



CENTRAL COUNCIL  
*Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*  
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## President's Weekly Update 3.4.22

Wáasá iyatee, Gasing.uu dang Giidang! I hope this email finds you and your loved ones doing well and staying safe. We are moving forward and making progress with our Tribal Assembly planning so I am excited to share this week's update with all of you. To stay up to date on all Tlingit & Haida's events, news and programs, be sure to follow us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/ccthita](http://www.facebook.com/ccthita)

### **87<sup>th</sup> Annual Tribal Assembly**

The 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Tribal Assembly will held virtually from April 20 – 22, 2022. The theme for this year's assembly was selected at last week's Executive Council Meeting.

**Theme:** We Go Forward Together

**Lingít Translation:** A shukáade yaa ntoo.át, wooch.een

**Xaad Kil Translation:** Gu dánhl gwii t'aláng ijaa

### **Testimony Provided on SB 34 – State-Tribal Education Compact Schools**

This past Wednesday, I gave public testimony to the Alaska State Legislature's Senate Education Committee during a hearing to support Senate Bill (SB) 34 – State-Tribal Education Compact Schools. SB 34 is sponsored by Senator Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak) and would allow tribal organizations to compact with the state to create schools. Schools would receive state funding and follow state regulations but could give hiring preference to members of federally recognized tribes. During my testimony, I noted Tlingit & Haida already delivers early care and learning services through the Head Start program and our Haa Yoo X'atángi Kúdi Lingít language immersion nest.

While Head Start is not delivered through compacting, it's an education program we deliver in coordination with the state and federal governments. Tlingit & Haida's Lingít language immersion nest is demonstration that tribal governments have the ability to provide culturally relevant, place-based education through our Indigenous language. These are examples of how we might partner to deliver educational programming. To listen to my full testimony, [click here](#).

Join Tlingit & Haida in support of SB34 and contact your legislators!

SB34: <http://www.akleg.gov/basis/Bill/Text/32?Hsid=SB0034A>

### **House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs on VPSO Program**

Last Thursday, I was invited to give a presentation to the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs on the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) program.

As many of you know, Tlingit & Haida runs the VPSO program for Southeast Alaska, which has VPSO positions in Angoon, Hydaburg, Kake, Kasaan, Pelican, Saxman, and Thorne Bay. VPSOs are the first

responders of our remote communities and many times it ends up being a 24/7 job. They are more than just a public safety presence, but they are law enforcement, first responders, EMT's, etc.

These VPSOs are critical to keeping our communities safe and it's been difficult to recruit and retain officers over the years. That's why I was pleased to see Governor Mike Dunleavy's proposed FY23 budget includes expanded resources for VPSOs and Troopers. We are happy to be building a stronger working relationship with Commissioner Cockrell and Colonel Hard. We believe with this new leadership and increase in funding, the VPSO program will much stronger.

Public safety for our communities remains a top priority for the Tribe and we are working hard for equity with the Department of Public Safety.