

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jim Beck <jbeck@accessalaska.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:52 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Funding Issues

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Jim Beck and I am the Executive Director of Access Alaska.

Thank you all for your service to the residents of Alaska. You find yourselves in the unenviable position of prioritizing expenses against shrinking revenues and overwhelming needs throughout the state. You probably ask yourselves - How can we allow the budget to grow when revenue is shrinking?

The unfortunate reality is that regardless of shrinking revenues, Alaska's population is growing along with the social issues that accompany any population. Simply cutting funding is not a sustainable long-term approach to meeting the growing issues in Alaska – especially in rural Alaska.

The Governor supports our vision for Independent Living (IL) in rural Alaska. I believe he understands that investing in IL now saves healthcare and other dollars in the future. The Governor has been investing in IL so that we can push these services into rural areas of the State. As a program we are approximately 20% State-funded. That means we will bring another approximate \$500,000 in services to the table, to complement the State's funding. That's an awful lot of leverage for such a small amount of State General Funds.

I strongly urge the Finance Committee to put the Governor's \$100,000 increment back into the Labor budget for IL.

I also strongly urge the Finance Committee to restore the behavioral health funding cut by the HSS Finance Subcommittee. While this funding will not likely have a dramatic impact on the organization for which I work, it will likely have devastating effect for many of the people we serve who rely on services from other organizations to complement those we provide at Access Alaska. We have seen these organizations struggle with flat or reduced funding for years, while their expenses increase continuously.

Two other important initiatives I hope you will support include The Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury (TABI) increment. As I am sure you know, Alaska has an exceptionally high rate of incidence of TABI, especially in rural Alaska. The TABI case management program has been very successful in Anchorage and Fairbanks. The increment will take this successful program from the urban areas into rural Alaska, where the services are desperately needed - but that increment needs to be fully funded.

Last but not least, please reconsider adding funds to continue the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative. This program now has several months under its belt and early data shows that not only is it meeting the needs of Alaska families, it is extremely cost-effective.

And once again – please restore the Governor’s increment for Independent Living.

Respectfully,

Jim Beck

J I M B E C K

Executive Director

Access Alaska, Inc.

907.248.4777 - main

907.263.1907 - direct

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<http://www.accessalaska.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/AccessAlaska>

Access Alaska is Moving To Its New Location - March 25th 2013

1217 East 10th Avenue

Anchorage AK 99501

Corner of 10th and LaTouche

(The former Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: cloudy@acsalaska.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:45 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Best Beginnings and PAT Funds

Rep. Austerman,

I coordinate Imagination Libraries across the state for Best Beginnings. In 2009, six communities had Imagination Library delivering books to their children; today, that number is 103. Akiachak has just come on board, and Cordova is next in the hopper. More than 20,000 children receive a book in the mail every month.

But this is the smallest part of the story. If this were just a matter of dumping books on little kids, I wouldn't be doing it. We say our way of doing Imagination Library is more than a book delivery program; it's a Get-the-Whole-Community-Involved-in-Reading-to-Kids Program. Behind each child getting a book is a community that decided they wanted to bring books to their children. A parent can't just sign up their child; the community has to sign up all their children.

This is why our Imagination Library network has attracted national and international attention (from Canada). This is how books have been introduced to communities without libraries or bookstores. This is why our Imagination Libraries are slowly building towards sustainability. This is the help, coaching, support, and training your funds to Best Beginnings have made possible.

And the funds you take away will interrupt this process.

In Brevig Mission, one boy's books stopped because he turned 5. "Why," he said, "did you tell them my birthday?! I don't want my books to stop."

Neither do 20,000 other children around the state.

Please restore the funds to Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.

Thank you.

Barbara Brown

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jodie Llamas <jkllamos@alaska.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Budget Cuts on Social Services_Jodie Llamas

I cannot fathom how this state can even consider cutting finances towards the social well being of the people of Alaska. Our family recently moved here from Michigan and daily it confuses me why there is not more financing towards mental health, substance abuse, and for the youth who are suffering from past traumas. This state needs to recognize that unless the people of Alaska are mentally and physically healthy this state will not be able to prosper. Isn't that what you ultimately want? A state that is full of prosperity and life abundantly? We need to the unique simplicity of this state so others are drawn to the benefits of this state.

I was actually suppose to meet with you last week, but my flight got cancelled twice out of Kodiak for weather.

I was going to speak to you about the necessity of more finances needed for social services here on the island of Kodiak. (including the villages) There is desperate need for the youth of this community to have hope for a productive, healthy future instead of one that is one of substance abuse and lack of education.

This cannot happen. There cannot be a cut in finances to social services, but rather there NEEDS to be an increase in finances for the well-being of ALL the citizens of Alaska.

Please stop and think of the long term effects. I am a survivor of mental illness because I came from a state that took social services as a main priority in the state. I am stable and now a productive, healthy citizen...now being able to help others do the same for their lives.

Thank you for your consideration and have a blessed day!

Jodie Llamas

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Philip Somervell <pdsomervell@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:09 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgman@akleg.gov;
Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; steve.thompson@akleg.gov;
tammie.wilson@akleg.gov
Subject: Behavioral health services funding

I am writing to ask that you not implement the cuts being considered to behavioral health services funding. I gather that a reduction of over eight million dollars in general funds is being considered. This would be terribly harmful to many of our most vulnerable people.

I'm an intern working with teens who have addiction problems and often have serious mental health problems as well. Many of them need all kinds of help just to get by at all, much less "make it" in life. The last thing we need as a state is to make it even harder for them and their families (if they even have any) to get treatment and services. I have also seen how hard it can be for adults to get any help when they have serious mental health problems (they usually don't have the kind of money, or health insurance, that would help.)

The agencies that help with these things are generally hard pressed already. I imagine some of them would simply go under if these cuts were implemented. In any case, I'm sure more of their clients would end up on the streets. I don't think that is what any of us want.

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

Phil Somervell
Anchorage

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: mmq@coppercenterak.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:02 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Dept of Public Safety Budget

Hi,

My name is Mike McQueen and my wife and I reside year round near Copper Center, Alaska. I am contacting you in regards to reports that the committee on which you serve is contemplating significant cuts in the Governor's proposed budget for the Department of Public Safety. I am concerned that budget cuts could impact the ability of the State Trooper post in Glennallen to respond effectively to motor vehicle accidents and criminal activity in our unincorporated area. The Troopers serve a vast area here stretching hundreds of miles along the Glenn, Richardson, and Tok highways. The Troopers are obviously understaffed in that they often end up responding to events and disturbances in remote locations with no back-up. This is not acceptable.

Although this entire area is only home to a few thousand individuals the population explodes in the summer as tourist from all over the lower 48 and even the world descend on this area for the fishing and scenery. Subsistence fishing and the personal use fishery draw crowds to the area from Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, and Fairbanks. The Princess Lodge draws thousands from the lower 48. My point is that the Troopers are our sole source for law enforcement in this area and their ability to respond to events and emergencies is critical to maintaining order.

In my role as Chairman of the Copper River Emergency Medical Services, I ask that you consider the fact that State EMS protocols require that we determine that a scene be "safe" before EMS personnel are allowed to enter and treat injured patients. In many cases the presence of the Troopers is required to be able make the determination that a scene is "safe". If Trooper response to accidents and events are delayed patients are likely to suffer and even die as a result. In my capacity as Chairman of Copper River EMS I ask you to fully fund the Governor's budget request for the Department of Public Safety.

Sincerely,
Mike McQueen
Copper Center, Alaska

Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Eugene S. Avey <gavey@aisdk12.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:55 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: House Finance Committee

Rep. Austerman: On behalf of the Annette Island School District, I would like to reinforce some areas in the Governor's budget and oppose other legislative bills that are not supportive of public education.

First, the major maintenance projects for education are areas of need for schools that have been neglected too long. Further delays in remodels or repairs further hinders maintenance expenses for districts. This allow us to refrain from placing resources and personnel needlessly into keeping unfit building up to safety and code requirements that are extremely challenging with no increase to the BSA in the past four years. I do want to add that our District has benefited well by the willingness to identify our needs for upgrading our buildings, however our RJ Elementary in dire need of bringing it up to code and replacing worn out mechanical and leaking issues we are experiencing in our roof and siding. In times of high poverty and over 50% unemployment it will be a welcome relief to have local residents be involved in this needed project.

Secondly, The Governor budget for implementation of digital learning should be paramount to meeting the needs of students future education endeavors. Technology development for college readiness and work preparation is essential for our student's future. We will short change our kids if we do not provide quality professional development to implement the many changes in distant learning, e-books, and digital learning that is upon us. I strongly urge that you keep all of the Governor's allocation for this needed area. It will push teachers to prepare students for the 21st Century.

Thirdly, I would like to vehemently oppose HJR 1 and SJR 9 bills that publicize private and religious education in the State of Alaska.

It may appear that the separation of church and state is quickly becoming something of the past. We are bounding down a dangerous path as we continue to indirectly and directly fund religious institutions as these bills aspire to support. Do all in your power to keep separation of "church and state" a priority as stated by our US Constitution. We cannot continue to believe that private and religious education will deliver the same programs under the same regulations as these two bills allege.

Finally, HB 151, the "scarlet letter bill" to assign and display letter measurements to school buildings is demeaning way of labeling schools. In place now under NCLB is a grading system and we don't need another grading system to take its place. This is a knee jerk way to identify schools in a dehumanizing manner.

Thank you for hearing my concerns,

--

Eugene S. Avey II
Superintendent Annette Islands School District
PO Box 7
Metlakatla, AK 99926
907-886-6332 (O)
907-886-6021 (F)

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Poms@akleg.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:52 PM
To: Astrid Rose
Subject: New Pom:Education

Joseph Delia
12110 Bells Flats Rd

Kodiak 99615,
bookmatch@acsalaska.net

907-487-2799

Please consider full funding (\$761,000) for the OWL Project Broadband support to public libraries and the Live Homework Help database on SLED (\$138,000) as both of these initiatives support education throughout the state. It would be very helpful if funding could be permanently inserted into the state budget.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sean P. Rice <sprice@ci.fairbanks.ak.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:48 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Consideration for funding our schools

I would like to thank you, for your time and your commitment for your service. I appreciate all you do for the State of Alaska and to your district.

I am contacting you today to encourage you to support and fund our schools and districts in the State of Alaska. I am concerned that here at the Fairbanks North Star Borough we are increasing our class sizes in our elementary schools, middle schools, and our senior schools. Not only this but we as a district are facing a 3.5 million cut this year and are looking layoff employee's.

As a district there has been cuts made of about 9 million over the last few years. The cuts were away from the class room as much as possible. We have been making success in our schools. In our SMART program this year we have graduated two students. Our SMART program is where our children go when they have been expelled for longer than 10 days. This gives them a chance to keep up with school work so they do not fall behind. With our late graduation when we first started we only had a few students graduate, I believe last year we had another 63 students walking.

Once again I would like to encourage you to fund the education system, not just for our district but state wide.

Thank you

Sean Rice

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Janice Hamrick <janice_hamrick2003@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:45 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Alaska is #!

Dear Honorable Alan Austerman,

Please think about the people in Alaska and the difficulty with access to care for mental health and substance abuse making such large cuts will only increase our numbers in so many of the areas that we do not want to be #1!

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker of 30+ years and 7 years here in Alaska working in the bush and in Southeast the need for the services in our villages is crucial for the health of the people in this state.

Tribal behavioral services is of up-most importance it is challenging enough to provide services please consider the lives' that will be lost and the rise in statics that will come from reductions in mental health and substance abuse services.

Thank you for the work you do and for your consideration of this request! Please know when cutting tribal behavioral health that the next person who dies from alcoholism, suicide, murder it will come back to behavioral health the funding is crucial. It will come back to you asking what you doing.

Sincerely,
Janice Hamrick, LCSW, BHP
Licensed Clinical Social Worker & Behavioral Health Practitioner

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Glenn StorageAbles <bables@cvinternet.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; rep.bill.stoltz@akleg.gov; Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Eric Feige; Glennallen_LIO@legis.state.ak.us; Southwick, Shane B (EED); Sue Sherif; Bonnie; Cynthia; Nora; Victoria
Subject: Governor's proposed budget for EED

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltz:

My name is Sharron Ables and I am a volunteer/OWL IT aide for the Copper Valley Community Library. I am writing in support of the OWL Project and Live Homework Help.

As you well know we are a small diverse community that struggles to stay afloat. As diverse as we are, we have a passion to educate our young. The OWL program (broadband support and the video conference network) has provided amazing tools to help us in that endeavor. It's been documented that kids who do poorly in school are typically exposed to about 60,000 words prior to kindergarten whereas successful kids, are typically exposed to 3 million words plus prior to kindergarten. Point being, exposure to communications is critical.

Videoconferencing networks and after school support programs such as Live Homework Help are making great strides in our rural Alaskan villages. These programs can and will make a significant difference.

The United States was built on its human capital and it is no secret that we are losing our edge. We need skilled/educated people.

A permanent addition to the operating budget (with periodical reviews) was recommended by Governor Parnell with his staff verifying that the OWL Project and Live Homework Help was actually doing the job they set out to do. Please - I am among those asking you to restore the Governors recommendations.

Thank you for your time!

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Colleen Endres <cgendres@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Support the Governor's Public Safety Budget

Dear Representative Austerman,

I support the Governor's public safety budget. We need the additional troopers he has proposed and I hope you will support this vital need for the safety of all Alaskans.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Colleen Endres
PO Box 557
Glennallen, AK 99588

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Robyn Priest <dir@akpeersupport.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:54 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioural Health Budget and Therapeutic Courts
Attachments: Behavioral Health Budget and Therapeutic Courts March 2013.pdf

Please find attached a letter requesting reconsideration of these budget items

Thank you

Robyn Priest

Executive Director

Alaska Peer Support Consortium

dir@akpeersupport.org

Ph: 907-351-6890

www.akpeersupport.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: tytigner@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:35 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: 2013 Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

Your position and hard work is really appreciated. It is clear that hard choices have to be made. This email is to strongly encourage you to reconsider cutting the budget in regards to treatment and recovery. I reside at 360 North Pine Ridge Loop, Wasilla, Alaska and work in Fairbanks, Alaska. Our communities are seriously struggling with dysfunction and trauma. Cutting the budget will only cause more harm than good. We as a society know that if we do not take care of problems with youth now as they grow older we will pay for high cost of care in Adult Corrections. Prevention does make a clear difference.

We have also seen on a national level recently that if we don't provide good treatment it can have huge ramifications. Cutting more than 8 million in the Health and Social Service Budget is a mistake. Take time and go visit the treatment facilities and get a clearer understanding of what they do. The State of Alaska is actually getting quality services at a reasonable rate. Thanks for your time.

Ty Tigner

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kelly Shanklin <kellys@fcbhc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:27 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: FW: Say NO to Cuts Targeting Alaska's Most Vulnerable!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good afternoon,

ACTION ALERT

The House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for **CRITICAL** Behavioral Health Services.

These local, community-based services include:

- * mental health treatment
- * substance abuse treatment
- * detox services
- * services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- * supported housing
- * peer support services
- * suicide prevention
- * tribal behavioral health services
- * services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
- * parent and peer navigation
- * services related to domestic violence and sexual assault

* prevention and early intervention

* programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring

disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

· Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

· By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

· Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

· Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a healthy workforce and promote a strong economy. For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services

is **2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.**

Behavioral Health services are invaluable in our community. Costs of providing care continue to rise and there are static and dwindling resources available to pay for these services. Please support maintaining current funding

levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter.

Kelly Shanklin, M.A., CDCI

Executive Director

Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center

(907) 455-5307

The mission of the Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center is to provide quality behavioral health services that support consumer choice, cultural diversity, and clinical excellence.

Our Core Values are effective:

Stewardship

Collaboration

Leadership

Compassion

Perfection is something we never reach, but like the North Star, it serves as a beacon to guide us...

We seek perfection by focusing on measurable improvement in all areas, including best practices of care. Every day, we strive to be even better than before. Our dedicated caregivers should seek to attain it; our patients and families deserve it.

-Blair L. Sadler

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Stephanie Allen <sallen@unitedwaymatsu.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:20 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: House Finance Committee: Budget
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Members,

Thrive Mat-Su (formerly the Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition) has taken the lead in bringing together substance abuse prevention coalitions and health promotion organizations from across Alaska to form the Alaska Wellness Coalition--a statewide partnership that works together to improve the health in communities across the state of Alaska. That coalition includes representatives from various regions across the state and is working to create changes in businesses, government, schools and neighborhoods to improve the health of Alaskans. Current emphasis is on substance abuse prevention, obesity prevention, injury prevention, suicide prevention, positive community norms, domestic violence prevention, and youth leadership development. **I am writing to you on behalf of Thrive Mat-Su and the Alaska Wellness Coalition to ask for your support in keeping DHSS/DBH funds to support innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention projects across the state.**

The Alaska Wellness Coalition serves to facilitate information sharing on state and local data, evidenced-based programming, best practices, strategic prevention, current health trends, statewide advocacy for health promotion, sharing funding opportunities and developing plans for statewide engagement to improve the health of Alaskans. The overall focus is to improve community wellness and reduce health disparities among the children and families of Alaska. As a coalition of public health agencies, local governments, school districts, health care organizations and professionals, and community-based organizations, we promote policies, physical environments, and systems-changes that create safe, healthy, and equitable communities. Members are representative of communities from Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau, Kenai, Kodiak, Palmer, Seward, Sitka, Valdez, Wasilla and Yakutat bringing a diverse group of urban, rural, native and non-native communities together. We are stronger when we work together and seek to work to create a cooperative environment within the coalition that includes seeking joint funding and collaborating to sustain the work of coalition organizations.

In Alaska, there is a clear need for coordinated efforts to reduce underage drinking. Communities across Alaska are bombarded with a quagmire of different laws, advocacy efforts, and media messages that range from extremely permissive attitudes about youth and alcohol use to the elimination of alcohol in communities altogether. The cacophony of competing attitudes, values, and beliefs that plays out in our State lead to a weak common understanding of factual information regarding alcohol and its effect on both youth and the community. Glamorization of alcohol use in the entertainment industry, alcohol advertising and retailing

strategies, and by outdated social norms toward youth use of alcohol as a rite of passage only exacerbate the problem.

