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Governor Bill Walker  
STATE OF ALASKA

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February 13, 2018

The Honorable Pete Kelly  
President of the Senate  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 111  
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Peter Micciche  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 514  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear President Kelly and Senator Micciche:

I have received your letter regarding my recent appointment of Randall Kowalke to the vacant seat for Senate District E.

The filling of a legislative vacancy is governed by Alaska Constitution, Article II, Section 4 and AS 15.40.320. The process outlined by the statutes generally involves three steps: (1) legislative vacancy occurs; (2) Governor has 30 days to appoint someone from the House or Senate district who is from the same political party as the legislator that vacated the office and meets the qualifications set forth in the Alaska Constitution for election to legislative office; and (3) once the Governor has made an appointment, the appointee must be confirmed by a majority of members of the same political party from the legislative body for which the appointment was made. If the appointee fails to be confirmed, the Governor has an additional 10 days to appoint another person to the office, followed by another confirmation vote. Nowhere in statute or the Alaska Constitution does it require the Governor to select names from a list provided by a political party; instead, the selection of names from a list has been a tradition that is only outlined in the bylaws of the Alaska Democratic and Republican parties.

While I appreciate your concern for the Republican party's selection process, I am a non-partisan Governor and my decisions are not based on the wishes or demands of any one party. Rather, my appointment of Mr. Kowalke was based solely on my sincere desire to make the best decisions for all Alaskans, including the residents of Senate District E. Mr. Kowalke is a respected leader in his community and an elected member of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly with broad support. His extensive private and public service in a wide array of sectors, and longstanding volunteer civic service to state and community, demonstrates a commitment of service to the people of Alaska and an understanding of the issues confronting us. I received more positive input in support of Mr. Kowalke from the local elected officials and residents in the Matanuska-Susitna area than for all the other applicants combined. In fact, I was encouraged to appoint Mr. Kowalke from your own Senate Majority, recommendations which I took very seriously. Mr. Kowalke has the

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integrity, dedication, political acumen and work ethic necessary to be a productive member of the Senate Majority and the best person to represent District E in the State Senate.

In closing, I have no intention of delaying the selection process by requesting additional names from the Republican party while my current appointment is still pending. Should the Senate Republicans choose to reject Mr. Kowalke's appointment, I will forward another name for consideration pursuant to requirements in the Alaska Constitution and State law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a long, sweeping underline.

Bill Walker  
Governor