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Local Boundary Commission

February 13, 2003
To: "Local Boundary Commission
From: Kathleen P. Slobode (Katty Slobode)

Please accept the following comments concerning the Review Draft. I am submitting them in addition to verbal testimony that I gave February 8, 2002 at the Glennallen LIO Office.

Again, I wish to stress that I have not had the time to fully review the Review Draft Chapters II and III. Even the extra time given for these written ~~ten~~ comments to be submitted has not been enough.

I live on a homestead almost surrounded by land owned by the National Park Service, University of Alaska and Alaska Native Lands in the Township of Taylina at T. 3 N, Range 1 West of the Copper River Meridian. I know most of the communities described in the CRB Model Borough quite well as I have lived in the CR area for 42 years. (By CR and the CRB I mean the Copper River and Copper River Basin.) I am one of the minority group in this locale, according to your figures, the 45.6% who are employed. I am one of the lucky ones who have one of the sought-after, really plush high-paying Government jobs in this area. I works for the U.S. Postal Service at Glennallen. After 22 years at the same job I now am grossing an annual salary of approximately $25,000.00 per year. At 59 years of age I'm looking forward to retiring into poverty in the near future.

I do not know where the financial information came from that is printed in your books for this area. The estimated average household income of $43,990 is extremely unlikely in this area. Today I delivered mail to Glennallen's 500 post office boxes. One of the mail pieces that I distributed was from the State of Alaska's Heating Assistance Program. As you probably know the Heating Assistance Program helps people with low income pay their heating and/or electric bills. Because I knew I would be writing this testimony to you I thought it might help illustrate the discrepancy of your "study" — with its possibly very erroneous figures — and the true reality of people's incomes in the CRB - Model Borough. I counted each piece as I delivered it to its [correctly labeled name and] address. There were 88 pieces. Only three pieces were not deliverable as the people had moved away. This number (85) represents 20% of the population of Glennallen (when the business addresses are subtracted). At least 20% of the population of Glennallen has income low enough that they need (or may need) assistance to pay their heating or electric bills. This is real.

Most of the people in this area of Alaska are struggling to survive. I know I am, even with my two paychecks every month I cannot meet basic needs. I'm behind with my oil bill. A major repair to my vehicle sets me back months financially. Pay for the local school system? Forget it!

This area would be very hard-pressed to pay for it's extensive school system, much less for the construction and maintenance of additional government offices, employees and staff, etc of a CRB-Model Borough.

The State government already receives revenues of approximately 6.5 million dollars into its general fund annually from the 156 miles of of oil pipeline that runs through the Copper River Basin. Our school budget is approximately 5 million dollars. In this time of National and State budget deficits it is most untimely to be increasing expenditures statewide. There is not going to be more money after we finish the war in Iraq. We will all be poorer then.

I urge this Local Boundary Commission to abandon these actions to create boroughs in these areas of Alaska in these uncertain times. It will only create more hardship on all the peoples of Alaska.

Thank you.

Kathleen F. Sloboda

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