Efforts to address underage drinking happen at a number of levels including neighborhoods, schools, tribal entities and organizations, and through youth serving organizations, as well as local, state, and federal government. The sheer number of individuals and organizations involved is quite impressive, as is the funding spent nationally every year to address underage drinking. Unfortunately, too often these efforts are not coordinated with each other. Their respective messages do not end up having the reach originally planned, and duplication of effort wastes the resources currently available to address the problem.


The Alaska Wellness Coalition Media Campaign project was recently awarded from the DHSS/DBH funding targeting substance abuse prevention and intervention. This project is to conduct a *coordinated* campaign to reduce underage drinking that accounts for messages and efforts at the local, state, and federal level. The Campaign will focus on evidence-based environmental prevention strategies to change social norms regarding youth alcohol. By using this approach the Coalition will maximize communication, outcomes, and economic use of resources at the same time duplicate and ineffective approaches are reduced.

To prevent underage drinking, the Media Campaign will employ a strengths-based approach utilizing the *positive community norms* model. It will begin a long-term dialogue with the public that increases parent and youth understanding of the social norms surrounding underage drinking as well as educate both youth and adults across the Alaska, cultivating a culture that decreases underage drinking and delays the early onset of alcohol use. The Alaska Wellness Coalition plans to launch the campaign in 2013 and continue community conversations and the media campaign for a minimum of three years.

The project will fulfill one of the strategies outlined in the Alaska Statewide Plan to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking and other state level and regional plans. **We ask for your support in preserving DHSS/DBH funding in the budget to be allocated towards innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention projects.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephanie L. Allen".

Stephanie L. Allen

Stephanie L. Allen

Executive Director

United Way of Mat-Su

550 S. Alaska Street, Suite 205

Palmer, AK 99645

P: 907.745.5821

F: 907.745.0635

<http://www.unitedwaymatsu.org>

[GIVE.](#) | [ADVOCATE.](#) | [VOLUNTEER.](#) | **LIVE UNITED™**

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: mbyer <mbyer@hbsd.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:16 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; rep.linsey.holmes@akleg.gov; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: Budget Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Member of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Michael Byer and I'm the Superintendent of the Haines Borough School District where I've served for six years. I am in my 25th year of a career in education. I started as a special education aide, became a teacher, both in K-12 and university, then a principal and now I'm here. I believe passionately that the education of our children is the most powerful investment we can make in the future of our state and country. We will soon enough depend on the innovative thinking of the young Alaskans who are currently in or will be entering our schools. They will be the ones to take the lead in reinventing and maintaining a healthy economy for future generations.

Education is in a time of great transition. Standards are being raised to make sure our students are Career and College ready. Technology is transforming the classroom. Research into learning continues to indicate how important early childhood experiences are to success in school and beyond.

I believe that now is the time we must all come together to insure we wisely nurture programs that recognize these trends. Now is when we should be making the investment in our young children. The proposals within the Governor's budget will help that to occur.

I'd like to speak directly to Digital Learning and Distance Learning found within that budget. We have many students who are in rural schools without the capacity to provide all the classes necessary to qualify for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The Alaska Learning Network is a great solution to that problem. It has support from School districts. It has highly qualified teachers, teaching Alaskan students. It has a 90% completion rate.

Two Haines students and a teacher made a presentation to Senate Education yesterday on how AKLN has worked for them. I would recommend watching it on "Gavel to Gavel." It is very compelling testimony. We need to prepare our students for a future not yet comprehended. We do know one thing, technology will be part of that future and our student's ability to use technology to learn and to work will be a great key to their success.

I'd also like to say that for a small district like Haines, getting support from DEED is extremely important. Our district office is composed of myself with a secretary and a bookkeeper. We need DEED to be a partner in helping districts like Haines to work through issues like the upcoming change to the teacher evaluation regulations just passed by the State board.

*Michael Byer, Superintendent
Haines Borough School District
Office: (907) 766-6725
Fax: (907) 766-6794*

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Tiffany McCormack <tamccormack@alaska.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:06 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Operating Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

6 March 2013

Tiffany McCormack
1830 Pandora Drive
Fairbanks, AK 99709
(907) 687-8493

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

I do not envy you the position of managing and making cuts to the Operating Budget that funds many important services throughout our state. As a Fairbanks resident, I have recently discovered that the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million reduction to critical Behavioral Health Services that would immensely impact our most vulnerable populations. I can only imagine the ways in which the cut to these services would end up impacting future costs in negative ways through the inevitable, exponential increased need for mental health, education, violence prevention, and health care services, not to mention the cost to the young people on an individual level and to the community as a whole that would lose out on numerous successful, engaged citizens.

Our state has a high incidence of domestic and sexual abuse, children born with a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and suicide. These challenges present many unforeseen consequences that are addressed through behavioral health services. I implore you, members of the House Finance Committee, to look for different means to balance the Operating Budget other than cutting the funding to behavioral health services.

Thank you for your time and attention in reading this.

Sincerely,

Tiffany McCormack

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: berens@mtaonline.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:59 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Services

I oppose the \$8.3 million cuts for Behavioral Health Services. These services are important to our consumers in the community. Without services and supports our most vulnerable population would be homeless. I know many people who benefit from services in our community. Taking away their life line would affect their safety and life style.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lauren Rice <lrice@covenanthouseak.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:55 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Alison Kear; Diana Bline
Subject: CHA Response to Proposed BHS Cuts
Attachments: BHS Cuts- CHA Response House Finance.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I hope this finds well. Please find the attached letter from Covenant House Alaska on the proposed Behavioral Health Services cuts. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Alison Kear at 907.339.4203 if you have any questions. Thank you and take care!

Lauren Rice

Director of Public Affairs and Advocacy

(w) 907.339.4224

(c) 907.351.8005



Pick.Click.Give.

Please consider a gift to the kids of Covenant House Alaska with your 2013 Permanent Fund Dividend. Thank you!

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Hannah Ragland <hbragland@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:25 PM
To: David Guttenberg; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Meredith Cameron
Subject: support for the Alaska Farm to School Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Representatives-

I am writing in support of the Alaska Farm to School program, and the funding that is needed to continue with the benefits this program provides. As an employee in the Denali Borough School District, and an active volunteer within the District and in the preschool and daycare setting, I have worked to support Alaskan food with our young people. I have worked to educate them about local food that is available, and work to increase their appreciation for Alaska Grown. The Alaska Farm to School program has supported my efforts immensely, both through direct funding under the Alaska Farm to School grant program, and indirectly through support by staff with the Division of Agriculture/Farm to School program.

This fall, with funds from a small grant (just \$500), elementary students at our school were able to visit a local farm, harvest produce, host a local farmers market (where they selected and prepared healthy snacks, and food for a cafeteria meal), then prepared a school meal for all students, served up in our cafeteria. It was an exciting few weeks, and data we collected from the students showed that their knowledge of Alaska Grown food increased greatly as a result of this project. Our project later won second place in the Alaska Farm to School challenge, winning an indoor gardening set that Middle School students are currently using as they explore indoor gardening. This project provided a solid base for our school's efforts to support Alaska Grown food as we later utilized money provided by the legislature under the Nutritional Alaska Food in Schools funding, and we currently offer Alaska Grown meals in our cafeteria once a week (Farm Fridays). I also support continued funding for that program.

Staff with the Division of Agriculture/Farm to School program have been instrumental in connecting us with local farmers, and providing the resources we need to share information and appreciation of Alaska Grown foods with our local youth. Please support the program by providing the funding it needs to continue with their efforts!

Hannah Ragland

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Maggie Lush <admin@havenhousealaska.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:21 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Funding Cuts!!!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Really? Our most prized possessions? Please think twice about cutting the funds that help our most vulnerable population. Early childhood development is critical and a very important component to aid our moms in crisis that we see here at Haven House, the women's shelter of Homer. Children don't understand trauma and it is "played" out in very negative forms when we are talking about domestic violence. Sprout, is the name of the agency in Homer that sends in specialists to assist our children. It is imperative that this alliance between our shelter and their agency -Sprout, continues. Without funding it looks like it won't. Please, please see that this doesn't happen! Many thanks for looking out for our best interest in this challenging time of need! Maggie Lush

--

Maggie Lush
South Peninsula Haven House
3776 Lake Street, Homer Alaska 99603
907-235-7712 Fax: 907-235-2733
admin@havenhousealaska.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Donna Nelson <dnelson@AccessAlaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:11 PM
To: Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Cc: Donna Nelson
Subject: HB 65 Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative,

Please restore the \$100,000 increment in the Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living, also known as CILs.

Section 702 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 established Centers for Independent Living as consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agencies designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities to provide an array of independent living services.

CILs provided itinerant services to **over 45 rural communities last year**, but enormous areas of Alaska remain underserved. CILs need more money, not less.

Access Alaska has seen the unmet needs but limited funds make it difficult to adequately address those substantial needs. **Rural Alaskans have limited options; those options are even more restricted for seniors and individuals experiencing disability**, whether it is cognitive, mental or physical in nature.

If you want functional, productive citizens and reduced costs then you must fund services which make that possible!

Without the support of a CIL, many Alaskans are forced into expensive long-term care away from family or they live dependent and isolated lives. On the North Slope alone there are more than 60 individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who are in need of supportive services in order to live independently, yet these services are pitifully lacking! Without the services these individuals end up homeless in the most extreme environments of the state, are sent to other areas of the state away from their culture and support network or even outside of Alaska altogether.

Home and Community Based Services are proven effective and cost efficient, reducing overall system costs substantially. I encourage you to do your homework as you make budget decisions.

CILs are located in the Dept. of Labor budget because the **federal government requires CILs to be in the same department as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.**

I know that times are tough and hard decisions must be made. I know there are no easy solutions. However, reducing the budget at the expense of our most vulnerable populations is not the right solution. Refusal to invest in these populations will ultimately further the costs deferred to state and federal sources.

Please restore the \$100,000 increment in the Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living.

Thank you,

Donna Nelson

Independent Living Advocate

Access Alaska

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: bill heiberger <bill.heiberger@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:05 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Support Cleaning our Beaches

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman:

Please support legislation to support and fund the cleanup of our Alaskan beaches of the Japanese Tsunami Debris that has and will continue to make landfall. Not doing so, is apt to harm our wildlife and to adversely affect our tourism.

Best Regards,

Bill Heiberger (An Anchorage Resident)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Pamela Fredrick <plf@sphosp.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:04 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: Comments regarding 2014 Trauma Fund Recapitalization

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives Austerman and Stoltze and Members of the State Finance Committee,

We at South Peninsula Hospital are very much in support of continued funding for Trauma Care in the State of Alaska.

South Peninsula Hospital has made a commitment to improving the trauma care at our community hospital, and was granted Level IV Trauma Designation early 2012. This involved additional and continued education of all Emergency Department medical staff, both physicians and nurses, as well as instituting new Policies and Procedures to standardize and optimize patient care.

The State Trauma funding allowed a number of our Physicians to complete Advanced Trauma Life support, a course designed for Emergency Department physicians by the American College of Surgeons.

South Peninsula Hospital also made a monetary commitment to encourage Emergency Room nurses to become Board Certified in Emergency Nursing. Three nurses were Board Certified prior to our Level IV designation, two more have completed the Certification, and two others are in the process. In addition, 11 of the 14 ER nurses have become certified in Procedural Sedation, often used in the Emergency department. Our Anesthesia department worked with the ER nurses to standardize procedures for Rapid Sequence Intubation.

The trauma funds have been invaluable, for items this small community hospital could not afford. The ER purchased a Glide Scope for difficult emergency intubations. This piece of equipment was used on two patients in the first week we had it. We were able to purchase improved lighting for the Operating Room. We have upgraded our audio EMS system and State EMS communication system.

Included in our commitment for improving trauma care, South Peninsula Hospital recently appointed a part-time Trauma Coordinator. An Alaskan nurse for 34 years (the last seven in Homer), she is one of our ER nurses with long experience in the Trauma systems of Alaska. She has been involved in Disaster planning, deeply involved in EMS, and traveled State-wide teaching trauma courses to both EMT's and nurses. We are very excited to have her in this position.

South Peninsula Hospital is a small community hospital, and we are proud of the progress we have made in improving trauma care. The hospital has made major monetary commitments, but the State Trauma funding has been invaluable in assisting us in this endeavor.

We would encourage you to keep the trauma care funding in place for 2014.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if we can be of any assistance to you in your deliberations.

Rebecca Lundqvist, R.N. CEN Emergency Room Trauma Coordinator for South Peninsula Hospital

Pamela Fredrick, RN, BSN, Emergency Room & Outpatient Services Manager for South Peninsula Hospital

907-235-0533 Office

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ray Friedlander <ray@sitkawild.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:59 AM
To: Marie Murray
Cc: Tully McLoughlin; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman
Subject: Letter of Support for Farm to School
Attachments: Housefinancecommittee_farmtoschool.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi Marie, please find my letter of support attached for the Farm to School program. Thanks!

ray

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Torgeson, Mary Jo. <TorgesonMJ@ci.anchorage.ak.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:57 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: State support for OWL and Live Homework Help

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

I am very concerned that two initiatives were taken out of the Governor's budget: OWL and Live Homework Help.

1. **Live Homework Help:** Let me start with the effectiveness of Live Homework Help, provided throughout the state through libraries. This is a service that started in FY2008 with 5073 using the services. In the last 5 years the service has increased to 18,065 students using the service which is a 300% increase of use from when it began. We need to be a state that helps students to succeed and this is a program that does it at very little cost, \$7.63 a use. I had one mother tell me that her child would not have gotten into college without the math help provided by this program. This was a single mother that did not have the needed math skills to help her child.

At the Anchorage Public Library, our Young Adult Vista volunteer says this:

"Live Homework Help is an important part of the Homework Help program that is offered to Middle and High School students in Teen Underground on Mondays and Thursday. The volunteers that help the students use Live Homework Help during every session. This valuable service enables volunteers to help students in a range of subjects, augmenting their personal academic skills and enabling them to be more effective as tutors. Without Live Homework Help, there would be times when we would have to turn away students, not having the tools or knowledge to help them. We depend on this resource. It is frequent to see a university student working alongside a younger student with a laptop open to Live Homework Help participating in a conversation with an online tutor. We provide the positive adult mentors and in person help while Live Homework help provides the expertise." In 2012, over 800 users accessed this service.

I am recommending that this service continue to be supported by State dollars and returned to the Governor's budget. We do not have sufficient municipal support to pay for this database.

2. OWL: While you have kept \$461K in the Governor's recommended budget for the OWL project, I am requested that you return the \$150K that was cut. The Anchorage Public Library plays a key role in providing a mechanism and meeting room space in sending educational programs throughout the state. We City of Anchorage does not have the dollars to allocate to the Broadband project. There are 97 communities, some of them in schools, where the additional broadband is important and adds additional resources to students during the day. OWL's high speed broadband allows us to offer a program in Anchorage to village communities. Likewise, village communities can provide educational programs to Natives cut off from village life. I urge you to return the \$150K back to the OWL broad project.

Feel free to call me with any questions if further clarification is needed. I would also appreciate a response, as time allows.

Mary Jo Torgeson
Anchorage Public Library Director
3600 Denali Street
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 343-2892
www.anchoragelibrary.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Susan Ohmer (raincountry) <susanohmer@raincountry.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:44 AM
To: Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Treadwell, Lt. Governor (GOV sponsored); Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Stone, Melissa W (HSS); Streur, William J (HSS); Judy Ohmer
Subject: Communities in Crisis

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Our Representatives and Senators:

I am writing to express dismay about the proposed cut of \$8.3 million in behavioral health services. At a time when our communities most need treatment, support, and violence intervention, this action will not keep Alaskans safe, nor will it save money. It will increase costs as emergency rooms, hospitals, and jails take on those who cannot cope without support.

We are experiencing a behavioral health and substance abuse crisis. Since 2005 Petersburg (pop 2,965) has had three homicides. Our violent death rate has in some years exceeded *33 per 100,000* (over *eight times* the state rate). An overall seven year average is still 14 per 100,000 (over *three times* the state rate).

There have been five suicides, including three in one year. Our average greatly exceeds the state rate, which is itself the second highest in the nation.

We had 32 suicide attempts, four drug-related deaths and multiple lockdowns of the school and other sites due to credible death/mass murder threats. In 2012 alone, three lockdowns (of the school, a bar and the entire city) occurred.

Domestic assaults are more frequent and serious, almost doubling since 2005, and we had 20 documented alcohol and drug overdoses needing emergency medical attention.

I've been Petersburg Mental Health's director for nearly 20 years. As cost of living and cost of healthcare have skyrocketed during this time we have not seen an increase in grant funding. We are being asked to do more and more administratively to demonstrate our service's worth. The concept of a cut on top of the burdens we already must adapt to is more than demoralizing, it's frightening.

Cuts like this don't require belt-tightening. They mean hacking off a limb. Please support full funding for behavioral health services. Oppose cuts that guarantee overburdened emergency rooms and jails. Keep your constituents safe! Petersburg Mental Health Services can help if you give us the means to do our jobs.

Sincerely,

Susan Ohmer, LCSW

Director

PMHS, Inc.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rebecca Howe <rebeccah@searhc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:32 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Projected 8.3 million in cuts to BH funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you for taking the time to read this e-mail. I would like to advocate that you reconsider making large cuts to the current Behavioral Health budget. I have worked in Behavioral Health for almost 20 years in Alaska, from prevention to intervention, and realize the importance of providing services to our most vulnerable citizens in Alaska. The services that are currently provided for these citizens throughout the State of Alaska helps them to be productive members within our communities, people who can now maintain employment, raise their families in a more positive fashion and help move our communities forward.

Investing in citizens who are having mental health, substance abuse or other issues and helping them to move forward to the best of their abilities is not only cost effective by reducing the amount spent on institutionalization and emergency room visits, it also helps protect the other citizens in Alaska. As we have seen on the national level with a rise in shootings and other tragedies, when Behavioral Health needs are not met, there can be a very high cost associated with this.

