From: ASSEMBLY CHAIR FORREST DUNBAR AND VICE-CHAIR JOHN WEDDLETON

Subject: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 2.30.075 TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION FOR TELEPHONIC PARTICIPATION IN ASSEMBLY MEETINGS AND LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES WHEREIN MEMBERS PARTICIPATING TELEPHONICALLY MAY COUNT FOR PURPOSES OF ESTABLISHING A QUORUM.

This ordinance updates language and quorum requirements, for the purpose of strengthening the Assembly’s abilities to meet and conduct business in emergency situations.

First, technology is rapidly advancing. Providing a broad definition of “telephonic participation” more accurately reflects that Assembly members may be able to participate fully in Assembly meetings by means other than a telephone, such as via video conferencing. All other requirements still must be met including that the assembly member gain permission beforehand, as well as have the meeting agenda and other pertinent documents to be discussed and/or acted upon.

Second, while Anchorage Municipal Charter directs that “six members of the assembly shall constitute a quorum,” it is only in AMC 2.30.075B. that requires six members be physically present to establish a quorum in circumstances where an assembly member wants to appear telephonically. This prevents the assembly from meeting and conducting business in situations where less than six members can be physically present. Particularly in emergency situations, members may need to quarantine themselves for public health or safety reasons. This ordinance carves out a narrow exception to the code’s physically present requirement in cases where an emergency has been declared and allows, in those narrow situations, telephonic participants to be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum.

We request your support for the ordinance.

Prepared by: Department of Law

Respectfully submitted: Forrest Dunbar, Assembly Chair
District 5, East Anchorage
John Weddleton, Assembly Vice-Chair
District 6, South Anchorage, Turnagain Arm, and
Girdwood