and dumping of Russian seafood, collapsing seafood markets, and built-up inventories which have led to the decline of ex vessel and first wholesale prices for all Alaska seafood, including salmon, pollock, cod, and sablefish. PWS fishermen and processors depend on strong markets to provide for stable business.

Mariculture

The City of Valdez is heavily invested in ensuring that the mariculture industry thrives in Prince William Sound and applauds legislative, regulatory and budgetary efforts on mariculture development at the state and federal levels. We encourage the legislature, the governor and the ADF&G to continue supporting this emerging industry.

ENSURE STABILITY FOR ESSENTIAL STATE SERVICES

The City of Valdez continues to urge the State of Alaska to maintain funding for essential services. Cuts to many services create a significant burden for the Valdez community and minimal savings for the State of Alaska.

Alaska Court System and Department of Law:

The Valdez Police Department has noted significant delays in prosecution of criminal charges by the state and a lack of resources for conducting local trials.

- Maintain state funding for criminal prosecutions.
- Address staffing shortages causing delays in prosecutions.
- Ensure adequate staffing of the Valdez Courthouse to allow for regular local trials.

Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Spill Prevention and Response:

SPAR staff and resources play a key role in ensuring that oil is safely moved through Port Valdez and in making sure that there are resources available in the event of a major oil spill event.

- Support efforts to increase the Refined Fuel Surcharge to ensure future funding for the oil spill response program.
- Maintain SPAR staff positions in Valdez.

Department of Administration, Division of Motor Vehicles:

Maintain full staffing of the local DMV office which allows Valdez residents to conduct business without having to travel more than 100 miles.



Department of Family and Community Services, Office of Children's Services:

Ensure that the one existing staff position for OCS in Valdez is filled to help ensure the safety of our community's most vulnerable children.

Department of Public Safety, Wildlife Troopers:

Maintaining the Valdez post for an Alaska Wildlife Trooper is vital to the fishing community of Valdez and Prince William Sound. The presence of a Wildlife Trooper ensures an orderly fishery and maintains established boundaries for resource protection and marine traffic.

University of Alaska, Prince William Sound College:

PWSC is a hub for training and education in our community. The City of Valdez encourages the continued support of Technical and Vocational Education programs at PWSC that support local industries of Oil and Gas, Mariculture, Healthcare and Outdoor Recreation.

SUPPORT STATE GRANT PROGRAMS

The City of Valdez recognizes the importance of maintaining funding for various state-administered grant programs that provide essential funding to local governments and community organizations. The following programs are particularly impactful for our community:

Regional and Community Jail Funding (DOC):

Annually, the state provides essential monetary support to offset the cost of community jail operations. Valdez is one of 15 communities that contract with the state to operate jail facilities in lieu of the state taking on this public safety responsibility.

Alaska Community Transit Human Service Grant Program (DOT&PF):

This grant program allows the Valdez Senior Center, a non-profit organization, to continue acting as the lead agency providing transit services to seniors and individuals experiencing disabilities. This program enables these vulnerable populations to participate in activities of daily life. The Valdez City Council passed Resolution 24-66 supporting the senior center's 2025 application for this grant.

Community Based Primary Prevention Program Grants (CDVSA):

This grant program supports activities to prevent domestic violence in our state. In Valdez, the local non-profit Advocates for Victims of Violence relies on this funding source to aid individuals facing family or intimate partner violence.

Child Advocacy Center Grant (DFCS) and VOCA Grant (DPS):

The City of Valdez provided supplemental funding in 2025 to the Copper River Basin Child Advocacy Center and supports the ongoing efforts of this organization in helping to reduce child abuse and providing services for families experiencing abuse in our community. The DFCS CAC grant to this organization was reduced by 15% in FY25 and led directly to an increased ask of the city.

Recreational Boating and Access Program (ADF&G):

The City of Valdez is interested in pursuing funding through this program to improve the boat launch ramp at the Valdez Small Boat Harbor.



