



Governor Mike Dunleavy
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

On behalf of the Alaska REALTORS®, we commend you for your leadership and the incredible diligence during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We also thank your department directors and state government workers for their hard work and dedication during this unprecedented time.

The timeline of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect are still unknown. In addition to health and safety, Alaska REALTORS® is also concerned about the impact that we are already seeing on homeowners and businesses in the process of buying and selling property, and therefore a primary driver of Alaska's economy. Real Estate is 25% of the nation's economy and would be a devastating economic hindrance to restarting the economy after the COVID-19 has passed.

With the potential of more shutdowns and limitations on local and state government services we respectfully request you minimize the potential interruptions to the real estate market by declaring real estate services as essential. These steps have been taken by other states to recognize and include essential operations vital to a real estate transaction. These services include but are not limited to, permitting, financial, appraisal, inspections, construction, title work and especially the transfer and recording of deeds and other instruments. Additionally, we are in full support of HB124 which allows remote (electronic) notarization of documents in real estate financing and transactions.

The ability to close real estate transactions includes certain requirements and deadlines. The impact, both on the lives and finances of property owners, is substantial and can be avoided if these essential services can continue.

Alaska REALTORS® is committed to working with our local associations and members to educate them on the virus and how to work with their clients to stay safe and healthy, while helping them work through the delays that are present in the market. Shutdowns will prohibit buyers and sellers from completing property transactions, potentially putting them in financial hardship and without adequate housing. It is for these reasons that we ask that real estate services to be exempt from state and local government closures.

We understand this pandemic is already having an impact on the real estate industry and the economy. Housing is a basic essential need, especially in Alaska due to our climate and to deny it would be a travesty.

We look forward to working together to limit the negative effects on Alaska and its citizens.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Arnott
2020 Alaska REALTORS® State President

Angie Tallant
2020 National Association of REALTORS® Region 12 Vice President
Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington States