



AARP Alaska
3601 C Street
Suite 1420
Anchorage, AK 99503

T 1-866-227-7447
F 907-341-2270
TTY 1-877-434-7598
www.aarp.org/ak

February 10, 2010

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The Honorable Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 518
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

The Honorable Bert Stedman, Co-Chair
Senate Finance Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 516
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: SB 199 (Ellis)--Support

Dear Co-Chairs Hoffman and Stedman:

On behalf of the members of AARP in Alaska, we would like to urge your support for SB 199 to establish a two year funding cycle for the adult dental benefit in Medicaid. The bill is sponsored by your Committee colleague, Senator Johnny Ellis, and co-sponsored by twelve other Senators including your Committee members Senators Egan, Thomas, Olson and Huggins as well as Senators Davis, French, Menard, Paskvan, Wielechowski, Kookesh, Wagoner and McGuire.

SB 199 basically changes the benefit for dentures so that an adult Medicaid beneficiary would be able to use the funds available for two years to pay for dentures. This makes sense for both the client and the provider.

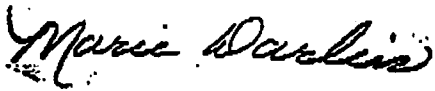
Older persons in need of dentures often have accompanying nutrition problems. These nutrition problems can cause other health issues and create an overall deterioration in health status. For those who need them, dentures are essential to quality health care. Two-year funding for dentures should be considered sensible prevention with the long term possibility of saving Medicaid funds that would not need to be spent on more serious health care problems resulting from poor oral health status.

AARP recommends an "AYE" vote on SB 199.

Should you have any questions about our position, please feel free to contact me (586-3637) or Patrick Luby, AARP Advocacy Director (907-762-3314).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Marie Darlin, Coordinator
AARP Capital City Task Force
415 Willoughby Avenue, Apt. 506
Juneau, AK 99801
586-3637 (voice)
463-3580 (fax)

CC: Senator Joe Thomas
Senator Charlie Huggins
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Donald Olson
Senator Johnny Ellis