Alaska has the chance to keep moving forward in breaking the cycles that create these issues in our citizens in the first place, which will take a commitment of funding and continued efforts of the Behavioral Health workforce. Thank you for taking the time to consider all sides of this issue.

Rebecca Howe

--

Rebecca Howe, CDC II, MPH
Program Manager, Yeil Jeeyax, Raven's Way
907-966-8719

Recovery:

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lorie Morris <akfamilies@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:20 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended an \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. Cuts include but not limited to the following services:

- * Mental health treatment
- * Services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- * Programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

I respectfully request the committee restore these funds. Behavioral Health Services support keeping children and adults with mental illness and substance use disorders at home and in their communities close to family and friends. These programs allow us to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time saving the State of Alaska money by avoiding more expensive, higher levels of care.

Financial Impact of the Proposed Cuts for the State of Alaska:

Ø Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

Ø Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

Thank you in Advance for your consideration,

Lorie Morris, MBA

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sherry Eckrich <sherryeckrich@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:10 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Funding for Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Cutting funding for behavioral health services is short-sighted and cruel. If the people who most need a safety net are not taken care of, we will pay for it financially later down the road, not to mention the immediate social costs. Please fund behaviroal health services fully.

Sherry Eckrich
18514 Olivia Drive
Eagle River, AK 99577

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Stopha, Mark E (DFG) <mark.stopha@alaska.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:03 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Marine Advisory Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear. Rep. Austerman:

I attended the first Alaska Seafood Processor Leadership Institute that the University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program put on. I understand that the Alaska Legislature House Finance Committee is taking up the University of Alaska budget this week, and that MAP is requesting \$50,000 to continue this program, and I support that request. The program gathers Alaskans from around the state processing industries, and provided training in HACCP, marketing, and Human Resources. In addition, our program had attendees from Nome, Unalakleet, King Salmon, Kodiak, Homer, Petersburg, Palmer and Juneau, with attendees ranging from owners of small fish marketing and processing plants, to staff of large processors, as well as an owner of a shellfish farm in Kachemak Bay. All attendees paid for the institute (it cost \$2,500 each when we attended), which covered part of the costs. Of course, one of the real benefits was the sharing of ideas and experiences of people who worked in different sized operations and in different capacities from what I was doing. I think it is a vital program for Alaska residents and will help maintain a progressive processing industry in the state.

Sincerely,

Mark Stopha
Hatchery Evaluation Biologist
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Commercial Fisheries
P. 907-465-6152
F. 907-465-4168
Mark.Stopha@alaska.gov

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sandy Solenberger <solenberger1@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:57 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Support for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman:

This letter is to request the restoration of funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels - \$937,500 for Best Beginnings and \$1,042,500 for Parents as Teachers.

My name is Sandy Solenberger and I have lived in Barrow for the past seven years and have served as the volunteer chair of the Steering Committee for the North Slope Imagination Library since its establishment in 2009. We now send a free book each month to about 85% of the children aged 0 through 4 living in the North Slope Borough's seven remote villages and Barrow. I am now in my late sixties and after a lifetime of volunteering I must say that I have never worked on a nonprofit program which was so beloved and appreciated.

If you live in a remote village it is very difficult to get books for your very young children – even if they can fit into your budget. By organizing independent Imagination Library programs around the state, Best Beginnings has enabled young parents to take action to improve the learning environment for their infants, toddlers and preschoolers within their homes. The books which we send out are treasured and read again and again; the children themselves ask repeatedly for them to be read and flourish in the warmth of the interaction with parents and caregivers who are doing the reading. The key to the exceptional success of this program in Alaska has been the ongoing organization and training offered to volunteers by Best Beginnings.

Last year Best Beginnings developed and released a dvd entitled "Babies on Track" with two companion board books. The dvd features babies from many locations in Alaska, including Barrow, and demonstrates to parents and caregivers how to help their baby's brain grow during its critical first few years. Our organization held parties with viewings of Babies on Track in all of the NSB's remote villages and at several locations in Barrow. When I returned to three of those villages last summer, I was amazed to see that I could pick out infants and toddlers whose parents had been exposed to the dvd and had used the board books in interacting with their children. When I gathered the parents and kids for story hours, I had children who crawled across the floor to poke through a stack of books to find the Babies on Track books. One father told me that he was convinced his 8-month daughter would learn to read before she could walk – she was so entranced with books.

Please vote to maintain the previous levels of funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.

Sandy Solenberger, Chair

North Slope Imagination Library

Barrow, Alaska

907-852-9323

Solenberger1@gci.net

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary Ver Hoef <mary.verhoef@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:45 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Citizen Input on Proposed State Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Representatives:

I wanted to write and urge you to NOT enact the severe budget cuts that have been proposed, specifically the \$8.3 million cuts to Health and Social Services.

With the gridlock at the National level, and the Sequester cuts in place, these VITAL social services are already compromised - to hit them with these additional deep cuts at the state level will really hurt Alaska. When our residents are not mentally healthy or lacking the emotional and behavior support they need, we ALL suffer. The shootings at Newtown are just one manifestation of some of this kind of unsupported mental health needs.

I am sure none of you want to be responsible in part for any tragedy of this sort.

I would also like to voice my support for two Agricultural programs that you may be considering in the state budget. Please support research for the growing peony industry, and also the very important School Garden and Farm to Table programs. The school garden programs have been highly successful and bring health to the kids involved and the end-product consumers. Seemingly small programs like this can go a long way to developing food security in our Alaskan communities.

Thank you for your work on the State Budget - I urge you again AGAINST DEEP CUTS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES!!!

~Mary Ver Hoef
3767 Studio Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dorcas Stein <dstein@gci.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:11 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Cuts to Behavioral Mental Health Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Legislators:

Like many other concerned Alaskans I too am very concerned about the proposed cuts to the Behavioral Mental Health (BMH) budget. I have seen our current BMH providers in our North Slope region struggle to provide the best services they can with the inadequate budget they have. If there are any further cuts, effective programs will most certainly be eliminated, causing more stress to already overworked staff and more stress to families with relatives with behavioral health problems.

I am particularly concerned that these cuts will affect the Hope Community Services programs in Barrow and other communities in the State. Community members have worked hard the past several years to get a group home established in Barrow and if there are cuts, it may affect this program that was finally becoming a reality.

Please do everything you can to look for cuts elsewhere, but not to the BMH budget. When we have people with good mental health, we have good communities. Thank you for listening.

Dorcas Stein
PO Box 587
Barrow, AK 99723
(907)878-0101 cell

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mike File <mcf195@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:06 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: ADFG cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Rep. Alan Austerman:

My name is Mike File, I have been comm. fishing in the state of Ak. for over 35 yrs. I have raised my family in Petersburg for the last

18 yrs. I have seen adfg's management style change alot in that time, always in the best interest in the states renewable resource

salmon. Failure to keep funding for aerial surveys and port sampling will devastate the southeast economy! It will at best put

many small operations with a thin bottom line out of business.

As you know stock abundance in streams can change in 24 hours or less, if nobody is keeping track of numbers you can have

a over escapement situation which can be dire for the salmon spawning (overcrowding, lack of water, raising stream temp. all

play into this). If you have a stock die off it can take years, decades for that system to recover. The state of Alaska is known

world wide for it's excellent salmon management always erring on the conservative. I fear that without effective tools to maintain

this practice adfg will have to curtail all salmon fishing to an extreme not having eyes in the sky, or personnal in the ports

taking samples.

Alaska has created a market known for its quality and value which A.S.M.I. has helped create. If we don't continue to play

our part the resurgence in farmed salmon could once again plunge our ex-vessel prices literally into the toilet. I went through

a whole decade of that once, I and many others would not make ends meet in this economic climate which is anything but

sure.

The state of Alaska has a law concerning the taking of game, you must not waste any edible part of that animal, it is a crime

if you do! Would allowing poor salmon management practices be any different but in this scenario the crime would be against

the very people sustaining the economy of Alaska.

Thank you for your time.

Mike File

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary Corcoran <marycorc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:48 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Best Beginnings Funds

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

I sincerely request that you restore funding to at least what Governor Parnell has submitted to Best Beginnings for FY14. I am a Delta Junction grandmother who volunteers for our community's Imagination Library, a non profit affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library that provides (free to families) age appropriate books including suggested activities to children from birth to 5. This consistent introduction and reinforcement to literacy is invaluable to all children and their parents. Our group is run entirely by volunteers and donations. Best Beginnings has been vital in assisting us with startup and continuing the program.

Cutting Best Beginnings will affect our program. Restoring funding will recognize the efforts of scores of people. Send a message of support to our program, its participating children and volunteers, Best Beginnings, and the Dolly Parton national foundation.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely
Mary Corcoran

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sandra Hayes <shayes16@alaska.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:45 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- *These services affect you personally in that I am a recipient of the services and a peer support specialist. I would be unable to assist clientele that I work with if you cut the funding. Also, I am a senior with co-occurring disorders. To lose service would greatly affect my quality of life. I have been a recipient of services and have gotten better because of it. My daughter is also a recipient of these much needed services.*
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Sandra R. Hayes

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kristopher Staples <KStaples@SEAVIEWSEWARD.ORG>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:39 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Thank you

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee,

Thank you for making some budget cuts, even if they are as tiny as \$100,000 dollars.

I feel, as a mental health provider, and community based provider that a lot of these programs designed to support people are abused. I am tired of seeing it happen in front of my face. I believe that if people are not self-sufficient that are not happy in life.

Because of the temporary short term patches that a lot of community services provide, people become dependent on one patch to the next. It is a crisis management system that does not create independence and growth. This greatly impacts life satisfaction as a demoralizing factor.

I strongly support scaling back social services because it makes people dependent on their victim hood (as long as they are a victim they get social services).

I simply don't think the Independent Living budge is the social service to take money from. The very purpose of this social services is to buck the trend of system dependence. It gives people independence allows them to grow and develop life satisfaction.

Please reconsider where you decide to cut the budget.

Best wishes, I know that our fate is in good hands.

Keep up the good work, folks!!

Kristopher Staples, MFTT

Behavioral Health Clinician

SeaView Community Services

Phone: 907.224.5251

Fax: 907.224.7081

SeaViewSeward.org

kstaples@seaviewseward.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Laura Lucas <llucas@sailinc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:40 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Funding for Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing in response to the proposed cuts in funding for Behavioral Health Services. As a direct service provider for seniors and persons with disabilities, I believe this direction is shortsighted in respect to the goal of fiscal savings. Behavioral Health Services are guided by the "stitch in time" philosophy. Money spent to help support and educate people at risk while they are in the community prevents exponentially more costly care in our institutions.

The Falls Prevention program is just one simple example: For seniors, falls are the top source of non-fatal hospitalized injuries in Alaska. And falls are expensive: the average hospital bill is \$27,000 and this does not cover a probable nursing home stay for rehabilitation. The impact on caregivers compounds the effect on the economy. Continued support of a program that helps increase public awareness and train both seniors and workers is a sound investment.

This logic is repeated by evidence-based programs throughout the spectrum of community-based services in the State.

PLEASE DO NOT PERMIT A REDUCTION IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Respectfully
Laura Lucas LMSW

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Joanne Healy <marshallhealy@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:11 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Spend now save in the future

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To the members of the Finance Committee:

In these times of spending cuts it is vital not to cut programs which save money in the long run. Early childhood education is one of the most cost effective programs we have especially for those affected by developmental disabilities (DD) (1 in 6 children is born with a DD). Once they learn a skill they are able to remember it and it makes it easier to learn additional skills. Many students affected by autism (1 in 88 children) have difficulty communicating and understanding social structures, early childhood education is essential for these children. Learning how to function in an educational environment early lays the ground work for students to learn. As a teacher I believe our children are our greatest resource and we need to provide the best education possible to ALL our children. That means fully funding Early Childhood education.

In addition, the cuts to the Traumatic Brain Injury Network would limit their outreach services and trainings. I was lucky enough to attend a training in Juneau last year. I brought that information back to all of my students and made them aware of the resources available. One of my students slipped and fell during our ice storm. She knew she had to see a doctor (even though she thought it was a minor fall), indeed had a concussion and knew she had to rest because of the information I was able to share earlier in the semester. Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) can happen to ANYONE at ANY TIME and unfortunately Alaska is the national leader in TBI. We need to continue to support and train people about TBI, please restore the full funding to this important organization.

The cuts in behavioral health services are also short sighted. They provide the following key services: mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbance, supported housing, peer support services, suicide prevention, tribal behavioral health services, services for seniors with co-occurring disorders, parent and peer navigation, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault, prevention and early intervention, and programs that support reunifying and keeping families together. These services keep our communities supported and without them one would see an increase in punitive practices that are not effective.

Please reconsider these cuts to improve our state's future.

Joanne Healy
1280 Jones Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709
907-978-9119

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Cindy Turnbough <cturnbough194@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:08 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TESTIMONY FROM CINDY TURNBOUGH/FAIRBANKS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

I am writing you on behalf of those I personally know who receive services that could be cut and for those I do not know.

I try not to write about issues I know nothing about and I have learned there are reasons that are not apparent to myself on why budgets need to be cut in places I cannot understand and yet the fear of losing benefits simply invokes panic which is what is happening now with emails and alarms sounding. As they should be!

I have become friends with folks who receive services from behavioral health and our son works with troubled youth in homes that receive money from the state. I have been able to hear the beauty of these homes where parents simply open up their lives to five young men or women and they mentor, teach them life skills and prepare them for society. For some, the broken homes and neglect will plague them socially the rest of their lives but this is their final safe haven, these homes. My son has worked there two years now while attending UAF full time. From FAS to abuse and early neglect which could lead to heavy drug abuse risks, these home spend 24/7 shaping lives - and though they have to let them run away by law with proper staffing and people who truly care, hope is offered. Some end up running. I have seen them walking along the road and hanging around downtown by describing the clothing they were wearing. They sleep from house to house. But there are many success stories and lives changed by providing these homes.

Some have severe attention deficit disorder so doing homework each day can be an exhausting challenge. But this is what they do in these homes and these young folks earn reward points or have them taken away.

Repetition and this point system work.

If these homes are cut, what will happen to these youth? I cannot answer that but if there are questions you still have before the cuts, please ask. I know your job is not easy.

I write you today on behalf of someone else I know who receives services due to a mental illness that developed at the hands

of family members who cruelly abused her as a little girl. Now she pays dearly with the scars and if she did not have

her counselor to run to on a Monday morning or to call from her home in desperate situations, I fear for her very life. She is a bright and smart woman who gives back to her community, has attended college yet must rely on it's goodness to survive what she never had a choice in as a little girl. She volunteers her time in so many different places in our community. It's difficult for her to get a full time job, transportation and limited bus schedules hinder some jobs she could apply for. Some may say to her just get any job. But they speak from ignorance. I know her and she needs the support and has moved forward only to go two steps back. I know firsthand for I have visited her in the hospital when the depression overcomes her.

Do I know if her services would be cut? No. But I must write just in case - on her behalf. On their behalf.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to share. My heart speaks blindly to the knowledge you have been given these past months for justification for these cuts. I thank you for all you have done for our daughter who has a medicaid waiver - whose disability is so visible. I realize it's not so easy to understand myself the hidden disabilities people live with. I pray you do the right thing. A tough day ahead with testimony. Thank you for taking the time to read this. I am late for work and so I will close now.

Very Sincerely,

Cindy Turnbough
Fairbanks, Alaska
There is a JOY in the journey.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: LaDawn Druce <ladawn_druce@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: Comment on Proposed cuts to state budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to respectfully ask you not pass the recommended cuts to the state budget which would effect our most valuable and vulnerable resource, our children.

As a mother of three Soldotna High School graduates and a grandmother of a 12 and 2 year old in Anchorage, many of these proposed cuts would have a direct negative impact on our state resources designed to help children. Particularly now with the federal government funding in doubt, these programs are more reliant than ever on state funds. We are fortunate to live in a state with fiscal resources and should not make cuts which would hurt those in the most need.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Sincerely,

LaDawn Druce

P.O. Box 2317

Soldotna, AK 99669

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Art Delaune <adelaune@AccessAlaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:40 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Independent Living Center Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Independent Living Centers (CILs) in Alaska are non-institutional, private, non-profit, consumer-controlled, community-based organizations providing services and advocacy by and for seniors and persons with all types of disabilities. The goal of CILs is to assist this vulnerable population to achieve their maximum potential within their families and communities.

Alaska CILs provide people with disabilities and seniors individualized services that are consumer-responsive, cost-effective, and community-based. Alaska CILs served over 4000 Alaskans with disabilities last fiscal year and provided itinerant services to over 45 rural communities last year. Enormous areas of Alaska remain underserved; because of this CILs need more money, not less. CILs that assist rural Alaskans with disabilities and seniors do so on a very limited budget. Considering the distances travelled, the cost of lodging and support to provide IL services “in the bush”, the service they provide is substantial, but still falls short of the level needed.

My plea to you is to support CILs and their services by restoring the Governor’s \$100K increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor’s budget. I am advocating for continued funding for CILs because I am convinced of the great good they provide for our community. I say this as a parent of 2 young men with disabilities needing skills to enter the workforce and have seen how much support my sons have received. I also say this as a son of an elderly parent living independently at Raven’s Landing Senior Community because of community based services available in the Fairbanks Community.

Without the support of a CIL, many Alaskans are forced into expensive long-term care away from family or to live dependent and isolated lives. Please don’t let that happen in our state; don’t let this happen to our seniors and people with disabilities. Please support our effort to restore the Governor’s \$100K increment for Independent Living.

Art Delaune

Fairbanks, Alaska

907-479-2838

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Bob Jewell <jewell@ctcak.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:30 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Budget cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman,

I am writing to urge you to fully fund both **Behavioral Health** and the **Acquired Traumatic Brain Injury Program**. Both of these programs serve extremely vulnerable children and adults who do not receive support elsewhere.

The Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury Program provides access to services, information, advocacy and case management support to those with brain injuries; those whose injuries prevent them from accessing or organizing their own services. Case Management services are a cost effective way to manage care for people who have complex medical and behavioral health needs, reducing inefficiencies in the utilization of public services and prevents further injury and illness. Case Management also assists with access to retraining, employment support and a return to self sufficiency.

The current planned cut to the **Behavioral Health** budget of over 8 million dollars represents a 31% cut in grant dollars to community behavioral health providers. Community behavioral health programs provides services to people who will otherwise not get assistance, many of them children and the seriously mentally ill. These people will not simply stop needing services, they will just have to get them through more expensive methods- the emergency room, inpatient hospitalization, or law enforcement and corrections. In many communities, the behavioral health care provider is the only provider in town-with the potential of leaving entire communities without this necessary service for some of their most vulnerable members.

I understand that money is tight and revenues from traditional sources are down. However, these cuts seem short sighted, costly in the long run and impacting those who can least afford it. I am a Case Manager in a Community Behavioral Health Program; I see these needs every day up close and personal. I have other options for employment. These folks do not have other options for the assistance they need to make it through each day.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Barb Jewell

P.O. Box 2173

Cordova Alaska

907-420-3925

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Susan McLane <macsmith869@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:34 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Bill Stoltze
Subject: Trauma fund

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives Austerman, Stoltze and members of the Finance Committee. As Medical Director of the Emergency Department of South Peninsula Hospital in Homer, I am very interested in 2014 funding for the State Trauma Fund. I have practiced Emergency Medicine in Alaska for 30 years and have witnessed the evolution and improvement in trauma care during that time. Several years ago South Peninsula Hospital went through a very rigorous process to be designated as a Level IV Trauma Facility. We would be glad to forward to the committee the requirements for the designation, however suffice it to say it took a year of preparation and many hours of work by our ER, hospital and Medical Staff. It also required two thorough inspections of our facility and review of our policies. Thanks to that designation we have been recipients of funding that has allowed us to substantially improve our trauma preparedness and delivery of trauma care. The State of Alaska has historically been very supportive of improving medical and trauma care and the in recent years the Trauma Fund has been instrumental in standardizing such care around the state. It would be extremely short sighted to reduce or eliminate such funding at this time. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of any assistance to you in your deliberations. Hal Smith MD, FACEP., 907 235 7073, 299 0327(c).

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: gari@alaska.net
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:01 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Governor Parnell

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please support Governor Parnell's budget for Education and Health and Human Services

Gari Bystedt
Fairbanks, Alaska

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ben Endres <benendres@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:32 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Public Safety Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

I'm writing to ask you to support the Governor's public safety budget. In this day of increased domestic violence, school violence, and drug crimes, it is not the time cut public safety. Alaska State Troopers are spread very thin already. Many communities do not even receive regular patrols by troopers. The citizens of Alaska deserve better. Please support the Governor's public safety budget.

Thank you.

Ben Endres
PO Box 557
Glennallen, AK 99588

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Nyia Charest <nyiacharest@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:19 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Honorable Alan Austerman,

It is more viable to allocate funds to Behavioral Health Services than spend \$31,000 per incarcerated person per year. It is imperative that we focus our spending on preventative measures than continue to experience the consequences of what happens when people "fall through the cracks" (i.e. Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook).

Thank you,
Nyia Charest, LCSW

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Vickie McCubbin <mcc@alaskalife.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:32 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Funding for Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors collaborative

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman,

My name is Vickie McCubbin.

I am writing to all members of the Finance Committee to ask them to fully fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors collaborative at the \$300,000 level. Though you likely do not remember me, or were not on this committee in the past, I have testified on this matter before. It is personally important to me. I have two brothers with Traumatic Brain Injury. Like many other Alaskans with TBI, they acquired their injuries through work related accidents. Their injuries occurred 21 and nearly 7 years ago. Neither of them are able to work and one of them had to travel to the lower 48 for rehab services. Sadly, Alaska does not have facilities to support people with TBI on their road to recovery. They rely on me for assistance with medical appointments, medication reminders, and finances. I am not complaining; they help me in my garden and with other things around the house. We have grown close, but none of our lives have ever been the same. And our family's story is not unique. Alaska has one of the highest rates of TBI in the nation. We have the highest number of veterans per capita of any state and many of these veterans are returning from wars, many of them with mild to serious brain injuries. Fortunately, my husband and I have been able to help my brothers, but at times it has been a difficult learning process and at times I slogged my way through, not knowing how best to help. I know I spent many wasted hours trying to find my way through social service agencies, medical facilities, and government agencies in order to help them.

Thank you for reading my family's story. Please help other Alaskan families by providing full funding. Help them, so through case management families and support services can be better linked, families can have a better understanding of TBI and they can better help the injured individual, so that money can be saved through fewer emergency room visits, so behavior and relearning opportunities of disabled individuals can be better supported and they can fulfill their best potential as Alaskans, hopefully returning to the work force.

I understand you have difficult decisions to make when looking at the budget. I appreciate your efforts in the task you have before you.

Thank you again for considering this important program.

Sincerely,
Vickie McCubbin
mcc@alaskalife.net
District 24, Anchorage, AK

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Carrie Beeman <kcbeeman@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:04 PM
Subject: Restore Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers Funding
Attachments: Carrie Beeman PAT & BB 2013.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Carrie Beeman
PO Box 808

Tok, AK 99780
(907) 883-8080

March 5, 2013

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

As a resident of Alaska and a mom, I am writing to ask for you to restore the Governor's funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers in HB65, FY 2014.

I received visits home visit thought the Tok RurAL CAP PAT program until my daughters transitioned into Tok Head Start. I enjoyed these bimonthly times to really focus on my daughters. The Home Visitor brought toys, puzzles, arts & crafts, play dough, books, ETC. and loved me getting down on the floor to play with them. She usually left us with a project or activity to in-between times. There were also the monthly groups socials where I got see my girls interact with other children and I got to meet other parents of young children.

Both of my daughters also loved getting books in the mail each month through the Imagination Library. The first book they received was the Little Engine That Could and the last one was about kindergarten. The biggest gift our family had received from the having these books are the love of reading. In fact, both of my girl's teams came in 1st place in the Alaska Gateway School District's Battle of the books: Hannah for 3rd grade and Holly for kindergarten.

My daughter Holly has been diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis. Speech and language delays have also been identified in approximately 68% of preschool children with this genetic disorder. I believe that Holly is not experienced any learning delays in part because of her access to quality early childhood programs she has had access to here in Tok. Please restore the Governor's funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.

Sincerely,

Carrie Beeman

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Deb Ward <ward_deb@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:01 PM
Subject: Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear State Legislators:

I am concerned that the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended an \$8.3 million reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. As a school psychologist for the Anchorage School District, I have worked in the field of mental health for almost 30 years. I can assure you that mental health needs have increased significantly over time, in both the student and adult populations. I see individuals in need of support on a daily basis in my work.

Cutting funding for community-based services including mental health treatment, substance abuse and detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbance, suicide prevention, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault and prevention/early intervention programs will have a significant and negative impact on the well-being of our communities. Prevention and intervention services in the field of behavioral health are already underfunded relative to the need for support. Community safety and quality of life for all Alaska residents is impacted when individuals with serious mental health issues are unable to access the services they require.

Behavioral Health Services support keeps people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities, close to family and friends. Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often, increasing the cost of health care. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to help all Alaskans live meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money. A reduction in funds now will end up costing more in the long-term.

Sincerely,

Deborah Ward, Ed.S., NCSP,

School Psychologist

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Judy <judyrae427@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:48 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Do NOT cut behavioral health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I have been a behavioral health nurse at a hospital here in Alaska since I arrived 7+ years ago. I have had patients from all over the state. I have had to point out to the insurance companies that we have to do more work inpatient as the patient would have no options once they got home to get the therapy that was needed.

The strain on families and communities for behavioral health issues is enormous and we as a society will pick up much more financially than what your proposed cuts would do. As a very wealthy state (and YES we are) it is unconscionable to not have these services available. Seriously! If there is ANY thought about giving oil companies billions, it is YOUR duty to give it first to the vulnerable citizens of the state who really need it and not some worldwide corporation.

Please do your duty as representatives of the people of Alaska (note that I said people and not corporations).

Sincerely,

Judy Engh, RN

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Eileen Heaston <heastone@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:45 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Please do not cut funds to Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello,

I hope you will reconsider the proposed \$8.3 million in cuts to Behavioral Health Services. As a Social Worker who has worked in an institutional like setting and in the community, it is obvious the importance the programs provide to keep individuals in a more familiar, less restrictive setting. The cost to provide supports in the community is less expensive than in an institutional setting such as a nursing home or hospital. Hospitalization is not a long term solution and most larger skilled nursing facilities do not have adequately trained staff to meet the psychological and emotional needs of people with mental illness; therefore, these individuals cycle through hospitals and API at a greater cost financially to the State and the individual possibly exacerbating the illness.

I recently visited with a woman who had lost her son to suicide more than 5 years ago. To this day she mourns the loss of his life and agonized over what could have been done to prevent it. Community supports not only save money, but help prevent the loss of life.

Today I met with a young mother of 2 who is battling severe depression and anxiety. She is working with a local mental health agency in the Mat-Su Valley. If the services were not available, it is possible she would not be able to care for her children thus bringing in OCS involvement and disrupting the family unit. This would greatly impact her small children as well as put an added strain on already overwhelmed child protection department.

It is a shame in the wake of the Newtown shooting and the increased discussion Nationally about access to mental health services that theses cuts have even been proposed. Please consider the enormous negative impact these cuts will have on our community.

Thank you for your time,

Eileen Heaston, LCSW

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Patty Mcloughlin <patty99501@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral health bill

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Alan,

It is a terrible mistake, leading to shortsighted savings with huge long term effects, to cut the behavioral health and mental herb budget. I don't need to elaborate on prevention and early intervention, it is understood by anyone who knows "a stitch in time saves nine". As a nurse practitioner working with teen addicts, I know first hand that the money spent on these children is worth it's weight in gold, cutting down on the myriad of burdens to the society and state as these young people become functioning citizens. Do not cut the budget. It will only shift costs and possibly irreversibly damage lives in the process.

Thanks. Patricia McLoughlin, ANP

Sent from iPhone. Please excuse typing errors.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Nicki Shelton <nicshelt9@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:33 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Parents as Teachers funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Co-Chair Austerman,

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today, but it is difficult to convey in 2 minutes how important Parents as Teachers is to Alaskan families with small children under school age.

I was lucky enough to be hired to be the first parent educator when Hoonah began the first Alaskan Parents as Teachers in 1995. It has now been implemented around the state because it is effective! I am currently a National Trainer for Parents as Teachers, and I periodically train new parent educators from across the state.

Parents as Teachers is a **voluntary** home-visiting program for families with children from birth to kindergarten entry. Local residents are trained as parent educators. I have observed phenomenal visits done in Yupik and Tlingit languages with parents who speak those languages at home.

Why Parents as Teachers?....**Because it works for Alaskan families!** The greatest benefits I have seen around the state are:

- **Increased school readiness**
- **Resolving developmental and language delays prior to Kindergarten**
- **Building family strengths for supporting brain development at home**

All parents want their children to be successful in school. To enter Kindergarten with the "school readiness skills" for success requires experience during the critical brain development of the first 3 years of life. Parents as Teachers shows families how to provide those experiences with specific parent-child activities that are learned during personal visits. Families continue to practice the activities in the intervals between visits so the skills become permanent learning.

Studies show that children in Parent as Teachers programs are less likely to need Special Education once they enter school. Parent educators conduct consistent screening of developmental skills in young children. Both parents and parent educators observe children's skills on every visit, and weaker areas will be addressed during each subsequent visit. Without Parents as Teachers, many children do not receive developmental screenings until they enter Head Start or Kindergarten. Much critical brain development may have been missed by that time. Of course, villages and smaller communities are critically in need, since local screening is usually not available until Child Find programs after age 3.

Parents as Teachers is a Win-Win program. It is a "strengths model" which stresses that parents are the experts of their children, and that **the parents** will determine the specific goals for their family. Parent educators are a resource who offer research-based strategies and options. The parents choose which options are appropriate for their family and circumstances.

Parents as Teachers is based in valid and reliable research and has been named one of the 9 most effective evidence-based home visiting programs eligible for Federal funding through the Federal Home Visiting Initiative. Parents as Teachers National Office received one of the highly coveted "i3 grants," Investing in Innovation, from the US Department of Education to fund tribal grants to provide Parents as Teachers services. Alaska received funding for 2 tribal sites. It is a national model, but a local program which meets the specific needs of the local families.

The No Child Left Behind legislation focused attention on student achievement. At the beginning of the school year, each Alaskan kindergarten teacher assesses every child's skills using the Developmental Profile. The profile includes physical and motor development; approaches to learning; social and emotional development; cognition and general knowledge; as well as communication, language and literacy. **Parents as Teachers children will have skills in all the areas if they have participated in consistent personal visits.** The research indicates two years of Parent as Teachers services is the minimum length for positive child outcomes.

Alaska still has communities with no services for children under Head Start and no access to books for young children. Rather than reducing funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings, the resources **should be increased** to provide additional Parents as Teachers programs.

I strongly urge the House Finance Committee to **pass HB65** with full funding for the Parents as Teachers funding in the Governor's budget. Thank you for accepting testimony on this most important issue.

Sincerely,

Nicki Shelton
PO Box 101
Hoonah, AK 99829

(907) 945-3380

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Julie Decker <juliedecker@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:24 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Dennis Egan
Cc: 'Decker, Julie'
Subject: Support for commercial fishing related budget items
Attachments: Support for funds in ADFG ASMI budgets 030513.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please see the attached letter.

Thank you for consideration,

Julie Decker

P.O. Box 2138

Wrangell, AK 99929

Cell: 907-305-0586

Fax: 907-874-3110

juliedecker@gci.net

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: donna mills <dwanna420@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:23 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: \$8.3 MILLION REDUCTION TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Alan,

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * **mental health treatment**
 - * **substance abuse treatment**
 - * **detox services**
 - * **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
 - * **supported housing**
 - * **peer support services**
 - * **suicide prevention**
 - * **tribal behavioral health services**
 - * **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
 - * **parent and peer navigation**
 - * **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
 - * **prevention and early intervention**
 - * **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**
- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
 - Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
 - Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
 - By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
 - Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

First, I want to say that people whom are using and benefitting from the services are already hurting in one way or another. Besides with all that has gone on in our country the last 10 plus years, there is an even bigger need for the services. There are so many more people, families and children needing these services than ever before in this country. For many it could just temporary and some life long, but if you cut these services the temporary ones will find themselves lost. I believe that if these people don't have support there will be much more crime, abuse, suicides and even homicides.

I personally have used some of these services and without them I can't imagine what would be. I also have a 21 year old son that utilizes some of the services and without them his chances of jail and or suicide are extremely high. The youth is the future of the country!! Please think long and hard before you make your decisions for the cuts. I know our country is in hard times and many will be taking cuts in one way or another, myself included. But with these cuts they will just be all that much more hard, in fact possibly devastated for some!!

Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.

You can tell a lot from a person, a society, a nation, by how it treats the weak and the helpless: Agree or Disagree?

Thank you
Sincerely
Donna M Mills

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Carrie Macaulay <amac@acsalaska.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:09 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker; Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sean.Parnell@alaska.gov
Subject: BSA funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello,

I attended the Finance Committee hearing today and was signed up to testify regarding education funding, however, time ran out before my name was called to speak, and I was not able to return tonight at 6 p.m. I would like to submit my comments in writing instead. Thank you for your time.

Alaska is the wealthiest state in the nation, yet the funding for the BSA has remained flat since 2009. However, the needs in our schools have continued to grow more complex...from children with severe learning disabilities and special needs, to kids with fragile medical conditions, to students who are living in dysfunctional and even dangerous home environments. Classroom sizes continue to increase, yet our teachers are being asked to serve as counselors, nurses, social workers, behavioral specialists and custodians, all while meeting increasingly higher performance standards. Every year our public schools are being asked to do more with less. The Juneau School District is anticipating cutting 1.7 million from their budget this next fiscal year, following a 4.7 million cut last year.

For my own children, this 1.7 million dollar cut means more students in their classes, so they'll receive less individual attention from their teachers. It means that if a student gets sick in class when there is no nurse on site, the teacher will have to disrupt her lessons to assist that ill child. It means fewer paraeducators in the classrooms, so special needs students will not receive all of the services they are entitled to, placing more demands on the classroom teacher. It means that my 4th grader won't get to experience Sea Week although we have access to the most amazing outdoor science lab right here in our city. It means my middle schooler won't get to try a new sport or activity because school activity funding will be cut. It means my high schooler won't be able to get help with his college applications because of cuts to the counseling program.

My children are among the more fortunate in the state. They do not have a serious medical condition, they are not living in poverty, they aren't victims of domestic violence or substance abuse, and they do not have severe learning disabilities. But there are thousands of children in our state who are dealing with these issues every day, and the lack of consistent funding hurts those kids the most...those without a voice. Please consider fully funding the BSA so our state can meet the needs of all of our children...our future.

Thank you for your time.

Carrie Macaulay

Juneau

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: gretchen <gilutsik@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:04 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Funding cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget!!

Cuts will only hurt Alaskan families and create more debt for the patient, the provider and our state!!

Sincerely,
Gretchen Ilutsik

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Peggy <chickadee@alaska.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:53 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Operating Budget - Testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

It seems that the legislature has already spent an inordinate amount of time discussing (and passing) absurd and unconstitutional laws to protect all their poor, vulnerable, gun-toting constituents. Despite this insanity, some agree with the NRA and verbally support the need for a better mental health system to curb gun violence. Our current mental health system is poor and many people go without any services now while those that receive some support get it only intermittently and with virtually no continuity. Because there are so few mental health clinicians available, people seldom see the same professional for any extended period of time. It is very difficult for clinicians to accurately assess whether or not a patient is “doing better” on a certain medication regimen if they did not see the patient prior to the initiation of the regimen.

