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August 10, 2021

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## **Sullivan Statement on Bipartisan Infrastructure Package**

**WASHINGTON**—U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) today released the following statement on the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* which was passed in the Senate.

“Alaska is a resource rich, but infrastructure poor state. Getting more infrastructure built in our state, so we can unlock our full potential, has been one of my top priorities since I was elected,” **said Senator Sullivan**. “We have natural resources that exceed most major countries, yet Alaska didn’t benefit from the build-out of the Eisenhower-era national highway system like other states. Consider this: We have fewer road miles than Connecticut, despite our state being 118 times the size. We also have much less broadband connectivity than any other state and have more communities that lack clean water and flush toilets than any other state. To make matters worse, any infrastructure project that attempts to get built in our state gets smothered in federal-agency red tape and far-left extremist lawsuits.

“While flawed in a number of ways, this bill addresses Alaska’s historic deficit in infrastructure in a way that I believe will be important for our state. It has very significant funding for Alaska roads, water systems, ports, airports, our ferry system, bridges, and Coast Guard infrastructure. It also contains historic funding for broadband build-out in Alaska, which will help our fellow Alaskans in terms of education, telehealth, and small business opportunities, and it has billions of dollars in federal loan guarantees for the Alaska natural gasline—a step toward unlocking our massive reserves of natural gas for the benefit of Alaskans, our country, and our allies overseas.

“Importantly, a lot of the infrastructure money in this bill will go directly to the states—which know how best to use funds for their citizens. Further, this bill contains necessary provisions to streamline key elements of our broken federal permitting process—a process that greatly stifles our ability to build out vital infrastructure. This is an issue that I have focused relentlessly on during my time in the Senate and one on which I worked closely with the Trump administration when they promulgated much-needed federal permitting reforms. While the Biden administration quickly rescinded those rules, we were able to include key elements of these important permitting reforms in this bill.

“Finally, this bill is important to competing with communist China. America cannot have crumbling roads, bridges and ports if we are going to continue to lead the world economy. Additionally, we cannot continue to be dependent on China for critical minerals—resources that we have in Alaska and are crucial to our economy and national security. This bill has the potential to advance substantial progress on both fronts and should better equip our country to rise to the serious economic and national security challenges posed by China.

“Nevertheless, despite the impressive infrastructure wins for Alaska, my vote to support this bill was a difficult one. In fact, over the past week, I have voted against procedural steps to move forward with this bill because I felt that more time and amendment votes were needed.

“Any bill of this size—and in particular a bill written with significant input from the Biden administration and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer—is going to contain provisions that I don’t support. My team and I read this bill. Unfortunately, it has many such provisions, like a multi-billion-dollar Energy Department slush fund and various federal mandates and pilot projects that are not focused on building out core American infrastructure. Such mandates have the potential to stifle innovation and force the heavy hand of government onto the U.S economy and consumers. Despite these and other problems with this bill, on balance, I believe the benefits to Alaskans and the overall focus on physical infrastructure, like roads, ports, broadband, and water and sewer, and the jobs and opportunities this will create for Alaskans, outweigh my serious concerns about other negative aspects of this bill.

“I also share the concern of many Alaskans about out-of-control government spending, particularly the recent partisan \$2 trillion spending bill passed in February that I voted against, with trillions more in partisan spending promised by President Biden and Chuck Schumer for this fall. My focus will continue to be on passing legislation that leads to expanding jobs and opportunities for Alaska small businesses and hard-working families—bills that put people to work—as opposed to bills that pay people not to work.

“In that regard, despite the passage of this physical infrastructure bill, Democrats are still planning to vote today on the beginning of a completely separate bill—their unprecedented \$3.5 trillion partisan tax-and-spending spree which will feature radical policies, like the Green New Deal, and further push upon American families the far left’s cradle-to-grave socialist agenda. That legislation is reckless and irresponsible, and I intend to fight like hell to ensure it does not pass.”

