

**Joint Proclamation from county associations representing the states of
California, Minnesota, Montana, and Oregon.**

Whereas, the Western Interstate Region (WIR) is an affiliated organization of the National Association of Counties (NACo), representing the counties within 15 western states;

Whereas, WIR held its 2022 annual conference May 17-20 in Anchorage, Alaska;

Whereas, on May 17, 2022, as part of the 2022 WIR conference, a tour was held called North to the Future – The Northwest Arctic’s Development and Indigenous Collaboration tour (Arctic Tour);

Whereas, during the tour, the leaders of the Town of Kotzebue highlighted their rich culture and history to all 54 participants;

Whereas, the Town of Kotzebue and surrounding villages displayed profound connections to their culture, family, and history;

Whereas, the Town of Kotzebue and surrounding villages face significant unique challenges meeting the needs of their communities due to being in such a remote area of the country;

Whereas, the Town of Kotzebue and surrounding villages displayed incredible resilience, ingenuity, and kindness;

Whereas, Ms. Saima Chase picked up fishing poles and hooks from her own house to teach participants how to ice fish in the Arctic Ocean;

Whereas, Ms. Saima Chase and her family caught and smoked the fish that was served to all participants of the tour;

Whereas, the generosity of Ms. Saima Chase and her family defined the strong community, culture, and history of the Arctic region;

Whereas, when asked about the difficulties living in the Arctic region, Ms. Saima Chase responded with a clear and powerful message that they are rich — rich in culture, rich in family, rich in history, all of which creates unique strength and resilience for their community;

Whereas, the tour highlighted a model of community, resilience, and lessons learned about innovation that serve as a model for many communities throughout the country;

Now, therefore, be it **resolved** that the county associations representing the states of California, Minnesota, Montana, and Oregon do hereby recognize Ms. Saima Chase for her leadership, hospitality, generosity, strength of community, and rich culture and history;

Now, therefore, be it also **resolved** that the county associations representing the states of California, Minnesota, Montana, and Oregon do hereby recognize the Town of Kotzebue and its ten surrounding villages for showcasing their culture and history, innovation, and the unique challenges and opportunities of the way of life in and around the Arctic Circle.

Affirmed on this date, July 1, 2022, by the undersigned officials.

Graham Knaus
Executive Director
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)

Eric Bryson
Executive Director
Montana Association of Counties (MAC)

Julie Ring
Executive Director
Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC)

Gina Nikkel
Executive Director
Association of Oregon Counties (AOC)