The proposed budget contains serious reductions in funding for mental health services. There are also significant cuts to pre-K and early education programs that are the most cost effective method of giving children a boost to be successful in school and better able to prosper in a complex and stressful society. Cuts in the educational programs will result in an increased need for mental health and detention services in the future. The system today cannot meet the current needs and certainly will not be able to handle an increased need. Please look at the long term consequences of your decisions and find a way to maintain and improve our current level of services in Health and Social Services.

Peggy O’Neal

Fairbanks

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Fr. John Beyers <pbandj@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:24 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please put back the \$8.3 million dollars back into the Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Because of the LAMB,
Fr. John Beyers, MDiv.
Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Joni Stamm <joni.stamm@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:00 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: So no to cuts targeting Alaska's most vulnerable

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am a UAA student who is currently working towards my Master's in Social Work. I also work with children and youth who are severely emotionally disturbed. Each day I go to work knowing that for many of the youth I work with, that without having access to services, their dreams of gaining the skills they need to be successful in life, would be severely limited.

With the new proposed cuts regarding behavioral health services for Alaska, I am highly concerned at what the result will be and the lives the cuts are "gambling" with. What will Alaska's communities look like with reduced services and what is the hope for those who will no longer have the services that they need? I am a firm believer in people taking responsibility for themselves, in "pulling themselves up by their bootstraps," on striving towards the "American dream." I do however, also recognize that due to difficulties, this is more difficult for some. Hence, I am also a firm believer that for those of us who are able and capable of initiating or aiding in providing support to others, whether it be financially or directly, that this is our ethical responsibility.

I know these are tough times with hard decisions to be made.

Please continue to support Alaska's most vulnerable by ensuring that they receive the services they need to have a good quality of life.

Respectfully,
Joni Stamm

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Richard Tews <Richard_Tews@ykhc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:54 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Rose Domnick
Subject: Reduced funding for Behavioral Health Programs.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5/2013

Bethel, Alaska

TO: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thank you for considering my testimony. It is a pleasure to share my concerns for continued funding for programs such as the Bethel Sobering Center.

My name is Richard Tews. I am Program Manager for the Bethel Sobering Center. Two years ago I was hired to design and implement the Sobering Center Program. I've seen it grow from a concept and a building to a program with professional staff providing 24/7 care of intoxicated individuals.

The Sobering Center Program is a joint effort with the Bethel Police Department and the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation. The concept was three-fold: to relieve the chaos and congestion in the Regional Hospital Emergency Department, reduce the Protective Custody census in the already over-crowded Yukon Kuskokwim Correctional Center and to prevent deaths and injuries to a vulnerable segment of the community.

The Program has been successful in accomplishing those goals:

The alcohol related census at the Emergency Department is reduced by 60%,

The Correctional Center Protective Custody census is reduced 84% and

150 sleep-off services are provided each month.

From my personal view, the program is important on several levels:

Safety- the clients we serve are kept safe from the weather and the victimization.

Community safety- intoxicated people are uncomfortable for the public. Inebriated people are often involved in confrontations and illegal activities that they would not normally commit.

Engagement and education- we have a unique opportunity to engage those that are using alcohol at high risk levels in a conversation about those risks and educate them on ways to lessen those risks.

From a pragmatic view the program is a cost savings to the community and state.

Reducing the alcohol related census in the Emergency Department frees providers and staff to treat patients more quickly and with greater satisfaction- both for the patient and staff.

Reducing the Protective Custody census in the Correctional Center reduces the needs for more staffing.

Preventative care and education delivered directly to those that are vulnerable.

Victimization and exposure are costly to mend. The Sobering Center is a preventative measure that goes beyond the “drunk tank” model by helping people see that they have a choice in how they live. Recent studies of the SBIRT protocols the Sobering Center utilizes show that for every dollar invested in the program, there are four dollars in return in more effective health achieved.

Finally, the Sobering Center program is a major shift in thinking for our community. Punishing publically intoxicated people hasn’t worked. We’ve realized that these are our friends and family and we don’t want to throw them away by sending them to jail. Providing a safe and respectful alternative is the first step in caring for a difficult and vulnerable segment of our community.

I think our community has taken the next step by establishing the Bethel Homeless Coalition. We conducted our first Point in Time survey. Our January survey identified 100 individuals in our community that were homeless or in imperiled housing.

I urge you to continue funding Behavioral Health programs such as the Sobering Center. These programs make our communities safer and our citizens healthier.

Thank you for your considerations.

Richard Tews

Program Manager

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation

Richard (Rusty) Tews

YKHC Sobering Center Manager

Office hours: Monday through Friday 9am-5pm

Cell 907 545 5811

Office 907 543 6831

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Trevor Storrs <trevor@snowgod.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:23 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Behavioral Health Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

It is extremely alarming to see \$8.3 million in potential cuts to Behavioral Health services. Alaska is continually struggling with some of the highest statistics in the nation regarding suicide, substance abuse and mental illness. Without a true investment in these issues, Alaska will continue to see this trend increasing and our state disintegrate.

These services help ensure these individuals receive the support need to remain at home and in their community. Without these supports, these individuals find themselves living on the streets and ultimately costing our state more. The level of investment being asked of the state is small compared to the return on the dollar.

I strongly encourage you to re-examine your suggested cuts and to truly invest in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Trevor Storrs

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Judy Farnham <cranberry@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:46 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Social Services 20% cut
Attachments: To all concerned -State of Alaska.docx

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please read attachment.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Steven Fields <feagles@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: \$8.3 million reduction to CRITICAL Behavioral Health Services
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you all with regards to the proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services.

I was introduced to the behavioral health field in September 2007 when started work at Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. (JAMHI) in an administrative support capacity.

JAMHI is a NON-profit state designated community behavioral health center in Juneau. All clients are accepted for services regardless of ability to pay for services.

I served as the Chief Operations Officer (COO) for JAMHI until Feb. 1st. 2013. I have moved to Anchorage and am now not in the behavioral health field.

During the five and a half years that I spent at JAMHI, a gained intimate knowledge and firsthand experience with regards to vulnerability and needs of the population that we serve.

The **reality** of the situation is that the need for behavioral health services has not ever been greater.

From 2007 to 2012 JAMHI had an increase of 40% with regards to the number of clients served per year.

Please note that from the Census completed for 2010 documented that there was only a 1.8% increase in population from the Census conducted in 2000.

With a population increase of only 1.8% as compared to a client count increase of 40%, it is very clear that the need for services is justified.

JAMHI has only been able to successfully serve this rapid growing population due to having stable funding sources at its disposal. A part of JAMHI's stable funding sources is the state grant.

The grant that would be slashed as part of this reduction is absolutely critical at its current amount for JAMHI to continually serving the ever growing population needs. Any significant decrease of this funding would severely harm JAMHI's ability to continue to provide services. This funding is even more **critical** as it relates to the governor's decision not to expand Medicaid.

Please see the following link: <http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/20130228/parnell-refuses-federal-money-expand-medicaid-alaska>.

If this state grant amount is reduced, the following situations **WILL** happen and the costs for these situations **WILL** increase:

- Increased emergency room visits for mental health reasons
- Increased inpatient hospital commitments (both voluntary and involuntary)
- Increased crime/incarceration of clients suffering from mental health symptoms
- Increased homelessness
- Increased domestic violence incidents

These are issues that JAMHI has been successful in preventing and reducing from happening through the provision of services.

In my opinion, these new costs that will be created will exceed the \$8.3 million that is being cut.

The costs would be realized in other areas such law enforcement, hospital services, corrections, judicial system, etc.

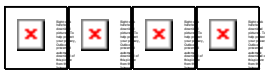
Currently, JAMHI is involved in is the APIC program (reintegration of inmates into society through mental health services) with the State of Alaska and with the Therapeutic Court (Mental Health Court) in Juneau which is a jail diversion program. If you know about these programs or would take the time to look at them, you all will be able to realize the importance of the services that JAMHI is providing and that these services would be reduced.

I implore all of you to please take into consideration my enclosed "testimony" and to make the RIGHT decision not to cut behavioral health services.

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Steven Fields



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Karen Stout <quality.assurance@voaak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:23 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services- Funding
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. It is my strong belief that this would have an extremely negative impact for all Alaskan's by ultimately lessening of services available to them. Please take the following into consideration before any reduction in funding programs and services that are currently providing these vital services. This doesn't just affect one area in Alaska, as the effects would be across Alaska as a whole. Thank-you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.¹

Sincerely,

Karen Stout, CPC

Volunteers of America

Director of Compliance

quality.assurance@voaak.org

(907) 279-9683

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ernie Manzie <erniemanzie@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:10 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Grants

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am writing with concerns regarding the proposal by the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee to cut 8.3 million dollars from behavioral health grants.

I have had the opportunity in my 30+ years in Alaska to have been a teacher, principal, district superintendent and currently I work for Family Centered Services of Alaska as the Director of Educational Programs at the residential psychiatric treatment center in Fairbanks. I also am a member of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and Special Education. During my years of service in Alaska I have seen firsthand the benefit that quality behavioral health programs have made in the lives of children. I believe this proposed cut will have significant negative effects on individuals who receive the direct services and their family. There will also undoubtedly be negative effects felt throughout communities in Alaska.

Organizations that address behavioral health concerns in this state have had flat or decreased funding over the past several years. This is due to both an increase in the number of individuals needing services and the ever increasing demands from the federal level. Simply put these organizations have continued to do more with less

If these cuts do take effect many programs that are able to serve individuals in their community will be cut. Without community supports, people with various disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care such as jail, psychiatric institutions and nursing homes. In addition without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care again leading to increased costs. Behavioral health services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-

occurring disorders at home and in their communities close to family and friends. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives at the same time we are saving money.

I appreciate your assistance in helping to reinstate the proposed cuts into the house budget.

Sincerely

Ernie Manzie, Director of Educational Services

Family Centered Services of Alaska

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kathy O'Rear <clerk@ci.petersburg.ak.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:07 PM
To: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Lyman Hoffman
Cc: 'Ray Matiashowski'
Subject: House Subcommittee Proposed FY14 ADFG Budget
Attachments: House Subcommittee Proposed FY14 ADFG Budget.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

Kathy O'Rear, MMC

Clerk

Petersburg Borough

907-772-4519 ext 23



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Vicki Blankenship <vicki.blank00@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:01 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please No Cuts to Behavioral Health Grants

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am emailing you in regard to my concerns on the \$8.3 million recommended cuts to behavioral health grants proposed by the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee.

I have worked in the mental health field for over 25 years in Alaska. I truly believe this cut would result in harm to children and families. In the long run, it will result in higher costs to the citizens of Alaska in many ways and through many other venues.

As you may know, grant funding for many providers has remained flat or decreased over the last decade. Behavioral health organizations have been struggling financially for some time. This in large part is due to the increase in the need for services occurring, simply from the population growth in the State and the continuing increase in Federal and State oversight demands that have required the redirection of provider resources. A cut this large would certainly affect the providers and the children and families in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter. I hope you will consider not making any cuts to the house budget for behavioral health grants.

-Vicki Blankenship

Vicki.blank00@gmail.com

907-479-9511

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Marita Waddell <maritawaddell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:39 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: advocacy.coordinator@mhtrust.org; cpedone@accessalaska.org
Subject: Proposed \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Sir:

I ask that you consider the potentially negative consequences of the proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services.

When a citizen of our community faces Behavioral Health issues; often the loss of place, as a contributing member, is the greater threat to recovery than the mental health issues themselves. When familiar and societal support is withheld, in effect a silent and unacknowledged shunning takes place. The essential human need for kinship is forsworn.

Kinship, place, contribution, accountability, self-sufficiency, and a sense of well being within the community, these are the structures that build mental wellness.

Many Alaskans, myself included, are stuck in the "mental health care system", because rehabilitation (training, coaching, Assistive Technology, and other accommodations that make it possible to reclaim self-sufficiency through employment) are not available, so rather than contributing, we place a further drain on the funds available for services.

May kindness guide your decisions. Please support maintaining the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health Social Services budget.

Sincerely,

Marita Waddell
maritawaddell@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Judith Jessen <jsjessen2@alaska.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:38 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Mental Health Cuts
Attachments: Letter to my Representatives.docx
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To my state representatives,

Attached is a letter outlining my concerns about the proposed cut to critical mental health funding that undermines the Alaskan spirit, undermines Alaskan Communities, and devalues vulnerable Alaskans. Thank you for taking the time to read and to hear my concerns. I apologize that I was unable to make the local commentary due to commitments at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

Sincerely,
Judith Jessen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: pamel Kennedy <pkennedy546@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:27 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please do not cut budgets in the Department of Health and Social Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget

Statewide Community based behavioral health services are the low-cost – high-value option

Current Medicaid rates and grant levels are not enough to maintain current levels of service, much less enough to expand to fit the need particularly with ever increasing administrative requirements.

Community mental health

-reduces the number of “frequent flyers” who cycle in and out of jail or inpatient psychiatric care such as API

-Assists people in achieving RECOVERY-reconnecting with families, staying in school, gaining employment, community involvement, living lives of purpose

Therefore, support community behavioral health-it is funding well spent.

Sincerely, Pamela

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Gloria Benson <gbenson@ytttribe.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:13 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Mental Health Services in jeopardy?

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Mr. Austerman,

Thank you for being our representative. We met in Yakutat when you came by in December we sat down and visited at our local coffee house. I hope you still remember. We discussed our radio station implementation and funding.

Three weeks ago I went to your office as part of the Alaska Food Coalition organization. We continue to be concerned about high prices of food the way we receive our food along with food security issues for small communities. In our last Tsunami warning we realized we do not have enough food to last more than 2-3 days maximum.

Recently it has come to my attention that **8.3 million** for the State of Alaska could be compromised in Behavioral Health Services. The reason for my concern in this area is for five years now I have been the project coordinator for a SAMHSA grant through the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. We do our best to work in our community through a coalition and through a memorandum of agreement to have a Masters Level mental health specialist come to our community. I recently finished the Rural Human Service program through UAF which focuses on improving the quality of service to small rural communities. I along with 13 other students from rural areas in Alaska attended these classes leaving our community for two weeks at a time over 24 months. We learned about so many issues facing rural Alaska including addictions, mental health and recovery. These areas also included: Fairbanks, Juneau, and Sitka.

We know that *without the services of Behavioral health* we will be lacking support in :

- Mental Health disorders, substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Yakutat and all of Alaska desperately need their services. Please speak up for us during the next two days of legislative sessions.

Thank you!!

Gloria A. Benson

Project Coordinator

Yakutat Healthy Community Coalition YTT

BBBS Community Contact

Akeela CPO

Yakutat, Alaska 99689

907-784-3368

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary C. Burtness <mary.burtness@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:00 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: farm to school

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

We have had a farm to school program at Hunter Elementary here in Fairbanks, Alaska for the last 6 years. It is amazing to see the change in diet of many children and families due to our small garden. It has also been a great source for "in school field trips" and learning where our food comes from. It is a worthwhile project that probably reaps more benefits than the aid to large agricultural corporations in terms of bang for your buck.

It is a long term investment in the health and well being of our nation.

Please do not cut the funding.

--

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

Mary C. Burtness
Preschool Special Education
Hunter Elementary School
Fairbanks, Alaska
(907) 978-1824 (cell while on sabbatical)
456-5775 ext 149

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Tari Stage-Harvey <stageharvey@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:00 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: HB 65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thank you all for putting in long days especially with the amazing weather. I was not able to testify today, but wanted to speak in favor of increasing the Student Base Allocation, Pre-K funding, and restoring behavioral health funding. Thank you for serving the public and wrestling with many difficult decisions.

I am Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church and parent speaking to increase the Base Student Allocation, funding for Pre-K programs and restored funding for behavioral health. Regular increases in BSA allow schools to plan for the future without the crisis and tension every spring. We have lost some good teachers because they are tired of the uncertainty. Public education is the foundation of our democracy. It is still one of the few places where people from a wide mix of backgrounds gather together to learn together.

I encourage funding of Pre-K programs. In Michigan, where we moved from many years ago and a state that was in great financial trauma, they still had the wisdom to recognize that early preschool programs from 6 months to 4 years old paid off in the long run by reducing prison populations and drop out rates. I saw as a pastor what a huge impact it had on entire families, as little ones learned their parents also received in home visits.

I also want to speak to restoring the funding for behavioral health. There are so many mentally ill people looking for services and right now when people show up at the church who are severely mentally ill I can contact NAMI and make sure they get the help they need. If you cut services to assist the mentally ill, then I can guarantee that you will need to increase funding for emergency rooms and prisons.

I thank you for your consideration and the tough job that you have ahead of you, but when Jesus says to care for the least of these, children and people with a mental illness should be at the top of the list.

Peace
Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Velvet Ivers <velveti@yakutatschools.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:57 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Representative.Bill.Stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Representative.Tammie.Wilson@ak.leg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker
Subject: SBA for Rural Schools
Attachments: YSD letter.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To the Honorable Alaska State Representatives,

Attached you will find my letter, addressing Rural School issues.

Thank you for your consideration,

Velvet Ivers
YSD 4th/5th grade

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Leon Hickok <Hickok@alaska.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:56 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Fund Education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

It's time to put education at the top of the list. That is what built America and it can do it again if we just put the resources into improving the system.

Please pass the education funding increase.

Leon Hickok

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jeanne Kitayama <jkitayama@hbsd.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: early childhood support on HB65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

My name is Jeanne Kitayama. I am speaking as an elementary grade teacher and director of the Children's Reading Foundation of Haines in support of funding for Best Beginnings, Parents As Teachers, and pre-school programs.

My point today is to draw your attention to research that shows that investing in early childhood education is a fiscally responsible way to reduce costs and create economic growth. Just before this teleconference I was on the internet and you'd be surprised to see how very much research there is that points to investment in early childhood education as having the greatest return on human capital – the dividends are impressive.

Many people are turning to James Heckman a Professor of Economics at The University of Chicago, a Nobel Memorial Prize winner in Economics, and an expert in the economics of human development. His groundbreaking work shows that early childhood development heavily influences health, economic and social outcomes for individuals and society. It's a matter of foresight, planning for the future.

