

CITY OF UNALASKA  
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2018-60

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL EXPRESSING CONDITIONAL SUPPORT OF THE STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS TRANSITION TO WORK PROGRAM IN UNALASKA

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska Department of Corrections has asked the City of Unalaska to support a trial transition to work program for State of Alaska prisoners that are nearing the end of their sentences and want to be prepared to reenter the work place; and

WHEREAS, an Unalaska seafood processing facility has shown interest in participating in the transition to work program; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Corrections staff including Commissioner Williams have briefed the Unalaska City Council and the public twice on the program and stated that only four prisoners would be allotted to Unalaska for this first trial run of the program; and

WHEREAS, staff of the Department of Corrections have briefed the Unalaska Department of Public Safety on the equipment that Department of Corrections provides such as ankle bracelets and other monitoring equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Unalaska Department of Public Safety supports the program and has been assured that any costs to handle prisoner violations will be covered by the State of Alaska, sparing the resources of the Unalaska Department of Public Safety; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and the community have voiced opposition to any sex offenders being placed in the community through the transition to work program; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Williams has assured the Council and the community that all inmates will be carefully selected and near the end of their sentences and motivated not to return to the prison system; and

WHEREAS, if the Council feels the program is not working and isn't in the best interest of Unalaska, the city will be able to opt out of the program at any time.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unalaska City Council supports a trial transition to work program for four Department of Corrections prisoners that are nearing the end of their sentences, to be placed at an Unalaska seafood processing facility.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on November 27, 2018.

  
Frank Kelty  
Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Marjie Veeder  
City Clerk



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## MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

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To: Unalaska City Council Members; and Thomas Thomas, City Manager  
From: Mayor Frank Kelty  
Date: November 27, 2018  
Re: Resolution 2018-60, a Resolution of the Unalaska City Council expressing conditional support of the State of Alaska Department of Corrections trial Transition to Work program in Unalaska

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**SUMMARY:** The State of Alaska Department of Corrections has asked the City of Unalaska to support a trial transition to work program for four State of Alaska prisoners that are nearing the end of their sentences at one of the local seafood processing plants.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:** None.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Unalaska has no formal experience with this type of program, but the Unalaska Department of Public Safety does supervise felons on probation in the community.

The State Department of Corrections has had experience and success with placing prisoners in seafood processing plants in other fishery dependent communities. Unalaska has one seafood processing plant which has shown interest in participating in the transition to work program with the Department of Corrections. The City Council and the community have had two visits with Corrections Commissioner Williams and his staff and they have pointed out that they need community support before they can move forward with this trial transition to work program in Unalaska. The Commissioner pointed out the amount of return offenders to the prison system is mostly due to lack of housing, and jobs both of which are very hard to come by for convicted felons. The work available at seafood processing plants that provide housing, meals, and a paycheck goes a long way towards getting prisoners back on their feet when their sentence is finished and also provides the possibility of continued employment. The earnings that the prisoners make at these jobs, allow the State of Alaska to require payroll deductions, to cover prisoner obligations, such as child support, fines, and restitution to victims.

**DISCUSSION:** The City Council and the community have voiced opposition to any sex offenders being placed in the community as well as other potentially dangerous prisoners. Commissioner Williams has assured the Council and the community that 1) all inmates will be carefully selected and near the end of their sentences and very motivated to not return to prison; and 2) if the community feels the program is not working and isn't in the best interest of the community, we are able to opt out of the program at any time.

It was also pointed out at the first public meeting that there are resources located in the community that could assist this program and the prisoners involved. They include education, mental health and drug and alcohol programs. The Unalaska Department of Public Safety has voiced its support for this trial program with a start of only four prisoners.

**UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL ALTERNATIVES:** The Council may choose to approve Resolution 2018-60; to amend Resolution 2018-60; vote down Resolution 2018-60; or take no action.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** The Unalaska Department of Public Safety has been assured by the Department of Corrections that 1) any costs to handle prisoner violations will be covered by the State of Alaska, sparing Unalaska Public Safety Department resources; and 2) if costs are incurred, that Unalaska will be reimbursed.

**LEGAL:** When a formal agreement is brought forward, it will be reviewed by City Attorney Brooks Chandler.

**MAYORS RECOMMENDATION:** I support the passage of Resolution 2018-60.

November 14, 2018 PRESS RELEASE  
From Lindsey Graham, U.S. Senator for South Carolina

### **Graham Statement on President Trump's Support for Bipartisan Sentencing Reform**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina) today made this statement on President Donald Trump announcing support for the First Step Act, a bipartisan sentencing and prison reform bill.

*“I am very excited to have President Trump’s support for the First Step Act.*

*“This bipartisan legislation gives nonviolent offenders an earned second chance and should dramatically reduce the recidivism rate by focusing on skills necessary for people to stay out of prison.*

*“We can and should pass this bill before Congress adjourns for the year.”*

#### Background on the First Step Act:

The First Step Act will reform America’s prisons to make our communities safer and our justice system fairer.

- Nearly all incarcerated Americans will one day leave prison and the goal of this legislation is to make sure they do not return.
- The First Step Act uses a targeted approach toward a specific population of Federal prisoners who will eventually be released.
- The First Step Act will promote prisoner participation in vocational training, educational coursework, or faith-based programs, and in turn help them successfully reenter society.
- Prisoners will be able to earn credits that reduce the amount of time spent in prison.
- As a result, prisoners will gain job skills, drug treatment, and education that prepare them to reenter American communities as productive members of society.
- The legislation also seeks to place Federal inmates closer to their communities in order to facilitate family visitation.
- This is a true first step in creating a fairer justice system by reforming mandatory minimums, which have created racially disparate outcomes and increased overcrowding and costs.
- The legislation reduces the enhanced penalties for certain non-violent repeat drug offenders and eliminates the three-strike mandatory life provision.
- Certain nonviolent offenders will be able to petition courts for a review of their sentence, which can be reduced only after the judge reviews all circumstances, including public safety, criminal history, and the nature of the offense.

Taking steps to better prepare inmates for reentry into our society and communities will help reduce recidivism.

- We can improve society for all by better equipping prisoners being released for successful reintegration into society.
- Today one-in-three American adults has some type of criminal record and more than two million Americans are in prisons, including 181,000 in Federal prison.
- More than 95% of these prisoners will eventually leave prison and face the challenge of restarting their lives.
- Our prisons can do much more to prepare inmates for release, addressing the fact that roughly 77% of state inmates and 38% of federal inmates are rearrested within five years of release.

The First Step Act enjoys widespread support across the political spectrum.

- Many of the reforms included in this legislation passed the House in an overwhelming, bipartisan vote of 360–59 in May 2018.
  - Republicans and Democrats in the Senate worked with the White House to craft a bipartisan sentencing reform compromise, which has been added to the legislation.
  - So far, seven major police organizations, over 2,700 faith and evangelical leaders, and hundreds of conservative organizations and leaders support this legislation.
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#### **WHO IS LOBBYING ON FIRST STEP ACT:**

A wide range of groups have lobbied for and against the bill. Among them, according to third quarter disclosure filings:

Americans for Prosperity, LIBRE Initiative, Gun Owners of America, Campaign for Youth Justice, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the American Bar Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Associated Builders and Contractors, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, FreedomWorks, Heritage Action for America, Families Against Mandatory Minimums, Due Process Institute, Friends Committee on National Legislation, American Conservative Union, Prison Fellowship Ministries, the American Psychological Association, the National Association of Police Organizations, and the National Employment Law Project.