



TEL: (907) 443-5231 • FAX: (907) 443-4452



SERVING THE

February 12, 2018

VILLAGES OF:

BREVIG MISSION

Senator Lisa Murkowski  
709 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Dan Sullivan  
702 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Don Young  
2314 Rayburn House Building  
Washington, DC 20510

COUNCIL

DIOMEDE

Daryl J. Boness, Ph.D.  
Chairman, Marine Mammal Commission  
4340 East-West Highway, # 700  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Governor Walker  
3rd Floor, State Capitol  
PO Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811

ELIM

GAMBELL

GOLOVIN

KING ISLAND

**RE: Marine Mammal Commission (MMC); Critical to Alaska Native Co-Management Efforts; Letter of Support for 2019 MMC Budget Inclusion**

KOYUK

Dear Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, Congressman Young, Governor Walker, and Dr. Boness,

MARY'S IGLOO

NOME

Kawerak is disheartened to see that President Trump released the Administration's budget proposal to Congress on February 12, 2018 but did not include the Marine Mammal Commission (MMC) for Fiscal Year 2019.

SAVOONGA

SHAKTOOLIK

The MMC is a critical pillar of marine mammal management, established by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which most importantly reviews the activities of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The MMC serves a critical function here in Alaska and has assisted co-management groups with their objectives. Ms. Vera Metcalf of the Eskimo Walrus Commission in Nome serves as an Alaska Native Advisor to the MMC and her service is of great importance to all of the Alaska Native Co-Management groups in Alaska.

SHISHMAREF

SOLOMON

STEBBINS

ST. MICHAEL

TELLER

UNALAKLEET

Alaska Native subsistence hunters from the Bering Strait region rely heavily upon the marine mammal resources of Alaska's bountiful oceans. Dramatic changes are occurring that our people and communities are struggling to cope with and Kawerak believes in and relies upon the work of the MMC to help us carry out our traditional, subsistence way of life. For example, earlier this month Kawerak staff engaged with the MMC to better understand the role of saxitoxins in marine mammals which may be contributing factors in large scale marine mammal strandings within the last two years in the Bering Sea. We believe the MMC is critical to issues such as co-management and marine mammal management and urge your offices to consider incorporating the necessary funding for the MMC to carry out its mandated functions.

WALES

WHITE MOUNTAIN

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
KAWERAK, INC.

Melanie Bahnke, President