

## Borell Consulting Services LLC

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Anchorage, AK 99516  
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March 4, 2016

Honorable Kevin Meyer  
Honorable Bob Lynn  
Alaska State Legislature  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: University of Alaska Engineering

Dear President Meyer and Representative Lynn,

As my Legislators I am writing to you to express my concerns about the engineering programs at the University of Alaska. I have been on three different UAA and UAF engineering advisory committees over the years and can testify that many improvements and cost-reduction steps have been taken. These include:

1. Changes have been made to ensure classes are transferrable between UAF, UAA and UAS campuses.
2. Programs have been combined between campuses and others eliminated to cut costs.
3. Coordination between UAF & UAA engineering deans is at an all-time high; their focus is to educate Alaskans as engineers to fill the needs here, irrespective of the campus.
4. Industry has stated its preference for local Alaska-educated engineers and UA has done a tremendous job and engineering enrollments have more than doubled for both undergraduate and graduate engineering programs; and the number of graduates has increased three fold.
5. The new engineering building at UAA is being utilized to the maximum. Thank you!
6. The new engineering building at UAF is nearly complete and once the internal buildout is finished that facility will meet the needs of the increased numbers of students there.
7. The new Chemical Engineering 2+2 program with Washington State University has been established at no cost to UA.

However, there are two areas that need your direct attention:

1. After investing \$74.8 million, the UAF engineering building remains unusable because the classrooms have not been completed. Industry has given several \$ million to complete the top floor of the building but the other space is only a shell.
  - **I appreciate the budget situation but some funding mechanism is needed for the \$46.8 million remaining; be it some form of bonding, etc. a way must be found to finish what is nearly complete, and badly needed.**
2. **The high cost of construction** is affecting the cost of the UAF engineering building, and all other state construction projects. **It is time to take a hard look at the regulatory requirements that increase the cost of state projects.** The report of the Deferred Maintenance Task Force (January 10, 1998) identified **the requirement that contractors pay Davis-Bacon wage rates as a major cost escalator. Now is the time to revisit this issue and thereby reduce the cost of facility construction.**

During my career I have taken classes at seven colleges and universities in the U.S. and South America, and the engineering classes I have taken in the UA system have been some of the best. I want to ensure that level of education can continue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Borell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steven" and last name "Borell" clearly distinguishable.

Steven C. Borell, P.E.  
Principal

Cc: Senator Pete Kelly  
Senator Anna MacKinnon  
Representative Mark Neuman  
Representative Steve Thompson  
Representative Tammy Wilson