

Introduced by: Martin, Mayor  
Date: 12/06/05  
Action: Adopted  
Vote: 9 Yes, 0 No

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH  
RESOLUTION 2005-102**

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CURRENT USDA FARM COUNTY SYSTEM  
AND MAINTAINING A FULL SERVICE FARM SERVICE OFFICE IN HOMER**

**WHEREAS**, the Farm Service Agency (“FSA”) is operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to stabilize farm income, help farmers conserve land and water resources, and make and guarantee farm emergency ownership, and operating loans; and

**WHEREAS**, “FSA Tomorrow” was an FSA program designed to modernize the FSA by consolidating various FSA offices; and

**WHEREAS**, “FSA Tomorrow” exempted Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 15, 2005, the USDA put the “FSA Tomorrow” plan on hold; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to maintain each of the four offices in Alaska due to distances, difference in agricultural areas, and anticipated additional programs to be administered; and

**WHEREAS**, the current county system which has worked effectively for the past 50 plus years should be saved; and

**WHEREAS**, the Homer “County” is as large as Texas, and includes Kodiak, the Aleutians, the Pribiloff Islands and the Seward Peninsula to Nome; and

**WHEREAS**, consolidating and placing the main office in Anchorage loses local contact and makes contact with outlying areas difficult if not impossible, making travel more expensive for FSA and the producers; and

**WHEREAS**, every participant in Farm Bill programs has to fill out paperwork with their FSA office; and

**WHEREAS**, the Homer FSA office assisted 681 salmon fishermen under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program in 2005, that garnered the Homer County \$680,000; and

**WHEREAS,** the FSA must be involved in every contract administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (“NRCS”), contracts that amounted to \$1.8 million dollars for the Homer County in 2005, not including the Trade Adjustment Assistance (“TAA”) program; and

**WHEREAS,** the FSA Homer office had 95 farmer and 24 fisherman visits in 2005; and

**WHEREAS,** the NRCS Homer field office took 32 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQUIP) applications and 19 Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) applications all coordinated with the local FSA; and

**WHEREAS,** the FSA is responsible for keeping records for the entire Department of Agriculture regarding change in farms, such as size and ownership, and requiring on-site visits; and

**WHEREAS,** currently FSA and NRCS offices are in the same building and across the hall from each other and work closely together as necessary; and

**WHEREAS,** approximately 7 months ago the appointed State FSA Committee made the plan to consolidate without public input, elected County FSA Committees were not consulted until after the fact, and National FSA has not approved the plan; and

**WHEREAS,** the State Executive Director (“SED”) notified the Homer FSA of a November 17, 2005, meeting and gave out a press release four hours later; and

**WHEREAS,** Homer requested a larger venue and a date when all three appointed State FSA Committee members could attend, but the request was denied; and

**WHEREAS,** the SED insisted the public hearing be held in the 12 x 36 hallway in the USDA facility, and 42 people crammed into the area with many more turned away who could not get in or hear and left without the opportunity to comment;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:**

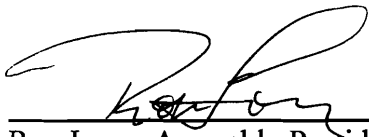
**SECTION 1.** That the Kenai Peninsula Borough requests the Washington D.C. delegation to intercede in behalf of all Alaskan farmers and stockgrowers and request the plan to consolidate be withdrawn.

**SECTION 2.** That the Kenai Peninsula Borough requests the SED to cooperatively work with local offices for an appropriate public hearing, in a timely fashion and adequate venue, where all three appointed members of the State FSA Committee can be present to accurately reevaluate the entire plan.

**SECTION 3.** That copies of this resolution be sent to: Senator Ted Stevens; Senator Lisa Murkowski; Congressman Don Young; Governor Frank Murkowski; Lt. Governor Loren Leman; Representative Gabrielle LeDoux, District 36; Representative Paul Seaton, District 35; Mike Johanns, U.S. Agriculture Secretary; Charles F. Conner, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; Teresa C. Lasseter, USDA Farm Service Agency Administrator; Doug Frago, Deputy Administrator Field Operations/FSA; Chad Padgett, FSA State Executive Director; Bill Ward, Chairman; Jeanette James; Bruce Willard; Bob Jones, State Conservationist/NRCS; and Bill Allen, State Director-Rural Development Agency.

**SECTION 4.** That this resolution takes effect immediately upon its adoption.

**ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 6TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2005.**

  
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Ron Long, Assembly President

ATTEST:  
  
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Sherry Biggs, Borough Clerk

