



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

## Volunteer Fire Department

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Governor Dunleavy:

The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a local committee based in various boroughs and areas throughout the state. Originally formed based on Community Right to Know legislation regarding hazardous materials, these LEPCs have expanded to address all-hazard preparedness, preparing our communities, and mitigating risks for various hazards experienced by the State.

The emergency management and preparedness community within the State recognizes the difficult fiscal situation that we have been experiencing statewide. The recent vetoes to the state budget included removal of state funding for the LEPC through the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs in the amount of \$300,000. This funding is then distributed to local committees to direct based on the local needs. In many smaller communities, the LEPC may be the only source of preparedness/emergency management projects. The removal of this funding affects all communities, urban and rural, and the preparedness activities that are enabled by the local funds.

As a percentage of the state budget, that \$300,000 amount is a very small percentage of the total but has a great impact on the local jurisdictions that take advantage of this funding to build preparedness and resilience in communities across the state. Public safety and emergency response is an essential function of government, and the funding loss of the LEPC is negatively affecting communities statewide.

Please consider restoring this funding for the current fiscal year and future budget cycles. This investment pays back dividends many times over to our state that has more than its share of hazards demonstrated by wildfires, droughts, and other emergencies this past summer in Southcentral and across Alaska.

Respectfully,

Chief Mark Kirko