2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

CAPITAL PROJECT PRIORITIES

Hermon Hutchinson Elementary Roof & Exterior Envelope Replacement

Cost - \$9,528,585 - Construction completed and seeking reimbursement - #16 on the FY26 School Major Maintenance Grant list for DEED

Pavement & Utilities Rehabilitation Phase 4

Cost - \$6,600,000

Valdez Harbor Launch Ramp Replacement

Cost - \$4,250,000 - Have applied for the Recreational Boating Access Program Grant

Public Safety Radio Network and Equipment Replacement

Cost - \$4,000,000

DOT&PF PROJECT PRIORITIES FOR VALDEZ

Mineral Creek Loop Road Resurfacing

Cost - \$2,000,000 - DOT&PF already has project funding in the amount of \$4,258,352 for culvert replacement on Mineral Creek Loop Road

Resurfacing and Lighting Improvements on Hazelet Ave.

Cost - \$5,000,000

Mineral Creek Bridge (Bailey Bridge) Replacement

Cost - \$2,000,000

Allison Point Pedestrian Pathways

Cost - \$2,000,000

Richardson Highway Resurfacing & Safety Improvements - Airport Rd to Dayville Rd



2025 FEDERAL ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

SUPPORT LOCAL HOUSING EFFORTS

Advocate for solutions to address the housing shortage in Valdez.

- Highlight projects that the City of Valdez has done to be a part of the housing solution. These have included:
 - Reexamination of land use policies and local zoning requirements- including updating the Comprehensive Plan and taking on a rewrite of our zoning code.
 - Housing incentives for new dwelling units and development
 - Temporary property tax exemptions for key areas
- Identify opportunities to improve housing options for USCG at the federal level. Work with the Alaska Delegation to explore solutions to expedite housing for the Coast Guard.
- Continue to seek federal funding through HUD and other agencies to promote additional high-quality housing units in Valdez with an emphasis on replacement of the large number of aging mobile and manufactured homes in our community.

ADDRESS CHILD CARE NEEDS

Work to address the child care crisis in Valdez through federal funding opportunities to ensure there are adequate child care services.

- Update Alaska Delegation on current child care initiatives in City of Valdez that focus on the interrelated areas of facility creation, workforce development and funding mechanisms to help businesses create licensed care in the community.
- Senator Murkowski was able to secure \$3 million for a child care facility in Valdez as part of the FY24 Appropriations bill. We are awaiting the award letter for funding.
- Explore options for a local Head Start grantee manage and operate city-owned early education facility.

KEEP A STRONG COAST GUARD PRESENCE IN VALDEZ

A robust USCG presence is important to maintaining of adequate emergency response capabilities and security for Valdez's strategically important port.

- Work with the Alaska Delegation to replace Liberty as soon as possible. The Coast Guard has committed to 87' foot cutter to be stationed in Valdez.
- Identify a long-term strategy to maintain Coast Guard presence in Valdez.
- The City Council will highlight the importance of adequate emergency response to handle TAPS and other sensitive material that enter the Port of Valdez.
- Identify future military assets to be station in Port of Valdez.
- Valdez will continue to highlight the strategic advantage City of Valdez provides.



INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Advocate for federal funding to improve and maintain Valdez's local infrastructure, including roads, bridges, ports, schools and modernizing the Valdez Container Terminal for economic growth and environmental safety.

- Pursue annual appropriations funding for community development projects in Valdez, which includes infrastructure funding. The top priorities for funding include the Emergency Radio Communications tower project, design funding for Phase V Pavement Management on Pioneer Drive, design and permitting for dock at Sea Otter Park for future vessels.
- Urge Congress to pass, and continue to fund, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Seek federal support to improve healthcare access in Valdez, including funding for healthcare facilities and addressing the healthcare workforce shortage.

- The City Council and local partners have identified gaps in specialty healthcare services – including obstetrics, senior support services, and long-term care.

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Support legislation that promotes sustainable fisheries management in the Prince William Sound, timber conservation, and wildlife protection in the Valdez area.

- Request Federal support for emergency declaration for local fisheries affected by meager salmon run in 2024.
- Reauthorization of the Magnus-Stevens Fisheries Management Conservation Act. This is an opportunity to evaluate possible changes that could be beneficial to Prince William Sound.
- The same strategy will be applied to mariculture, timber and wildlife protection developments projects in Valdez, which includes infrastructure funding.

ARCTIC POLICY

Advocate for policies that recognize Valdez's position as a strategic Arctic gateway.

Promote sustainable development, environmental conservation, and infrastructure improvements to support increased Arctic activity.

