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The Honorable Senate Finance Committee
Senators Lyman Hoffman and Bert Stedman, Co-Chairs
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 532
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Letter of Support for SB 221

Dear Senators Hoffman and Stedman:

Thank you for the invitation from the Senate Finance Committee to comment on Senate Bill 221, an Act relating to the disposition of proceeds from the existing alcohol tax to the alcohol and other drug abuse treatment and prevention fund.

Substance abuse and dependence and their consequences are associated with substantial health and social costs. Large numbers of Alaskans continue to suffer from the effects of substance abuse, and it remains one of our most serious health and social problems. Substance abuse is a contributing factor in suicides, crime, domestic violence, child abuse, unemployment, school dropout rates, and juvenile delinquency.

We need to prevent, intervene early, treat and help people recover from substance abuse. Senate Bill 221 is designed to do just that.

Our research into this topic indicates that there are insufficient resources to fully address this problem in Alaska; therefore, we support increasing the capacity of substance abuse treatment programs in Alaska by dedicating 100 percent of the taxes collected under the Alcoholic Beverage Tax to the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment and Prevention Fund (ADTP). These funds would supplement, not supplant, the existing undesignated general funds to the ADTP for this purpose.

Best regards,

Diane Kaplan
President

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