



## **SENATOR LISA MURKOWSKI PROPOSES \$5 MILLION FOR DESIGN OF NEW ILISAĠVIK COLLEGE CAMPUS**

Iłisaġvik College is pleased to announce that Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) has included \$5 million dollars in the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations bill for the ongoing design of its new Iłisaġvik College campus.

On August 1, 2022, Murkowski announced nearly half a million dollars in directed spending for Alaska as part of the Senate majority proposed appropriation bill. This is an important step in the year-long appropriations process, though it does not guarantee the money will make into the final funding bill. Nonetheless, Iłisaġvik was thrilled to be included. Iłisaġvik President Justina Wilhelm said, “We are ecstatic about Senator Murkowski’s support and advocacy of the proposed \$5 million towards our new campus.”

Iłisaġvik has been working towards a new campus since preliminary discussions began in 2007. In 2018, they were allocated \$1 million in North Slope Borough Capital Improvement Program funds to support the programming and concept design phase. The proposed \$5 million will allow the college to continue the first phase of design including a collaboration with Ukpeaġvik Iñupiat Corporation (UIC) to secure a long-term land lease for a site. Iłisaġvik is working with UIC UMIAQ LLC and Cibinel Architects on the design.

Iḷisaġvik College is currently housed at the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory, a 70-year-old facility four miles outside of Utqiaġvik that was never meant to be a college. The campus is spread across 13 buildings that are occasionally locked down due to polar bear sightings or inaccessible due to road closures caused by extreme weather. The college is hoping to consolidate operations into one purpose-designed facility in town that can better serve the community's needs for education, training, and events.

The proposed \$5 million is one of only two items in the bill centered within Utqiaġvik. Almost three million was directed to the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management for marine mammal research. Another \$3.7 million was set aside for the North Slope Borough for winter access trails and a wastewater replacement project.

Iḷisaġvik College was very grateful to host Senator Murkowski in late June. Senator Murkowski and her Special Assistant for Rural Affairs, Cordelia Qigñaaq Kellie met with students, faculty, and staff. Dr. Hal Haynes, Jr., Dean of Students said the Senator "was quickly able to relate to the students and they eagerly engaged with her." President Wilhelm said, "she was genuinely interested in the students and made them her priority."

For more on the proposed funding bill see the original announcement at:

[https://www.murkowski.senate.gov/press/release/murkowski-announces-a-half-a-billion-dollars-in-directed-spending\\_for-alaska-in-proposed-fy-2023-appropriations-bills](https://www.murkowski.senate.gov/press/release/murkowski-announces-a-half-a-billion-dollars-in-directed-spending_for-alaska-in-proposed-fy-2023-appropriations-bills)