The Arctic is becoming more prevalent in members' minds for a host of reasons, including Senator Sullivan's determination to educate members on the resources and national security concerns related to the Arctic.



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Prioritize federal assistance for disaster preparedness and response in Valdez, focusing on the city's vulnerability to natural disasters and the potential impacts of climate change.

- Seek federal funding to support the Avalanche Center, including National Weather Service daily weather observations.
- Find opportunities for federal funding to support resilience for the City of Valdez in future natural disasters.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Address the immediate impact of climate change on Valdez's coastal ecosystems, including protection of glaciers and marine life and prioritize funding for climate resilience projects in Valdez.

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Support legislation that addresses the unique needs of the Valdez Native community.

2026 SESSION CALENDAR

| DECEMBER 2025 | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|---|--|---------------------|------------------------|-----|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Christmas Day | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 5pm deadline to request new bills for prefile | | | |
| JANUARY 2026 | | | | | | |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | 1 New Year's Day | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 Noon deadline to approve final for 1st Prefile release | 7 | 8 | 9 1st Prefile Release | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 Noon deadline to approve final for 2nd Prefile release | 14 | 15 | 16 2nd Prefile Release | 17 |
| 18 | 19 MLK Day | 20 First Day of Session | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| FEBRUARY | | | | | | |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 President's Day | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 Personal bill deadline | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| MARCH | | | | | | |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 Seward's Day | 31 | | | | |

| APRIL | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 90 th Day | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |
| MAY | | | | | | |
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 121 st Day | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24/31 | 25 Memorial Day | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

WEEKEND ROTATION SCHEDULE FOR LEGAL SERVICES STAFF

Saturday:
 Duty Attorney Hours 10:00 - 3:00
 Front Staff Hours 10:30 - 3:00
 Editor Hours 11:00 - 3:00



To: Valdez City Council
Re: State and Federal Policy Priority Updates

The goal of this memo is to provide an overview of significant policy shifts at the state and federal levels and movement on topics related to 2025 City of Valdez legislative priorities.

Housing (state and federal)

- Approval received for future construction of additional Coast Guard Housing Units in Valdez however the Coast Guard has been noncommittal. Recent [process in Kodiak](#) has been cited as a possible model.
- Alaska Corporation for Affordable Housing is completing development of 20 units in Valdez.
- PRICE Program 2024 application was not funded by HUD- Community Development Department looking at other options for mobile home replacement.

Child Care (state and federal)

- SB 189 which [expanded child care assistance and added specific business tax credits for child care investment](#) passed into law in 2024 – it faced a [legal challenge](#) due to the single subject rule.
- SB 95 was [passed in May of 2025](#) to ensure provisions related to child care would have legal effect.
- The Division of Public Assistance [announced new rate schedule](#) and noted an additional \$5.9 million in annual funding is being put toward supporting licensed child care.
- At the federal level, the [Department of Health and Social Services](#) has frozen about \$2.4 billion in Child Care Development Fund monies in five states. States are under greater scrutiny currently.
- The final [2025 tax reconciliation package](#) (One Big Beautiful Bill) made several changes to the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (expanded), Employer Provided Child Care Credit, Child Tax Credit (altered), and other programs.
- \$3 million FY24 federal discretionary funding for child care will be used in renovation of District Office and \$880,000 State of Alaska Community INNOVATION grant fully expended.

Strategic Port Value and Port Infrastructure (state and federal)

- With help of the Alaska delegation the USCG Cutter Liberty was replaced with USCG Cutter Blacktip – a home porting ceremony took place in the summer of 2025.
- The city engaged PN&D and Corvis design to assist with conceptual design and promotional materials to illustrate the potential for and benefits of additional US Coast Guard or military assets being homeported in Valdez. Other Alaska communities like Kodiak and Juneau will not likely be able to host as many vessels as the coast guard is planning to construct.

Support for Valdez Area State Parks (state)

- Ranger position for Valdez area remains unfunded.
- Maintenance for Valdez area parks is still contracted to VAA with little state support.
- [HB 79 Renaming Shoup Bay State Marine Park](#) as Vic Fischer State Marine Park passed the House and is in Senate Resources committee (COV submitted letter of support).