Brain development is at a steep upward incline during the first 4 years of life, then levels off quite dramatically to a much more gradual growth. 85% of children's core brain structure is developed by the age of 4. The brain charts align that earliest is prime. These are the prime years to build children's literate and social skills.

These are early childhood, pre-reading skills – talking, singing, reading, with children to expand their vocabularies and social skills. These are the skills they need so that by the time they enter kindergarten they are ready and eager to learn.

I urge you to use *your* foresight to support early childhood education for a healthy future for all of us. Thank you.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kerry Turnbow <kturnbow@accessalaska.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Funding needs.....

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing to advocate for the ratification of three specific funding sources:

1. \$300,000 Funding for the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program: As the director of the program here at Access Alaska, I have personally observed how our case management program has impacted approximately 100 Alaskans diagnosed with an acquired or traumatic brain injury. The funding we have received has been utilized to support these individuals to live productive and independent lives which saves the state several thousands of dollars spent in more expensive institutional settings. Fully funding the program will allow for much broader expansion of the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program thus serving more Alaskans diagnosed with TABIs.

2. \$100,000 for IL rural outreach: Having been personally involved in Access Alaska's work in the Barrow region and other regions across the state, I have seen the vast need that exists for IL services. Please keep the \$100,000 in the budget to support rural outreach for IL service expansion into very needy remote areas across the state of Alaska.

3. \$8.3 million proposed cuts to the Division of Behavioral Health budget: Having worked in the mental health field for many years in Alaska, I have seen firsthand the need for mental health supportive services in a wide variety of context. From outpatient to residential care which includes substance abuse treatment, the need for mental health services is well documented. Taking \$8.3 million from the budget will only exasperate the cost of covering mental health services for the population that needs them the most: low income families and individuals. Speaking from the standpoint of Access Alaska's Wellness Program (our mental health case management program) receiving DBH funding allows us to provide case management to people coming out of programs like: API and the Anchorage Mental Health Court to help folks with severe mental health diagnosis to live outside of institutions that typically have significantly higher costs.

I trust the committee, upon hearing public testimony and reading all the emails you receive, will consider the needs of vulnerable Alaskans and do what is the morally right thing by keeping the original funding proposals in place. Keeping the needed funding sources in place will insure that programs in place can continue and new programs can be expanded and/or developed assisting our most precious state resource: people.

Sincerely,

Kerry L. Turnbow, D. Min.

Director of Operations



121 West Fireweed, Suite 105

Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2043

907.248.4777 Fax:907.248.0639

Access Alaska is Moving To Its New Location on March 25, 2013

1217 East 10th Ave

Anchorage AK 99501

Corner of 10th and LaTouche

(the former Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: j r <icecrystal71@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:28 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral health servies

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing to urge you to vote AGAINST the reduction to behavioral health services.

Fairbanks needs MORE services especially for those who are injured in accidents causing Traumatic Brain Injury – there are very few resources here in Fairbanks available to families.

Peter and I had just gotten engaged, had not told anyone yet – and then Peter was driving home to his children February 3, 2011, he lost control of his truck on the icy roads. His truck rolled down the embankment – the ensuing scramble of contacting people and having Peter medevaced to Anchorage, not knowing if he would survive and the trauma that causes family members – The four months he spent in Anchorage trying to survive and then being released back to Fairbanks with Nothing, no help, no referral to doctors, no help what so ever. . I called and told doctors of Peters Traumatic Brain Injury and no one would help us, not even to monitor his progress especially since he had children. Finally out of desperation, I called Fairbanks memorial Hospital and talked to their emergency room social worker to even get ANY doctor to take Peter on as a client, she finally had a referral to Tanana valley clinic.

We connected with ACCESS Alaska for help processing Peter’s disability paperwork for Social Security, but their resources were limited to their knowledge and there was no precedence for a disabled father of two children – there was no help what so ever for families. We attended TBI support group which helps Peter know that he is not alone, although he is the only person with small children. Peter almost lost his children to his ex-wife as before the accident they had 50/50 custody of the children. There was no help. No one should ever have to worry about losing custody of their children because of an accident and the ensuing legal issues along with a very expensive debt because of the accident. Peter is 100% disabled due to the injury, but he is making progress!

Peter and I married 6 months after his accident, his injury is difficult through his aphasia, but he is kind and wonderful – his determination and positive attitude are what is keeping us going through the hard spells. Alaska Center for Children and Adults (ACCA) has a speech therapy clinic that started in 2011 for Adults and they are working with us to provide Peter valuable and much needed therapy that we would not be able to afford otherwise.

This has been traumatic on our family and now that Peter is receiving some of the help he needs to try and recover as much as possible, you are taking away some of the funding that is so richly needed in the interior. There are no resources available here in Fairbanks that help children deal with the stress trauma of having a loved father, unless you have financial resources there is no help.

I urge you to please vote against this, there has to be other ways to cut expenses without taking away the already small resources for families.

I never want another family to come back to Fairbanks the way I brought Peter back and the ongoing stress that having little to no resources or places to turn to for help.

Please don’t take away the funding -

I thank you in advance for looking to other areas to reduce funding

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Crystal Parrilla <Crystal@ayfn.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:11 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services
Attachments: Rep Alan Austerman letter.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Crystal Parrilla

740 Communication Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99503

3/5/2013

Representative Alan Austerman

State Capitol, Room 204

Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Austerman,

As a peer support worker I would like to see the budget remain the same, cutting out \$8.3 million dollars will affect many people within the community. Substance abuse services, supported housing, and mental health services help many people in the community avoid being sent to jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. As a peer navigator I help a lot of people stay stable and find resources within the community to help them become or remain a healthy, contributing member of our Alaskan community.

Acute services cost about 2 – 5 times more to provide to a person than community supports cost. Behavioral Health Services provide community supports which help “level the playing field” for people with mental illness. Community supports also allow a person to recover or feel apart of society which helps promote wellness. When a person feels that they are a part of a bigger group or community they can often times contribute in a healthy and positive way, from volunteering to even getting back into the work force. By promoting people to stay in the community and get well so they can get jobs they can also contribute to the economy creating a stronger economy.

As a youth I needed community supports so that I could become stable and well enough to accomplish getting a job and getting into college so I can someday move up with my job. I have personally used peer support, wrap around services including therapy, case management, and support groups. Without these community supports I would have probably ended up just as a statistic and in acute psychiatric care or worse in jail. I would like to see other youth and adults continue to have access to these supports so that they can succeed and work towards there goals in life as well. I am now a peer support worker and I see a lot of potential in my clients that I work with everyday as they learn to manage their mental illness and work toward their goals becoming a more contributing member of society. Please do not cut the budget for mental health services. These are important and help everyone within the community not just those with mental illness. Thank you for your time and considering my request.

Sincerely,

Crystal Parrilla

Crystal Parrilla

Peer Navigator

Phone: 907-770-4979

Cell: 907-748-5389

Fax: 907-770-4997

crystal@ayfn.org

[YouthMoveAlaska@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/YouthMoveAlaska)

www.facebook.com/YouthMoveAlaska

740 Communications Ave

Anchorage, AK 99503

www.ayfn.org

www.facebook.com/ayfn.org

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: carolyn kinneen <ckinneen@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:09 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman
Subject: farm to schools program support

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi,
The Farm to Schools program is important to me as a mother, an Alaskan and someone who works with the Alaskan Food Supply.
Please reinstate the funding for this programs fourth year. It really impacts local economies, food security for our state and the health of our children -- and the way they view their state.
Thanks!
Carolyn Kinneen

Carolyn Kinneen
1133 M Court Anchorage AK 99501
SnowGlobe LLC
907 227-8422
www.fresh49.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rep. Les Gara
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:06 PM
To: robin allen; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: RE: Trauma Care Fund

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi Robin-

I share your concerns and will try to build the support for those items in the budget. The Republican-led caucus members hold a 9-2 majority on the Finance committee, so thanks for your help convincing Operating Budget Chair [Alan Austerman](#), and majority members [Munoz](#), [Neuman](#), [Thompson](#), [Stolze](#), [Edgmon](#), [Holmes](#) and [T. Wilson](#).

Thanks. Les

P.S. – Here is a [link](#) to my e-news highlighting some problems in the budget, and you’re encouraged, if you’d like, to sign up for our **Legislative E-news** so we can keep you up to date on important legislative issues where your voice may be needed (just reply that you’d like that).

Also, please note that letters to the editor often work better than letters to legislators – as they are read by thousands of voters. If you write a letter to the editor to the Anchorage Daily news, they should go to letters@adn.com, and have a strict 175 word limit.

From: robin allen [mailto:dave_robin1@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: Trauma Care Fund

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that you will please consider the need for funding the State of Alaska Trauma System. As a life long Alaskan, I have seen the vast improvement in the quality and availability of medical care for the injured Alaskan. Our Trauma System has allowed the growth of a standardized system of Trauma care and transportation of the injured Alaskan to highest level of care. Our regional hospitals and clinics have increased their level of education, certification, and training of all staff. The Trauma Care Fund has provided this training and education beginning at the pre-hospital level up to Advanced Trauma Care for physicians and nurses. The Trauma Care Fund has allowed this training to be done on the local level for many of the rural hospitals and clinics. This increases the quality of care for all Alaskans.

The implementation of a Trauma System in the State of Alaska has provided a system by which data can be accurately gathered and analyzed to provide process improvement in all areas of Trauma care. It has been well

established, that when States have Trauma systems in place it improves over all care of the patient, not just in Trauma, but in all areas of care.

The Iditarod is a wonderful piece of medical history for our Great State and an example of the Alaskan "can do" attitude. Please lets continue to move forward and provide the best possible medical care for all Alaskans.

CONTINUE ALL FUNDING FOR THE TRAUMA CARE FUND!!!!

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Robin Allen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Cara Rodgveller <cara.rodgveller@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:55 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; ep.steve.thompson@akleg.gov; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Cara Rodgveller
Subject: Do NOT cut funding for Behavioral and Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am strongly opposed to cutting funds for Behavioral and Health Services. A lack of these support systems put people of all ages at risk for suicide, jail time, and a lower quality of life. Besides affecting individuals, it affects the community negatively by creating a less safe environment, and increases the costs to the state associated with jails, prisons, nursing homes, and mental institutions.

I find it ironic and offensive that the Governor publicly claims he is for suicide prevention in Alaska, yet cuts programs for suicide prevention or programs that reduce suicide, such as substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment.

Cara Rodgveller, Juneau, AK

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Celeste Bennett <Celeste@ayfn.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:55 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Amber Hampton
Subject: \$8.3 million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am a functional member of society today thanks to my community behavioral health supports.

I pay taxes. I do not receive public assistance. I have co-occurring diagnoses that I was told would leave me incapable of recovery. Thanks to my community behavioral health supports (Alaska Youth and Family Network in particular) I am living recovery. I have a happy, healthy family thanks to the help I received from community supports.

I am a domestic violence survivor. I've been diagnosed with Bi-Polar disorder, PTSD, ADD, and Alcoholism. I have been hospitalized twice due to complications arising from these diagnoses. I tried to kill myself in 2007. I couldn't leave my apartment most of the time. If it wasn't for the help I received from my community behavioral health services I might be dead.

It is a travesty that it is even considerable to reduce spending in the area behavioral health.

Thank You,

Celeste L. Bennett

Administrative Coordinator

Alaska Youth and Family Network

Main Office: 907-770-4979

Fax: 907-770-4997

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Thomas Woodward <twoodward@pchsak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:47 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Reduction in general fund for Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Representative Austerman,

I work with many Adult clients who use mental health services at Cottonwood Behavioral Health in Soldotna. I am a Mental Health Clinician but I work with many colleagues who do rehabilitation work with very low income mental health clients. All of the services we provide help keep these clients stable and in recovery mode. Without these services I can tell you from my experience that many clients will end up in jail, the local hospital emergency department, Alaska Psychiatric Institute or more dependent on public assistance.

Because of this I would urge you to reject the recommendation of the Behavioral Health Subcommittee to reduce the general fund for behavioral health by 8,368,800 dollars. Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Woodward, MA - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

Cottonwood Behavioral Health

Peninsula Community Health Services

230 E. Marydale, Suite 2

Soldotna, AK 99669

907-260-3691

fax 907-260-3697

twoodward@pchsak.org

www.pchsak.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Helen Kalk <Helen.Kalk@ccsjuneau.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:47 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: proposed cut to Behavioral Health Budget
Attachments: letter to Rep. Alan Austerman.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please see my attached comments regarding the proposed cuts to the Behavioral Health Budget. Thank you for your attention.
Helen A. Kalk

Helen A. Kalk, Program Director
Child Care and Family Resources
Catholic Community Service
419 6th St.
Juneau, AK 99801
907-463-6183 direct line
907-586-9018 fax
907-463-6180 main line(FRC)
907-790-1829 fax(FRC)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: susan jabal <susanjabal@icloud.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Young children's programs

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing to indicate my preference for restoring funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels.

My 18 month old son is a participant for the Parents as Teachers program and we so appreciate all that this program does for him, our other son, and our family. We are enveloped in individualized support as we struggle with speech impairments and the general challenges of having 2 young children.

In our continued interactions with other families in our community, it is so clear the importance of these early years as the building blocks to our children's future. By providing these types of services early, children and families are set up for the greatest of successes in their future, and they may avoid more costly service needs later.

Please restore the funding to these critical programs, and keep prevention based programs a priority for our children.

Thank you -

Susan Jabal
Juneau, AK
Susanjabal@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jana wallette <archintake@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:27 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: BHS Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am asking for your help to **stop** The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services from recommending an 8.3 million reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These programs are very much needed in our community.

Thanks for your support.

Jana Wallette, Intake Coordinator & UR Specialist

Volunteers of America, ARCH

(907) 689-1501 direct number

(907) 694-3336 main number



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jill Hodges <jill@alaskabraininjury.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: House Finance Testimony
Attachments: March5_JH.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Jill Hodges

1581 Nelchina Street, A#3

Anchorage, AK 99501

March 5, 2013

House Finance Committee Members

Alaska State Legislature

Dear House Finance Committee members:

For the record my name is Jill Hodges. 10 years ago, I earned my Business Degree and moved to Alaska. My family also moved north. Today, my dad and brother work on the North Slope. My mom is a teacher. My sister owns a BBQ business. Another brother is a firefighter. My boyfriend is an arctic engineer.

I was raised with a spirit of “work hard and smart and you can accomplish anything.” I took on that spirit and made myself into a Division 1 athlete, class valedictorian, and student-athlete of the year. Sounds like a pretty balanced kid. Well, little did anyone know that despite my success, I was battling depression, I tortured myself with binge eating and obsessive exercise, and I sometimes had thoughts of killing myself. Mostly I was angry, successful people are supposed to be happy. Finally when I went away to college, I found the courage to seek mental health services, and I learned to respect myself. Four years later, life sent me a phone call. My younger brother was sitting in the hospital in a coma. He had suffered a traumatic brain injury.

I have spent the last eight years immersing myself in TBI best-practice care and services offered across the country. My brother’s injury happened in California where resources exist. The neurosurgeon kept my brother alive and minimized the damage. My mom found a rehabilitation program. We still get a phone call from the case manager. My parents could have gone broke with medical expenses (and drowned in frustration), but the government stepped in temporarily to help keep them on their feet. My brother, the firefighter, has found his

purpose, and I found a career helping others. The TBI knowledge came in handy one year ago when I was a passenger in a car that crashed and I too sustained a mild TBI.

Alaska does not have brain injury services. There have been nearly 15,000 Alaskans that have been hospitalized for TBI in the last 20 years. These families have further insult to injury by having very few, if any, medical, rehabilitation or community supports.

Please recapitalize the trauma care funds (DHSS)

Fully fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program (DHSS)

Fully fund Behavioral Health Services (DHSS)

Fund the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative (DHSS)

Fund the Statewide Independent Living Centers in Alaska (Labor)

Life happens whether we plan for it or not. We cannot have hard working, healthy family units without having a continuum of basic medical, mental health, and community resources. Please fund these programs.

Sincerely,

Jill Hodges

Anchorage, AK

Cc: Representative Austerman

Representative Stoltz

Representative Neuman

Representative Costello

Representative Edgmon

Representative Holmes

Representative Munoz

Representative Thomas

Representative T. Wilson

Representative Gara

Representative Guttenberg

Jill Hodges

Executive Director

Alaska Brain Injury Network

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 140

Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone: (907) 274-2824

Toll Free: (888) 574-2824

Fax: (907) 274-2826

www.alaskabraininjury.net

Check out our new Alaska Brain Injury Network products: <http://www.cafepress.com/alaskabraininjury>

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ian Bauer <Ian@ayfn.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: 8.3 million reduction to behavioral health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

My name is Ian Bauer, and I work for Alaska Youth and Family Network. I am writing you today on behalf of the company I work for. I believe that it would be in your best interest to not cut funding for behavioral health services. We are a pretty amazing community support that actually enables clients to help themselves instead of telling them what they need to do with their lives. We help redirect them ,and help them identify and achieve goals, and because of the approach we take clients are more likely to remain able to help themselves out of the slumps they were born, raised , or put into. I have seen a lot of success from this non-profit organization, and I know it helps a lot of people every year.

Thank You,

Ian Bauer

Alaska Youth and family Network

Phone: 907-770-4979

Fax: 907-770-4997

740 Communications Ave.

Anchorage, AK 99503

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Carol A. Mickelsen <carol.mickelsen@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:09 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Fwd: Farm to School Program

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Carol A. Mickelsen <carol.mickelsen@k12northstar.org>
To: house finance committee <house.finance.committee@akleg.gov>
Sent: Tue, 05 Mar 2013 14:06:16 -0900 (AKST)
Subject: Farm to School Program

To whom it may concern,

During the past several years we have had an amazing school garden here at Hunter. There has been an incredible amount of community buy-in and involvement, more than at any other school, from what we have been told. Students have been able to work in the garden and some have even been paid a small amount. The volunteers who work with the students get paid nothing. As the funding has dried up, Calypso Farms has been able to do less and less to keep the program going. This year families are going to have to **pay a fee** in order for their children to be able to help out in the garden. After all the progress that has been made, this is very sad to see. Our community consists of mostly low-income families, and this is heartbreaking to see such a great addition to our community dry up and become inaccessible or unsustainable because of lack of funding. This is the opposite direction than what we should be going.

