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Re: Letter of Support for HB 325

Dear House State Affairs Committee,

My House is in support of HB 325, as we testified last month. Corrections needs the procurement rules changed to allow for smaller programs in rural areas to be able to access funding that is currently being completely monopolized by GeoCorp, owned by a company outside Alaska, with less than ideal outcomes.

We would like:

- corrections to be able to reimburse programs like MY House and Haven House that serve re-entrants in rural communities, with extremely high success rates.
- clients coming through reentry to be able to return to their home community, and re-engage in job training internships in a sober environment with peer support on-site.
- re-entrants from rural areas across Alaska to have choices for returning to smaller communities and connecting with peer support, AA Sponsors and family support systems that can be permanent.

We have clients who come out of incarceration, go to the GEO Corp owned Cordova House, and relapse within 48 hours-in the housing. Reentry centers owned by "Outside" companies with no vested interest in Alaska may not have the same motivation, partnerships or support for reentrants to remain sober and prevent relapse and recidivation.

Our teams are trained and motivated to prevent relapse and recidivism, reentry "best practices" and offering peer support that has been shown to be very impactful. Our job training programs have a 98% success rate and our transitional housing has an 80% success rate three years post transition. We CAN save the State of Alaska money by helping clients to be successful, preventing relapse and keeping reentrants supported and working, but we need the funding to support our programs in order to do so, rather than having it all go to an outside corporation.

Sincerely,
Michelle Overstreet, Executive Director