



CITY OF FAIRBANKS

Jim Matherly, Mayor

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Date: March 1, 2019

From: Mayor Matherly, City of Fairbanks

To: The Residents of the City of Fairbanks

Subject: Ordinance 6093

After much soul-searching, research, and examination of all facets of the issues surrounding Ordinance 6093, I am exercising my veto powers under the City Charter Section 4.2 and vetoing this Ordinance.

I do *not* take this action lightly. I became a sponsor of Ordinance 6093 because I believe that all people should be treated with dignity and respect, and the concept behind this Ordinance is sound. As with most concepts, the details become challenging when they affect so many people with different priorities and opinions. It is those details that I think require further examination. That said, it is my intention to ask the Council to place issues related to this ordinance on the ballot in October. As we did with the proposed property tax increase (which the citizens voted "no") and the legalization of marijuana (which they voted "yes") I believe this question should be given to City residents that choose to exercise their voting rights.

There have been more emails, testimony, and opinions given on this subject than any other in the recent history of the City. Much of the communication has been from those who live outside of Fairbanks, and in some cases, outside the State of Alaska. While I value the opinion of our neighbors in the surrounding communities and visitors from farther out, I want the citizens of Fairbanks to chart their own course and decide how we move forward as a city.

This Ordinance will not change the attitudes of citizens; no Ordinance will. There will be a small number of individuals, on both sides of this issue, who will exploit others no matter what we do as a governing body. For this I am saddened. However, as many have testified, Fairbanks is a welcoming and compassionate city, and for that we should all be proud.

By vetoing, I know I will be the target of anger, as I would be if I did not veto. By vetoing I am not saying it is okay to discriminate or treat others poorly. I believe in treating others with compassion and fairness. What I am saying is that, while the Council and myself do our best to work out important issues for the community, this ordinance is bigger than a Mayor and six Council members, and the decision needs to be in the hands of the voters of Fairbanks.

I would appreciate patience and understanding from all parties while I prepare to introduce a ballot measure that will allow the citizens to express their desires through the voting process. I look forward to receiving continued input from Fairbanks residents and businesses as we go forward. This veto will allow time to solicit and assimilate input which will mature into the ballot proposition.

Thank you,

Jim Matherly