Local Control in Municipal Property Taxation (state)

- Current [version of HB 13](#) includes COV's desired language "(dd) A municipality may by ordinance exempt or partially exempt from taxation real property owned and occupied as a permanent place of abode by a resident of the municipality." This bill also has additional provisions intended to help alleviate housing affordability issues.
- It passed the House in May 2025 and was referred to Senate Community and Regional Affairs and State Affairs committees.

Adequately Fund Public Education (state and federal)

- The Alaska Legislature successfully [passed HB 57](#) raising the BSA from \$5,960 to \$6,660. Other provisions related to charter schools, reading grants and wireless telecommunications policies were in this bill as well. The governor vetoed this bill, but the veto was overridden. The governor then used his line-item veto authority to reduce the enacted operating budget funding amount to the prior BSA amount. [This veto was also overridden](#) by the legislature.
- Valdez City Schools continues to advocate for control of local contributions and supports [HB 212](#), which would base the funding formula on a 3-year enrollment average and SB 113, which passed but was vetoed last year and would have directed corporate income tax from online business to school funding.
- COV commented in opposition to [proposed regulation changes](#) to alter the definition of "Local Contribution" that would severely limit local communities' ability to fund community programming in schools. The state claimed the change related to correcting their [failure of the federal disparity test](#) but communities and school districts argued that the two decisions were unrelated.
- Herman Hutchens Elementary School Exterior Renovation ranked 16th on the [FY 26 school major maintenance list](#) – only the first three projects were funded due to [governor veto](#).
- Secure Rural School funding for recent federal fiscal years was approved and has now been received.

Reliable Transportation Systems (state and federal)

- Overall coordination with Alaska DOT&PF has been positive in 2025.
- Ferry operations remain sporadic in Prince William Sound- there were no sailings on the Valdez, Cordova, Whittier route for a two-month period (Dec 2024- Jan 2025). There is an approved 2026 project for [replacing the M/V Tustumena](#), which may add flexibility for the fleet.
- Alaska DOT&PF completed repaving of the section of the Richardson Hwy where several automobile accidents have occurred in recent years. There are additional repairs planned to the Richardson and Glenn highways. Federal Highway Administration [redistributed \\$183.4 million in federal funds](#) to Alaska DOT&PF allowing for additional road projects to be funded statewide.
- There were fewer closures of Thompson Pass in winter of 2024-25 compared to winter 2023-24, though it continues to be a challenge for Alaska DOT&PF to keep a full workforce of operators and mechanics locally.



Essential State Services in Valdez

- Funding for various state agency positions in Valdez was status quo in the FY 26 state operating budget.
- There are still delays with prosecution of local cases by the state and some challenges with staffing.

Stable Public Retirement System (state)

- HB 78 [passed the House](#) and is currently in Senate Labor and Commerce.

Fisheries, Mariculture and Natural Resources (state and federal)

- 2024 Prince William Sound Fisheries Economic Disaster – A request was submitted to U.S. Department of Commerce by Gov. Dunleavy under the Magnuson-Stevens Act in January 2025. Status is still listed as “pending” on [NOAA page](#).
- FY 26 ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division budget was stable.
- Half of Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute funding was [vetoed by the governor](#) in 2025.
- Several Prince William Sound projects have benefited from the \$49 million Alaska Mariculture Cluster grant program funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration and led by Southeast Conference. The project period for this grant expires September 30th, 2026.
- [Conversations around reauthorization](#) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Management Conservation Act and potential changes to the law continue at the federal level.

Healthcare Access and Quality (federal)

- Providence Valdez has identified the following projects and programs that could be supported by the Rural Health Transformation Program: MRI & Ultrasound Replacement Project, Rural Training Hub Pilot Program, Home Health Pilot Program.
- Providence Valdez also supports Compacting Nursing Licensure to allow for reciprocity of professional licenses across states.

Disaster Preparedness and Response (federal)

- Funding for the emergency radio communications tower project is currently in an appropriations bill being considered by the US Senate.
- Vessels of Opportunity (fishing vessels that play a vital part in oil spill response programs) remain exempt from USCG inspection is included in the current version of the National Defense Authorization Act (signed into law in Dec 2025).

There were no specific or actionable advocacy goals for the following identified federal priorities: Arctic Policy, Climate Change and Environmental protection, Tribal Sovereignty and Self-determination.