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March 31, 2009

The Honorable Wes Keller, Co-Chair
House Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska Capitol, Room 13
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

The Honorable Bob Herron, Co-Chair
House Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska Capitol, Room 415
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: HB 71 (Holmes, Dahlstrom, Millett, Kawasaki)—Support

Dear Co-Chairs Keller and Herron:

On behalf of the members of AARP in Alaska, we encourage you and your colleagues on the House Health and Social Services Committee to support HB 71, authored by your Committee colleague Representative Lindsey Holmes and Representatives Nancy Dahlstrom, Charisse Millett, and Scott Kawasaki.

AARP encourages our 97,000 members in Alaska to prepare advance health care directives and to discuss their wishes with their family.

Unfortunately, all too often a serious illness or accident may strike when an individual does not have their directives on their person. It is also not uncommon for someone to arrive at a hospital and be unable to speak and express their wishes. This often results in a health care provider being unable to discern or to follow the preferences of a patient.

HB 71 would help alleviate this situation. HB 71 would establish a voluntary registry for health care directives which could be accessed by health care providers in time of need.

HB 71 offers everything we could ask for:

- Voluntary
- Confidential
- Available on a 24 hour basis
- Inexpensive
- Available for updating if the individual so chooses

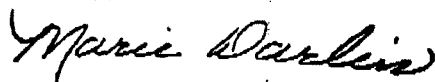
If passed, AARP Alaska will encourage every one of our members to participate in the registry and to encourage their younger family members to do likewise.

AARP urges an "AYE" vote on HB 71.

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
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586-3637 (voice)
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CC: Representative John Coghill
Representative Bob Lynn
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Lindsey Holmes
Representative Nancy Dahlstrom
Representative Charisse Millett
Representative Scott Kawasaki