

**SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY DIRECTING THE MANAGER TO PLACE A DISPLAY IN THE LOBBY OF THE DORTHY SWANDA JONES BUILDING TO INCLUDE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, MAGNA CARTA, THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT, DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, AND THE PREAMBLES TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND ALASKA CONSTITUTION.**

**AGENDA OF: October 1, 2024**

**Assembly Action: Amended and adopted without objection 10/01/24 - BJH**

**AGENDA ACTION REQUESTED:** Present to the Assembly for consideration.

Route To	Signatures
Originator	9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 X N S f o r A s s y m B e r n i e r S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s
Finance Director	9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 X C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l S i g n e d b y : C h e y e n n e H e i n d e l
Borough Attorney	9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 X N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s S i g n e d b y : N i c h o l a s S p i r o p o u l o s
Borough Manager	9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 X M i c h a e l B r o w n S i g n e d b y : M i k e B r o w n
Borough Clerk	9 / 2 0 / 2 0 2 4 X L o n n i e M c K e c h n i e S i g n e d b y : L o n n i e M c K e c h n i e

**ATTACHMENT (S):** Resolution Serial No. 24-105 (2 pp)

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:** This resolution is sponsored by Assemblymember Bernier to direct the Manager to place a display in the lobby of the Dorthy Swanda Jones building to honor historical documents and culminate with the preambles to the US Constitution and the Alaska Constitution.

The Constitution of the United States is the highest law of the country and the Constitution of the State of Alaska is the highest law of the State of Alaska. While there may be many influences and impacts of prior documents in the development and drafting of the constitutions of the US and Alaska, a few stand out.

### Ten Commandments

An extract<sup>1</sup> from an article from the Journal of Law and Religion provides: It is axiomatic that many of the principles contained in the Ten Commandments are fundamental to the Western legal tradition. Prohibitions on murder, theft, and perjury are found in nearly every legal code. Notions of respect for one's parents and admonitions against adultery are also implicit, if not explicit, in the quasi-legal realm of normative rules that order many societies. Few people, if any, would dispute that the Ten Commandments—and its parallels from other ancient cultures—as well as other directives contained in the Pentateuch of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, inform our notions of right and wrong and, as such, have influenced the development of Western law of which the American legal system is part.

### Magna Carta

According to the National Archives<sup>2</sup>, the Magna Carta was written by a group of 13th-century barons to protect their rights and property against a tyrannical king. It is concerned with many practical matters and specific grievances relevant to the feudal system under which they lived. The interests of the common man were hardly apparent in the minds of the men who brokered the agreement. But there are two principles expressed in Magna Carta that resonate to this day: "No freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, disseised, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will We proceed against or prosecute him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land." and "To no one will We sell, to no one will We deny or delay, right or justice." During the American Revolution, Magna Carta served to inspire and justify action in liberty's defense. The colonists believed they were entitled to the same rights as Englishmen, rights guaranteed in Magna Carta. They embedded those rights into the laws of their states and later into the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

### Mayflower Compact

According to Britannica<sup>3</sup>, the Mayflower Compact was the first framework of government written and enacted in the territory that is now the United States of America. The brief document (about 200 words) bound its signers into a body politic for the purpose of forming a government and pledged them to abide by any laws and regulations that would later be established "for the general good of the colony."

---

1 <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-law-and-religion/article/abs/fount-of-everything-just-and-right-the-ten-commandments-as-a-source-of-american-law/39E532D9E73E879B7BDD78C10D227F1A#access-block>

2 <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/magna-carta>

3 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mayflower-Compact>

## Declaration of Independence

In the National Archives of the United States of America, there are 3 founding documents: Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights<sup>4</sup>. The Declaration of Independence states the principles on which our government, and our identity as Americans, are based. Unlike the other founding documents, the Declaration of Independence is not legally binding, but it is powerful. Abraham Lincoln called it "a rebuke and a stumbling-block to tyranny and oppression." It continues to inspire people around the world to fight for freedom and equality.

## Preamble to the United States Constitution.

According to the United States Court System<sup>5</sup>, the Preamble sets the stage for the Constitution. It clearly communicates the intentions of the framers and the purpose of the document. The Preamble is an introduction to the highest law of the land; it is not the law. It does not define government powers or individual rights. Establish Justice is the first of five objectives outlined in the 52-word paragraph that the Framers drafted in six weeks during the hot Philadelphia summer of 1787. They found a way to agree on the basic principles addressed in the Preamble. The U.S. Constitutional website maintained by the U.S. Congress explains<sup>6</sup>, more broadly, while the Preamble may have little significance in a court of law, the preface to the Constitution remains an important part of the Nation's constitutional dialogue, inspiring and fostering broader understandings of the American system of government.

## Preamble to the Alaska Constitution.

According to the Citizen's Guide to the Alaska Constitution provided by the Alaska Legislature<sup>7</sup>, Alaska's preamble was drafted as a substitute to an imitative version presented to the convention by committee. Delegate Victor Rivers described the current preamble as a more fitting expression of the "thinking and the speaking and the heritage of our Alaska people . . . ." This preamble is one of the few to acknowledge the interdependence of the state with the other states in the federal system (which was a Model State Constitution recommendation for preambles).

The intent of this display directed by this Resolution is to honor and recall the historic and influential nature of these documents. It is to remind everyone entering the DJS Building of the societal bonds we all share, and culminates with the wisdom of the words written by the founders of the United States and the State of Alaska. Such displays are permissible under Van Orden v. Perry, 545 U.S.

---

4 <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs>

5 <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/about-educational-outreach/activity-resources/us#:~:text=The%20preamble%20sets%20the%20stage,government%20powers%20or%20individual%20rights.>

6 [https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/pre-1/ALDE\\_00001231/](https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/pre-1/ALDE_00001231/)

7 [https://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/citizens\\_guide.pdf](https://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/citizens_guide.pdf)

677 (2005) and Pleasant Grove City v. Sumnum, 555 U.S. 460 (2009).

**RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:** Present to Assembly for Consideration.

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH**

**FISCAL NOTE**

Agenda Date: October 1, 2024

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY DIRECTING THE MANAGER TO PLACE A DISPLAY IN THE LOBBY OF THE DORTHY SWANDA JONES BUILDING TO INCLUDE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, MAGNA CARTA, THE MAYFLOWER COMPACT, DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, AND THE PREAMBLES TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION AND ALASKA CONSTITUTION.

FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE)	FISCAL IMPACT <b>YES</b> NO
AMOUNT REQUESTED To be determined	FUNDING SOURCE Areawide Operations
FROM ACCOUNT # 100.xxx.xxx. 4xx.xxx	PROJECT
TO ACCOUNT:	PROJECT #
VERIFIED BY:  X <u>Liesel Weiland</u> 9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 Signed by: Liesel Weiland	

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:**

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Personnel Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land/Structures						
Grants, Claims						
Miscellaneous		TBD				
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>		<b>TBD</b>				

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

**FUNDING:**

(Thousands of Dollars)

General Fund		TBD				
State/Federal Funds						
Other						
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>TBD</b>				

**POSITIONS:**

Full-Time						
Part-Time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)**

APPROVED BY:  X <u>Cheyenne Heindel</u> 9 / 1 6 / 2 0 2 4 Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel	
--	--

Signed by: Cheyenne Heindel