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## **Background on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**

As a member of both the Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee and the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, Sen. Sullivan played a major role in drafting three pieces of legislation that served as the primary building blocks for the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*—focused on bolstering America’s and Alaska’s core, physical infrastructure, like highways, bridges, broadband and water and wastewater systems. The infrastructure bill, in large part, is composed of legislation passed in a bipartisan basis by the EPW and Commerce Committees—the *Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act (STRA)*, the *Drinking Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Act*, and the *Surface Transportation Investment Act*.

The infrastructure bill appropriates \$550 billion over five years in new investments for physical infrastructure—\$110 billion per year, without raising taxes on American families or small businesses.

The bill includes \$3.5 billion over five years for Alaska that Sen. Sullivan negotiated in the EPW Committee as part of *the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021*. This represents a 34 percent increase across the nation beyond the previous long-term highway authorization, the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act*, passed and signed into law in 2015. The final infrastructure bill also includes an additional national plus-up of \$110 billion over five years in supplemental funding for programs to support roads and bridges.

One important issue that the bill addresses is serious permitting reform, which Sen. Sullivan has been a strong advocate for since coming to the Senate. These provisions include [making the FAST-41 Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council permanent](#) and expanding FAST-41 benefits to additional projects, regardless of size, including those sponsored by or on land owned by tribes, Alaska Native Corporations or Native Hawaiian Organizations. The bill also codifies the Trump administration’s “one federal decision” policy for major federal highway projects that President Biden had eliminated early in his presidency.

The legislation includes significant funding for water and wastewater infrastructure, which is critically important for Alaska, where there are still communities without access to clean, running water and flush toilets. This is an issue that has been a top priority for Sen. Sullivan since he first came to the Senate. The bill includes a topline of \$55 billion

over five years for water infrastructure. The bill also reauthorizes an increase for Alaska's portion of the *Safe Drinking Water Act* grant program from \$40 million to \$60 million by 2026. Sen. Sullivan also worked to secure \$3.5 billion over five years for Indian Health Service sanitation facilities, which will help many of Alaska's villages.

Finally, the infrastructure bill provides major investments in high-speed broadband, which is needed to connect Alaska's unserved and underserved communities lacking this basic service that most Americans take for granted. The flagship program is composed of \$42.45 billion over five years in grants to the states based on their number of high-cost and unserved communities. States will have significant discretion in how they distribute the funds with a top priority of reaching the truly unserved. Alaska is expected to receive more than \$1.5 billion over five years to meet this challenge.

Among other important provisions, the legislation:

#### *Broadband*

- Provides \$42.45 billion over five years in flexible funding for states to deploy broadband, including an estimated \$1.5 billion over five years for Alaska which will prioritize unserved communities.
- Provides \$2 billion over five years for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) broadband programs.
- Provides \$2 billion over five years for the NTIA Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program.

#### *Ferries*

- Provides \$1 billion over five years for a new Essential Ferry Service program to serve isolated rural communities. In addition, the bill provides \$570 million for the national Ferry Boats and Ferry Terminal Facilities Program to construct ferry boats and terminal facilities, and provides new authority to direct the funds toward operating costs.
- Provides \$250 million over five years for an energy efficient ferry pilot program, with at least one pilot to be conducted in the state with the most marine highway system miles—Alaska, which has more than 3,100 miles.

#### *Tribal Transportation Needs*

- Authorizes \$3 billion over five years for the Tribal Transportation Program; creates an Office of Tribal Government Affairs within the U.S. Department of Transportation; restores dedicated funding for the Tribal High Priority Projects Program; and provides \$275 million over five years for the Nationally Significant

Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Program with new eligibility allowing smaller projects to qualify for the program.

#### *Coast Guard*

- Provides more than \$187 million for Coast Guard construction priorities in Kodiak, Seward, and Ketchikan.

#### *Denali Commission and Rural Needs*

- Provides \$75 million for the Denali Commission, and authorizes an additional \$20 million annually for the Denali Commission to address the regional infrastructure needs of rural Alaska communities; provides authority to better facilitate the gifting of funds from other federal agencies through intergovernmental transfers.
- Provides \$2 billion over five years for a new grant program to improve and expand surface transportation systems in rural areas.
- Reinstates the authorization for the Shakwak Project, an agreement between the U.S. and Canada to reconstruct and maintain the 325 miles of the Haines Road and the Alaska Highway within Canada, and enables the project to receive grants and state allocation money.

