

Statement of Fannie M. Weyiouanna
Bicameral Task Force of Climate Change Forum
January 14, 2014

Good morning, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.

I am **Fannie M. Weyiouanna** from Shishmaref, Alaska and originally from Wales, Alaska. I am married to Tony and we have four children, three boys and one girl, they range in age 16-23 years old.

The unpredictable weather we face is dangerous. We can't predict the thickness of the ice like we used to. Even elders who have been able to read the ice for generations are at risk. They used to judge it based on the color of the ice, but even the freezing patterns are changing, and that makes it impossible to read. A few days ago in Nome, an elder went out fishing and lost his life falling through the ice. These were concerns that we never used to have. Today crossing rivers or going fishing is much more risky.

Due to the unusually thin ice, one of our young local hunters lost his life a few years ago – falling through the ice. Due to the tragedy, our hunters now wait for the ice to breakup to use boats for hunting, which is a safer transportation option. Hunting by boat has to happen once the ice is melted, which is much later in the season. This forced the hunters to go further north than usual, and by the time they caught their catch it was too hot to dry and preserve the meat properly. That results in families losing their catch due to spoilage from the unusually hot weather. There were a couple of people in my village who contracted botulism due to the hot weather during the preservation, which is a rare occurrence in Shishmaref. In the early 1990's and past years, we used to harvest clams in the fall along the beach, but now we cannot harvest clams because the beach is actually gone.

As a result of the changes from the climate change and global warming, my children do not feel safe our island, especially in the fall due to the eroding beach front. Every year they dread the coming of the fall storms, hoping for a peaceful freeze.

Once again, thank you for listening to my observations and giving me the opportunity to voice my concerns due to climate change and its affect on my people and home.