

Members of the Alaska Local Boundary Commission,

As a devoted community member of Elfin Cove, I feel compelled to express my opposition to the formation of the Xunaa Borough. After reviewing the petition, I would like to outline several significant concerns that pertain to the potential inclusion of Elfin Cove in the proposed borough.

Elfin Cove, a thriving community, place of business for many, and a place I call home, has long operated successfully without the need for inclusion in the borough that this petition proposes. The community of Elfin Cove has successfully managed the development and maintenance of essential services, including but not limited to our water and electric utilities, boardwalks, docks and community buildings. The Hoonah petition, however, seems to overlook critical issues such as funding and plans for attention to the items stated above. Contrary to the petition's assertion, Elfin Cove already has a well-established and functional government. The proposed inclusion in the Xunaa Borough does not promise to enhance local governance; rather, it raises concerns about taking away the decision-making power of our community members, currently represented by our Board of Directors. This would leave Elfin Cove unable to manage our local matters that at times need immediate attention.

The borough petition lacks clarity on how implemented taxes would benefit Elfin Cove, leaving us uncertain about the equitable distribution of funds. I strongly oppose the imposition of a seasonal 1% areawide sales tax as there is no clear outline of how these funds would remain in Elfin Cove. This arrangement appears to lack fairness and may disproportionately impact certain areas. Additionally, the provision suggesting that no zoning ordinance or building code will be imposed on remote areas unless necessitated by changed circumstances is concerning. It leaves these areas vulnerable to potential future changes without a clear framework for community input and protection. This lack of specificity raises uncertainties about the long-term implications and control over local regulations. It is essential to address these issues for the well-being of the affected communities.

The proposed borough, as outlined, appears to deviate from the best interests of the State. The exclusion of Gustavus, Pelican, and Tanakee Springs, combined with continuous adjustments to the plans in response to community opposition, raises questions about the overall feasibility of the proposed borough structure. I firmly believe that the Hoonah Borough Petition should be denied, given that it does not align with the necessary state criteria.

In conclusion, our community continues to thrive, and the approval of this petition poses significant risks to our local governance, economic stability, and overall quality of life.

Thank you,

Zachary Miller