#### *Bridges*

- Provides \$40 billion over five years in dedicated resources to repair and replace bridges across the country. Alaska currently has 141 bridges classified as structurally deficient.

#### *Water and Wastewater*

- Provides \$10 billion over five years to reduce, limit and prevent exposure to polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), also known as “forever chemicals.”
- Authorizes the Alaska Village *Safe Drinking Water Act* grants program at \$40 million from 2022-2024, \$50 million for 2025, and \$60 million for 2026; adjusts the federal/state cost share from 50/50 to 75/25.
- Authorizes and appropriates approximately \$23 billion over five years for the Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds to provide loans for water infrastructure.
- Authorizes the *Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act* Small and Disadvantaged Communities Program at \$70 million for 2022, \$80 million for 2023, \$100 million for 2024, \$120 million for 2025 and \$140 million for 2026; adjusts the project match to 10 percent; and provides a waiver for small, rural and disadvantaged communities to opt for a 100-percent federal share of the project.
- Authorizes \$250 million over 5 years for a competitive water and sewer grant program for truly small and underserved communities.

## *Energy*

- Makes the Alaska LNG project eligible for Department of Energy loan guarantees up to \$18 billion.
- Includes a small utility set-aside to address grid resiliency and \$1 billion specifically for rural or remote areas.
  - Establishes a \$2.5 billion revolving loan fund to allow the Department of Energy to serve as an “anchor-tenant” for a new electric transmission line or an upgrade of an existing line.
  - Authorizes \$4.7 billion over five years for programs to plug, remediate, and reclaim orphaned wells on federal, state, and tribal lands.
  - Authorizes \$3.5 billion for FY 2022 for the Weatherization Assistance Program.
  - Provides an extension through 2023 of the *Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000*, which provides federal funding that many Alaska communities rely on to support schools and local government as they see declining receipts from timber harvesting on surrounding federal lands.
  - Secures full participation for all Alaska Native people and organizations in the programs and services conducted by the federal government regarding energy infrastructure under this bill.
- Provides \$216 million over 5 years for tribal erosion resilience, adaptation, and community relocation planning.
- Makes Alaska hydropower and water storage projects eligible for Bureau of Reclamation demonstration grants.

## *Streamlining and Permitting Improvements*

- Codifies the core elements of the “one federal decision” policy for major transportation projects, including establishing a two-year goal for completion of environmental reviews.
- Makes the FAST-41 Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council permanent in order to improve the timeliness, predictability, and transparency of the federal environmental review and authorization process for covered infrastructure projects; expands the mission to cover projects owned by tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.
- Provides surface transportation block grant flexibility to allow funds to be spent on ice roads, rural barge landings, docks, and waterfront projects.

## *Resiliency*

- Creates a new “Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation” (PROTECT) Program, which provides \$7.3 billion over five years in formula funding to states and \$1.4 billion for competitive grants to make resiliency improvements to protect against the effects of extreme weather and natural disasters; contains set-aside competitive grant funding for at-risk coastal infrastructure and evacuation routes.

#### *Critical Minerals*

- Includes programs to address supply chains for clean energy technology, particularly critical and rare earth minerals (\$8.6 billion authorized, \$7.7 billion appropriated over five years); includes critical minerals and rare earths language co-sponsored by Sens. Murkowski and Sullivan to fund critical minerals supply chains and reliability, and to make improvements to the federal permitting process with respect to critical mineral production on federal lands.

#### *Port Highlights*

- Provides \$2.25 billion over five years for the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) Port Infrastructure Development Program, which provides critical support to big and small ports throughout Alaska.
- Provides \$350 million over five years for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). These funds can be used on small projects that the Corps can initiate without needing congressional authorization. These funds will help smaller communities across the country and in Alaska.
- Provides \$250 million over five years for the construction of remote and subsistence harbor projects. These projects are in locations that are not connected to a road system, and the ports are vital to the long-term viability of the community.