In addition, now we hear that the Farm to School Program may get cut. We all know that things are tight. Unfortunately, this is not the fault of the people who are benefiting from these programs. We need more of these types of programs, that help communities and small business, not less. Please do not cut the Farm to School Program!

Our custodian made a suggestion that perhaps instead of paying \$20,000 per oil painting for the White House, that money could go to fund things like this. They could use modern technology and take a good photo instead. I am sure there are other cuts that could be made at the state level as well. \$20,000 may not be much according to the Feds. but to a program like the above-mentioned, it would pay for years of community gardens or a Farm to School Program! Seriously, we need to see some appropriate priorities in our leadership.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

Carol Mickelsen
Behavior Intervention Aide
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen
Behavior Intervention Aide
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen
Behavior Intervention Aide
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen
Behavior Intervention Aide
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen
Behavior Intervention Aide
Hunter Elementary

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: jmpfist@alaska.net
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:09 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Education Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Member Rep. Austerman:

I am very concerned with many issues that are happening in Juneau this session. None of them are more puzzling then how we are spending or not spending our money.

I am very concerned about the cuts that have been proposed for education. It is a given Fact that if you want citizens of Alaska to be able to compete globally you must appropriate the funds necessary to make this happen. "Best Beginnings" is at the Forefront of needing help. Many families do not have the resources to make pre-school Happen for their children. IT is the least this state can do to help our budding citizens Get a head start on their education.

Secondly, K-12 education is in need of help. Please support HS95. the Governor's proposed budget would lead to a third year in a row of educational staff cuts across the state. This is unconscionable, when we as Alaskans have the funds to support our children of this great state. Governor Parnell, additionally, has upped the anti on teacher Evaluations by tying student test scores to teacher evaluations. How can a governor make such demands and then turn around and not fully fund education.

Teachers and students need the educational tools to work with to meet these new demands, the education systems across the state certainly don't need to be looking at budget cuts when it is not necessary.

Further more, our state university system is in need of help, we are encouraging our students to remain in the state but then turn around and do not offer the funding necessary to make our university system one of the best in the U.S.

I could go on and on but the most disheartening is to think of the Oil Tax giveaway with No string attached, is an absolute joke. Why would anyone want to let the Oil companies Our fair share of windfall profits and to take this money and spend it anywhere they want, which probably won't be in Alaska. Why not propose a plan that requires Alaskan Investment and production in exchange for some tax relief. It is in your hands, Please Be good stewards of our state dollars.

Sincerely,

Joann Pfisterer

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus <ianmomtchr@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:08 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am a parent who lives in a northern village. My daughter was just 'expelled' from her group home in Anchorage and is back home unexpectedly. I am working with the Complex Behavior Collaborative to keep her home. Without funding for this program, she has no place to go, as other programs will not accept her following the recent escalation.

I do not want her out of state, I want her home and we need support to do this.

Cutting 8.3 million from the Behavioral Health budget will increase the number of people who require hospitalization and who enter the criminal justice system, both juveniles and adults.

This is inappropriate and a waste of funds and human potential.

We do not incarcerate people because they have a disease or physical disability, but when that disability is hidden, that is what happens when they cannot access the services they need.

Budget cuts are necessary, but not at the risk of endangering a vulnerable population.

We want our children to be successful, they need supports and this costs money, but the cost of not providing services is much higher.

In addition, please continue the funding for DUI Therapeutic Courts to prevent recidivism and flooding of courts and support successful accountability for those with addictions.

Thank- you

Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus

Parent

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: D. Robbins <drobbins.r@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:07 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Update: Re: The budget should include more funds to pay down the unfunded liability of PERS/TRS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Legislators,

The Alaska Retirement Management Board (ARMB) recently met and this is a quote from one of their membership:

Actuaries and financial experts acknowledge additional money into the funds will save ALL EMPLOYERS a significant amount of money in the long run. Surpluses are not expected to ever be higher.

You will be hearing more from them directly. They do not say such things lightly but have facts to back it up. Please listen to them for the good of the State of Alaska.

Thanking you,

Doris Robbins

--

Doris Robbins

(907) 374-0597
1281 Overhill DR.
Fairbanks, AK 99709-6753
drobbins.r@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: ninavolkova.voa@gmail.com on behalf of Nina Volkova <ninavolkova@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:06 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Reduction to Behavioral Health Grants

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Nina Volkova and I am writing to you as a representative of the behavioral field. I have had the privilege of working with Alaskans for over thirteen years and have provided services to adolescents who are suffering from substance abuse and mental health disorders. During this time, I have seen changes in the system that had impacts on many aspects of our community and in some cases all of us. This is to include local hospitals, police force, detentions/jails, clinics, detox facilities, schools, outpatient/inpatient/residential facilities to name a few. The issues of growth, expansions and cuts are not new; however, what appears to be missing is calculating spending money upfront that we will have to do for measures that are cost prohibitive, such as emergency room admissions, legal costs, incarcerations, and unproductivity. I would like to reflect on some past and current numbers that we all had to pay for.

Between 1992 and 2001, there was a 201% increase in the number of girls in the U.S. arrested for drug abuse violation, and 121% increase for boys. This can be compared to adult arrests for the same category which increased only 33% (Nissen, 2007). These numbers have financial impact on our communities: for instance, in Alaska the costs attributed to crime-related alcohol and other drug abuse in the state were nearly \$154 million in 2003; while health care costs related to alcohol and other drug abuse totaled an estimated \$178 million during the same period (McDowell Group, 2005). These numbers do not represent cost associated with victimization and long-term secondary cost, such as removal of children from home due to parent(s) incarceration or as a result of inability to attend to a child's needs.

According to the Division of Behavioral Health the number of clients that are in need of services increased in FY2009 from 4,605 to 5,199 in FY2011 (youth with serious emotional disturbances who received mental health services; included individuals with co-occurring disorders. The division's BTHK initiative of keeping youth home was successful in bringing out-of-state placement numbers down during the FY98-10; however there has been an increase admission during FY2011 in out-of-state, as well as in-state residential psychiatric treatment centers by over 30%. As a result there was an increase in financial aspect of behavioral health; therefore, the division set a new goal "decrease in the number of children/youth returning to RPTC and acute hospitalization care by 75% by SFY12 (DBH, 2011). This goal will obviously be impacted if we cannot provide ongoing services in least restrictive levels, such as outpatient and lower level residential care.

It is important to note, that health of adolescents has direct impact on our community, economy, and of course behavioral health services. The initiation of drug use often occurring during adolescence is the result of a combination of many different factors of adolescent development. For many adolescents, the use of substances is limited to a brief period of experimentation. It is so commonplace that experimentation with drugs appears to have become part of the normal rites of passage for many youth. However, for some youth, the use of substances leads to compulsive patterns of use characterized by psychological and physical dependence. According to the National Institute of Health, 90% of Americans suffering from addiction began using before age 18. Furthermore, substance use disorders are a leading cause of medical morbidity, mortality, and health expenditures in the United States (NIH, 2003).

As a provider and a member of this community I am asking you to consider investing in adolescence care as opposed to us repeating the cycle of paying significant amounts in other areas of our lives.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this matter.

Nina Volkova

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Alicia Cornils <Alicia@ayfn.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:02 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Amber Hampton
Subject: \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * **mental health treatment**
- * **substance abuse treatment**
- * **detox services**
- * **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
- * **supported housing**
- * **peer support services**
- * **suicide prevention**
- * **tribal behavioral health services**
- * **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
- * **parent and peer navigation**
- * **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
- * **prevention and early intervention**
- * **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- My husband was told 10 years ago to go home and tell his wife that he would no longer be able to work, due to his mental health diagnosis. Community peer supports gave him hope and direction, and he not only recovered, he is now executive director of Alaska Youth and Family Network. Now we daily help other families find their way to live happy, productive lives. Without these services, many families would continue to believe that they have no choice but to accept that they cannot function and contribute to society.
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Thank You,

Alicia Cornils

Operations Manager

Alaska Youth and Family Network

740 Communications Ave.

Anchorage AK 99503

Main Office: (907) 770-4979

Fax: (907) 770-4997

Cell: (907) 240-4283

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: robin allen <dave_robin1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: Trauma Care Fund

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that you will please consider the need for funding the State of Alaska Trauma System. As a life long Alaskan, I have seen the vast improvement in the quality and availability of medical care for the injured Alaskan. Our Trauma System has allowed the growth of a standardized system of Trauma care and transportation of the injured Alaskan to highest level of care. Our regional hospitals and clinics have increased their level of education, certification, and training of all staff. The Trauma Care Fund has provided this training and education beginning at the pre-hospital level up to Advanced Trauma Care for physicians and nurses. The Trauma Care Fund has allowed this training to be done on the local level for many of the rural hospitals and clinics. This increases the quality of care for all Alaskans.

The implementation of a Trauma System in the State of Alaska has provided a system by which data can be accurately gathered and analyzed to provide process improvement in all areas of Trauma care. It has been well established, that when States have Trauma systems in place it improves over all care of the patient, not just in Trauma, but in all areas of care.

The Iditarod is a wonderful piece of medical history for our Great State and an example of the Alaskan "can do" attitude. Please let's continue to move forward and provide the best possible medical care for all Alaskans.

CONTINUE ALL FUNDING FOR THE TRAUMA CARE FUND!!!!

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Robin Allen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Liz Cabrera <petersburgedc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:53 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Peter Ecklund
Subject: ADFG Operating Budget
Attachments: ADFGFY14.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Rep. Austerman,

Please see attached letter regarding the ADFG operating budget.

Best,
Liz Cabrera
Coordinator

--

Petersburg Economic Development Council
PO Box 750
Petersburg, Alaska 99833
907.772.4042
petersburgedc@gmail.com
<http://www.petersburgedc.org>

Subscribe to our community newsletter: <http://bit.ly/TmB9Qf>

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ashley Borner <assist_cdc2@voaak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:51 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Cutting funding to the Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To whom it may concern:

Prevention and early intervention are crucial within the state of Alaska. Alaska's drug problem needs to be addressed, not dismissed! Cutting funding to the Behavioral Health Services would be a grave mistake. Please think about how your vote may affect the at risk youth within Alaska.

Ashley Borner

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Melinda Maddox <officeseward@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:49 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Governor's Increment for Independent Living

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Melinda Maddox

Independent Living Center

officeseward@peninsulailc.org

P.O. Box 3523 Seward, Ak 99664

Ph: 907-224-8711

Fax: 907-224-7793

" It's not the disability it's the ability"

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: jen laroe <jalaroe@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:45 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Operating Budget HB 65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Greetings House Finance Committee,

Thank you for taking my testimony via email as it makes participating in the legislative process possible for me and many others in today's busy times.

As you may recall from last year, I attempted to testify in person on a subject that is very emotional to me, Education funding, and was unable to speak due to emotions flooding over me. I am not able to put myself out there this year, but hope you do accept my written testimony and hold it in as high regard as you may for in person testimony. Please also consider my voice strongly as I am sure I speak for many other Alaskan parents whose children are being impacted by today's standard of public funding for public education.

I do not disagree that the public school system is flawed, as are many systems by which our society attempts to function. I do believe that until great effort is made at public school reform, consistent and responsible funding levels are imperative to keep many Alaskan schools functioning at all. When graduation rates seem bleak, please remember the percentage of students who are graduating. These students deserve our support as much as those the system is failing. Failing to keep the BSA up with inflation, as has been the case for the last few years, will only exacerbate the problem and decrease the graduation rate.

My children are Lila Quigley, fourth grade student, and Miles Quigley, first grade student. Both attend Harborview Elementary School in Juneau. I am on the site council and have served on the JSD budget committee. More importantly, I spend at least 3 hours a week volunteering my time in the school, directly interacting with students for the last four years. I know a lot of the students by name, and am considered a familiar face. I started a school garden last year with the help of staff, parents and community members and agencies. I am vested in this school, and in quality public education for my children and all children throughout the state.

Please urge the governor to bring the BSA back up to par, and support the children of Alaska, one of the wealthiest states in the nation.

Sincerely,
Jennifer LaRoe
5134 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK
99801
907-7890-3625

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Catherine DeLacee <catherine@peninsulaloveinc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:42 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

The Budget Subcommittee on HSS recommendation of \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services *almost* couldn't come at a worse time. Given the national state of sequestration, the Kenai Peninsula poor are already being told by AHFC that they cannot issue any housing vouchers and can't grant voucher extensions due to questionable receipt of federal funds. So if one can't get shelter, how does one make a start? Prior to Love INC's AHFC-funded homeless housing program, families were customarily separated leaving a life-time impact on kids. Traumatized kids, not helped, will be communities' future troubled adults at a tremendous monetary cost and tremendous loss of potential community contributors.

Having served on boards and working with non-profits over the decades, I know what living in a second-class borough means. The Kenai Peninsula Borough government has no opportunity or responsibility to provide any social services assistance. We are dependent on the State of Alaska and now face diminishing federal funding. If these behavioral health services are pulled from the Kenai Peninsula, with so few resources or even private agencies, the poor and those in need will suffer. There is a current sentiment that the poor just need to get work and take care of themselves. In my 10 years' work in assisting the hungry and the homeless of the Kenai Peninsula I consistently deal with wounded people, who were wounded children, who experience the resultant behavioral health issues. Very tough to make wise decisions without help from this background.

Over my 30 resident years, I have watched individuals who've been injured or laid off go from under-employed/ unemployed, to homeless, to experiencing hunger, to having mental health issues and sometimes descent into addictions. I have watched unemployed parents progressively become more desperate trying to feed and shelter their kids, going out day after day after day looking for work. And then ... no job, no rent, often no food stamps, potential domestic abuse and family disintegration, possible jail time, new demands for public services by remnant families and new expenses for the community and state. Perhaps not surprisingly, some do self-medicate with alcohol and drugs. But, while many want to get into treatment, there has been only six (6) available beds total in Anchorage for a long time! A long wait list locally - costly private treatment or the underfunded, overtasked outpatient treatment through the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and Cook Inlet Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (CICADA) simply can't keep up.

Local non-profits have stepped up to assist where the State has been unable to go. We consider ourselves as citizen partners with the State of Alaska trying to better our State. I have relied on behavioral health services to assist me in getting families stabilized so they might have a shot at just being employed, housed and healthy families with a future.

Please, please reconsider the cut of \$8.3 million for these community-based behavioral health services for those who don't have access to alternatives. We are truly building our 'tomorrows' by how we treat the poorest of the poor in our communities.

Thank you.

Catherine Y. DeLacee,

catherine@peninsulaloveinc.org

283-7163

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dick LaFever <cli@ak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:41 PM
To: Rosalie Nadeau
Cc: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgmon@akeg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Jim Sellers; Pat Ventgen
Subject: Re: Behavioral Health Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Thanks, Rosalie. I got wind of in an email from Anna Sappah. I'm assuming testifying is in order. Do you have any guidance on what should be in such testimony, or should we go with our best shot?

Dick

Dick LaFever

cli@ak.net

727.6187

On Mar 5, 2013, at 10:43 AM, Rosalie Nadeau wrote:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Health and Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million cut to the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). The impact is devastating because it is approximately 15% of the Governor's recommended Division of Behavioral Health's budget, and it is slightly more if one measures it against the current year's budget. I have heard stories of the steep escalation in the budget, but those escalating budgets have not happened in Akeela's programs, and we are one of the largest programs in the State. For instance, in FY-1992 our Akeela House grant budget was \$682,239, and this fiscal year it is \$681,225. Our other large program, a women and children's residential and outpatient program has only increased \$40,477, from the FY-2007 budget of \$856,478, or \$6,746 per fiscal year. Additionally, the mandatory match each program must contribute in order to qualify for the grant has increased from ten to 25 percent.

We also agreed to take over the management of a small Southeast Behavioral Health Program that had struggled to stay afloat under the City of Ketchikan's management. It has a grant of \$981,098. The City notified DBH that it would close the program effective July 1, 2010, if no one could be found to take over the service. We stepped into that hole, and have inch by inch brought the program back to life. However, it is still a daily struggle to maintain operations in an area of the State that has few services. Any significant cut would likely result in the complete closure of that program that provides mental health and substance abuse services to over 1,000 children and families.

We also have been told that the committee wants to limit indirect to 15% of the budget. Our company has a 26% indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Federal government that is established by reviewing who spends funds in our company and how and where funds are spent. Administrative costs have grown dramatically in the last several years driven in large part by what we providers call unfunded mandates. For instance, the new Behavioral Health regulations require all of us to be accredited by one of three National Accreditation organizations. We have recently completed that process at a cost of approximately \$75,000 with an annual membership cost of a little over \$5,000. The accreditation is for three years, so the process must be repeated in 2015. We also are required to move to an Electronic Medical Records system. We now have \$300,000 invested in that effort, and we anticipate that we will spend an additional \$200,000 before all of our programs will be operational on the system. It takes personnel to maintain these systems and they are administrative in nature. When I began working for Akeela none of the more sophisticated management systems were required by the State. I believe that in part these required functions have been the State's way of shifting management costs from the Division to the provider. However, to meet these unfunded mandates, we must have personnel that do not neatly fit into the direct service category.

Finally, treatment works and costs less than failure to provide treatment. The best example can be found with our prison programs. Prisoners who have been in substance use treatment show a recidivism rate that is 12% to 16% lower than is the rate of prisoners who have not experienced treatment. The current recidivism rate for prisoners is approximately 67%. If one applies that rate to 100 prisoners at a daily rate of \$115 per prisoner, 67 individuals going back to prison cost \$7,705 per day, while 51 going back to prison cost \$5,865 or a savings per day of \$1,840 based on a 16% difference. The savings over the year at the daily rate savings of \$1,840 translates to \$671,600 for prisoners not returning to prison because they received treatment.

Rosalie Nadeau,

Akeela CEO

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rachael Uponen <frontdesk2@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:26 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Subject: Independent Living Increment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representatives Austerman and Stoltze:

My name is Rachael, and I am writing to request that you reconsider your decision to remove the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living.

