



May 10, 2017
Representative David Eastman
State Capitol Room 114
Juneau AK, 99801

Sent via email: Representative.David.Eastman@akleg.gov

Representative Eastman,

Sealaska joins the growing chorus of Alaskans calling for an apology for your unsubstantiated claim below:

“You have individuals who are in villages and are glad to be pregnant, so that they can have an abortion because there’s a free trip to Anchorage involved.”

As Native people, one of our most important values is “respect.” Respect for ourselves and respect for each other including a veteran and elected leader such as yourself. However, your appalling comments demonstrate a significant level of disrespect toward Alaska’s first people because we are the majority in Alaska villages. Your statements exploited negative stereotypes of village life and further perpetuated racist feelings to promote your own political and personal beliefs.

Sealaska has more than 22,000 shareholders who either live in rural Alaska or trace their ancestry to Native villages. We have great respect for our shareholders providing for the next generation in rural Alaska because our traditional villages are the basis of our collective identity and culture.

We expect more from our elected officials from all 40 House Districts. With this letter, we respectfully request the House of Representatives pursue censure and take all necessary and appropriate action to reassure Alaskans that this type of bigotry is not acceptable among our lawmakers.

Sincerely,

Joe Nelson
Board Chair, Sealaska

Cc: Representative.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov
Representative.Chris.Tuck@akleg.gov
Representative.Charisse.Millett@akleg.gov