Thanks to the Disability Rights and Independent Living movements, people with disabilities are more visible than ever before. However, sometimes our needs for services are overlooked. When one has a disability, it impacts everything in life. Some of us pay more for insurance due to pre-existing conditions. Some of us are unable to drive, and must pay for either a taxi cab or an accessible vehicle. Some of us have difficulty finding and keeping a job, and some of us cannot work at all. This may mean we need job training or Individualized Education Programs. The financial and emotional costs of these needs can often be overwhelming, and that is where Centers for Independent Living (CILs) come in.

I work at an Independent Living Center (ILC) and I am also an individual with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Because I have a mind that is always busy due to intrusive thoughts, I get distracted easily and have trouble when there is not a set procedure for a given task. This made it difficult for me to gain employment experience. The ILC agreed to hire me for a probationary period, and one of their staff trained me in independent living and job skills. I now have a full-time job with great benefits, and I have never been happier.

Every day, I encounter people who are in need of our services. Our consumers come to us with needs ranging from transportation to nursing home transition. An overwhelming majority of elders and people with disabilities wish to live in their homes rather than an institution. Furthermore, most of us want to live as independently as possible. Because Alaska is so rural, however, this can prove to be difficult. That's why the ILC also provides rural outreach. Many of our staff travel to outlying communities to give presentations, answer questions, and work with local advocates and consumers to determine how to best serve each individual.

I understand that \$100,000 is a lot of money, and that our state cannot afford to spend money recklessly. However, we also cannot afford to abandon aging Alaskans or Alaskans with disabilities. Our services at the ILC are free of charge, and because we are a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on donations and grants to continue our services.

When elders and people with disabilities can live independently, we can work, study, and learn new skills. We can contribute to society by doing our jobs and raising our children. We can contribute to the economy as consumers. This leads to a healthy flow of money, goods, and services, and to more Alaskans living happy, productive lives. I am just one individual who is living proof of this fact.

The right to live independently is something that is cherished by people with and without disabilities alike. Again, I ask you to please reconsider your decision to remove the Governor's \$100,000 increment for maintaining this right. It is not wasteful spending; it is absolutely necessary for the productivity and livelihood of so many people.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rachael Uponen

Receptionist

Independent Living Center

47255 Princeton Ave. #8

Soldotna, AK 99669

(907) 262-6333 (Phone)

(907) 260-4495 (Fax)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kenny Lake Public Library <kennylakelibrary@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:20 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep.Bill.Stoltz@akleg.gov
Cc: Sharon Ables; LIO Glennallen; shane.southwick@alaska.gov
Subject: EED proposed budget: library proposals

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltz; I am writing from the Kenny Lake Library in Kenny Lake Alaska. Our small community has benefited greatly from the OWL program for the past several years. We are encouraging continued funding for two aspects of the OWL program: Broadband and infrastructure support and "Live Homework Help.

Our library can now offer newer computer equipment, video conferencing equipment and services, improved bandwidth and training for our staff as well as 97 other public libraries in Alaska. Many of our patrons are unable to obtain these services as often these services are cost prohibitive or not provided to their homes. Another program called "Live Homework Help" has become an invaluable tool for folks from 4th grade through college. Anyone can obtain assistance in math, science, language arts, and social studies 7 days per week. We love everything that the OWL program has helped us with. Please continue these wonderful and invaluable programs for all of Alaska. Thank you. Kathy Libbey

Please let us know if you prefer not to receive e-mail from Kenny Lake Library.

Hours: Monday 1-4; Tuesday 4-7; Wednesday 11-3; Thursday 1-4;
Friday 1-4; Saturday 1-4; Sunday CLOSED

Frances Kibble Kenny Lake Public Library
HC 60 Box 223
Copper Center, Alaska 99573
(907) 822-3015

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Vivian Fleming <vivian.fleming@maniilaq.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Response to Proposed Behavioral Health Services Funding Cut

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed



Dear Representative Austerman,

My name is Vivian Fleming. I am the Behavioral Health Director for Maniilaq Behavioral Health Services. I am reaching out to you to describe how the proposed budget cuts will affect my program, the staff and the community. Maniilaq Behavioral Health Services is located in the Northwest Arctic Region in remote Alaska. The main hub is in Kotzebue with residence of about 3000; give or take the season. We provide services to 11 outlying smaller villages whose occupants can range from 50 up to about 900 people. I am sure you are aware and have hopefully acknowledged the statistics provided by the epidemiology department, and representatives from this region, and of course the many testimonies from my colleagues that this region has some of the highest rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, suicide, and mental health concerns.

The Behavioral Health program is tasked with providing support to all of the individuals in the northwest arctic region. To date we service about 200-350 clients each year, this includes substance abuse/dependence, mental health, medication management, wellness to include issues dealing with suicide and providing support to families and the communities. You might be under the impression that there are a couple of other agencies that also provide behavioral health support for 12 villages, but this is not the case. Maniilaq Behavioral Health is the only support these communities have. Outside of the referring agencies and inner Maniilaq supports there are no additional resources located here in this region. For the overall wellness of the client (keeping them close to their community) and to cut down on cost, we try to keep the client at the lowest level of care if possible. The closest acute behavioral health facilities are located in Anchorage Alaska. So you see, by cutting cost in one area you are actually raising costs in another.

We are already under staffed to provide the community demand for services. Cutting my program dollars will reduce my budget significantly which will reduce a significant number of the much needed staff. We have staff that is located in the villages. These staff lives in their home community and provide support to their fellow

tribal members and are essentially the backbone to our BHS program. They are the eyes and ears of the therapist and are oftentimes the initial contact to those requiring services. A cut in funding could potentially eliminate their positions which will thereby cut off behavioral health supports needed. Cutting funding will also increase unemployment in the villages that have few to no jobs available anyway. This action will increase budget dollars to provide public assistance to the unemployed.

The therapist positions are one of the hardest positions to fill. Our program is currently understaffed with only 6 therapists to service 12 villages. Cuts in funding will significantly reduce the amount of clinical support to the communities which will in turn increase the travel and mental health cost to transport the people out of the region. We currently have 3 substance abuse counselors. By cutting our budget will also cut positions that are in great demand.

I urge you to maintain the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services. Such a drastic reduction in funding will decrease the only resources these communities have thereby significantly increasing the actual money expended by requiring acute out of region or out of state services.

Thank you for your consideration to this urgent matter.

Vivian Fleming MA, LPC

Vivian Fleming, MA, LPC

BHS Director

Maniilaq Association

P.O. Bx 256

907-442-7640/7730 fax 7749

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Adam Grove <drgrove@ak.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:10 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HFC - Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors Collaborative
Attachments: TBI-AA.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Please see the attached letter re: this week's hearings.

Thank you very much for your time.

Adam

Adam Grove, ND
Naturopathic Physician

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Patrice Parker <patrice.parker@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:07 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Proposed cuts to Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

In the wake of the Newtown tragedy, most of you said that instead of banning assault weapons, the country should focus on mental health needs. Now is your opportunity to put our money where your mouth is.

Rather than hope the country will just forget about the most recent and most heartbreaking case of assault weapon mass murder, it's time to do something significant.

Gov. Parnell has focused on Alaska's high rates of sexual assault but prevention programs are also targeted.

There is an epidemic of heroin use in Alaska and yet the proposed cuts include substance abuse treatment. Juneau, Alaska's Capital, is part of the epidemic. I personally know two Juneau kids who recently got caught up in it and are going to jail. My own son fought addiction.

Watch the recent series on KTUU for a little more insight.

Additionally, suicide prevention is another issue many of you campaign on - and most every day the obituaries underscore the heartbreaking impact of suicide on our families. My son beat his heroin addiction, but didn't get proper treatment for chronic depression. He killed himself. So I know, when I read the obituaries, what those families are suffering and will continue to suffer for the rest of their lives.

Heroin addiction is not just an affliction of the poorest parts of urban America, and suicide is not just happening in Alaska Native villages. It's happening in your districts, too, to families just like yours.

Please don't cut the Behavioral Health budget.

Sincerely,

Patrice Parker
1550 H Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Sent from my iPhone

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: akbmd@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:03 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: CBC Program
Attachments: CBC Program.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please open and read. It works!
Laura Kelly
akbmd@aim.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jason Hoke <jhoke@coppervalley.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:51 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Farm to School Support
Attachments: Farm to School Support- Austerman.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman,

Please find a letter of support for the Farm to School Program. I hope that this funding and program stays to foster agricultural development in Alaska, maintain food security for the state, and the innumerable benefits to schools and our children.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and service to our state.

Jason Hoke

Executive Director

Copper Valley Development Association, Inc.

Mile 111 Richardson Hwy

PO Box 9

Glennallen, AK 99588

(907) 822-5001

(907) 822-5009 fax

(907) 259-5006 cell

www.coppervalley.org



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: hsmaze@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:48 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Services are essential!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders-including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders-at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

These Alaskans are at higher risk for institutionalized care-such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. Without this funding they will be forced to use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care. We want to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives-at the same time we are saving money. These Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community workforce and promote a strong economy. Community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Sent via the HTC Vivid™, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Michele Friars <mfriars@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:47 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: budget cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Michele Friars and I have worked for Volunteers of America for the past 21 years providing services to adolescents who come from different parts of Alaska that suffer from substance abuse and co-occurring issues. As the clients receive treatment services to address their main issue such as addiction, mental health and behavioral issues it is important to recognize that they are also gaining knowledge in different areas that support their successful transition into adulthood. Over the years, considering that the kids had not attended school for years prior to their admission due to their substance abuse I have seen kids passing their high school equivalency exams while they were completing their educational goals in our program. In many cases these kids were able to resolve their legal issues and successfully transition out of the division of juvenile justice system and become responsible young adults and not be a burden to our society. Most importantly, they have been able to rebuild their family relationships and establish new healthy relationships in the community.

Unfortunately, we are experiencing ongoing issues with kids being on a wait list for services who are out on the streets or in detention centers. The current issue of budget cutting will have a very negative impact on these kids which will mean possible unnecessary incarcerations and hospitalizations for those kids whose issues can be addressed in treatment services. Please consider the long term cost and impact of this action on our community.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jackie Eisenberg <uafrep.naswak@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:41 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please don't cut funding for Behavior Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative, I am writing to you regarding the proposed cuts to the DHSS, Behavior Health budget. Taking care of Alaska's most vulnerable individuals is crucial to ensuring that Alaska remain a safe and sustainable place to live and raise a family. Of particular significance are the prevention and early intervention services that work to fix problems faced by families with young children before they become life long problems that are damaging to our communities and our state. Our residents are resilient but they need your support to remain healthy and active in contributing to our communities and our economy. **Please do not cut the budget for Behavioral Health services throughout Alaska!**

Thank you for your consideration,
Jackie Eisenberg,
Devoted Mother of two, and life long Alaskan

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Christy Russ <Christy@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:36 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: HB65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Christy Russ

Independent Living Center

TRAILS Coordinator & Development Specialist

3953 Bartlett

Homer, AK 99603

(907) 235-7911

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rick Malley <ilobhomer@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:26 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB-65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rick Malley

The Independent Living Center

PO Box 2474

Homer, AK 99603

Voicemail; 1-907-226-2193

Ph: 1-907-235-7911

Fax: 1-907-235-6236

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lori DeStefano <loridestefano19@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:21 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health funding cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing this email to speak against the proposed \$8.3 million cuts to the Behavioral Health Budget. Any reduction in funds would greatly impact an already financially strained industry. Cuts to funding for substance abuse and mental health treatment could close agencies, or reduce agency ability to continue to provide quality services. Community services for suicide prevention and those provided to address domestic violence and sexual assault could be lost. This all comes at an increased cost to the community, as this loss of services results in increased use of emergency room services, increased numbers of people requiring institutionalization and increased crime rate. People will be forced to seek care outside of their homes and communities, resulting in alienation from their key supports. I've witnessed first-hand the impact and benefit of treatment for friends and loved ones with substance and mental health issues, and know that those folks could not have achieved the changes they made without treatment. Public funds are vital to retaining these under-resourced facilities, to ensure people can live a productive life that will benefit our communities.

Lori DeStefano
Anchorage, AK

Sent from my iPhone

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Clare Charles <clare.charles@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:24 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: DON'T CUT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom it May Concern,

I am deeply passionate about the need to preserve services for the most vulnerable of Alaska's population. Alaska is first in many mental health, suicide and addiction needs in the country and we cannot reduce the services provided when we know there is such a high need. I have been working in the Social Services field with homeless and at-risk teens for 5 years and have witnessed a devastating amount of impairment and desperation among young people and their families. It would be beyond negligent to remove these valuable supports in the face of tragedies like Sandy Hook Elementary. How can we educate and protect our communities from these kinds of grievous horrors without the many agencies that do this work? Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money. Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community and they contribute to a **healthy workforce** which promotes a strong economy.

PLEASE PRESERVE THESE SERVICES WHICH ARE INTEGRAL TO THE HEALTH AND FUNCTIONING OF SO MANY ALASKANS.

Clare Charles

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Barb george <lady_loon@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:01 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Operating budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

Please reconsider your cuts to Early Education. Please increase the base allocation for funding for our children.

If you have ever been in a classroom, or have children in public school, you know how important teachers and class-size are to the overall success of our students.

Please invest in our most valuable resource, the children of Alaska.

Please invest in a viable future for our state by investing in our children. We cannot afford to balance our budget at the expense of the future of our children and our state. Please support education and our students and our teachers.

Thank you,
Barbara George
Retired teacher
Fairbanks, Ak

Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Doug Harris <Dough@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:58 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Concerns regarding cuts to behavioral health care

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good afternoon. My name is Doug Harris. I am writing today as a member of the Board of Directors of the Disability Law Center for the State of Alaska and as Clinical Director of JAMHI, the community behavioral health provider for Juneau, Tenakee, Elfin Cove, and Gustavus.

In the time that I have been clinical director at JAMHI, four years next month, we have striven to establish the infrastructure necessary to provide the best care to individuals in need of behavioral health services. In this time, JAMHI has increased overall productivity by an average of 450% and increased the number of individuals we see by 50%, not including those seen only for Emergency Services. This is with the same number of staff and the same budget. In addition to our own infrastructure, we have worked hard to develop the community partnerships with agencies that are equally impacted by these proposed cuts. Many of these partners are here today out of concern the impact these cuts will have on the people who rely on the services we all provide to live respectable lives. AWARE, SEARHC, Rainforest Recovery Center, Bartlett Regional Hospital, Juneau Youth Services, Front Street Clinic, SAIL, Juneau Police Department, St. Vincent DePaul, The Glory Hole, Polaris House, Juneau Trial Courts, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and Lemon Creek Correctional Center.

In addition to these and other local agencies impacted by the proposed cuts there are the many agencies within the state whose partnerships are equally impacted such as The Co-occurring Disorders Institute, under whose training, my staff and many others have been trained in the most up to date interventions for care of the people we serve. Trainings on Trauma informed care, and co-occurring disorders provide the latest and most effective means to deliver care. Those things directly or indirectly impact not only our clients, but everyone in this room. We want our Mission statement to remain to be "helping people live their own best lives" rather than "helping people survive in times of crises". We have made too much progress to be set back by the proposed funding cuts.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas R. Harris, MEd, LPC

Clinical Director,

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

(907)463-6876

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: D K <ata@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:56 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Dennis Egan
Cc: Hannah McCarty; Julie Isom; Jesse Kiehl; Steven Ricci
Subject: ADFG Budget
Attachments: Industry Sign On House Finance Committee re ADFG Budget FINAL 4MAR2013A.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Committee Members:

Please find attached a letter from the Southeast seafood industry regarding potential loss of funding for ADFG. ATA strongly supports this letter, which lines out the problem in detail. I hope you will take time to review and contemplate the ramifications prior to voting on the ADFG Subcommittee recommendations before you.

The Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) is deeply concerned about the potential loss of funding for core ADFG port sampling programs and Chinook salmon biometrics work, as recommended by the House ADFG Subcommittee last week. In addition, we fear that ADFG has inadequate funding to conduct its aerial survey program, which is an important puzzle piece for the intricate fishery assessment program in our region. Aerial survey was ADFG's top priority for Region 1. At that time, they anticipated that the port sampling program would be funded as well. Loss of funding, or inadequate funding, for these items could effectively gut the SE management program, leading to reduced fishing opportunity.

The sampling programs and the biometrician staff position are essential to our sustainable fisheries management program, and also help ADFG and the state meet international commitments to the Lower 48 and Canada and defend our interests in the difficult US/Canada treaty arena.

As an example, the sampling program - combined with aerial survey - is critical to assessing run strength for all fisheries and providing fishing time for the troll fleet, particularly during our summer Chinook and coho season. The sampling program is so essential to our spring fishery that we could be severely limited, IF NOT SHUT DOWN, depending on the level of sampling that occurs. That's because the entire fishery is based on hatchery fish, which the port samplers are responsible for retrieving. If ADFG doesn't have the data to ascertain the proportion of hatchery fish to wild, then they will be forced to leave one or more of up to 30 areas closed to fishing for up to two months. Or, if the catch is under-sampled, we could be leaving valuable hatchery fish on the table, which fishermen pay to produce. Trolling is a very complicated fishery and is extremely important to local economies, particularly in early spring when we all know it's pretty lean for the seafood industry. Loss or reduction of the spring component of our fishery would have a domino effect on the success of troll fishery; especially when you add in our fleet's reliance on halibut and the status of that fishery.

The troll fleet is one of the largest in the state and occurs exclusively in Southeast. We are unlike any other salmon fishery as we are state, federal, and internationally managed. There are more troll permit holders in

most Southeast ports than all other salmon fleets combined. About 1 of every 40 people in Southeast work ON a troll boat, and that's not counting the workers in our support sector. The health of the troll fishery is directly tied to the fiscal well-being of the Southeast region.

You should find attached a letter regarding the ADFG Subcommittee recommendation, which is signed by a large number of seafood industry leaders in Southeast Alaska. I hope you will take time to study what we believe a few of the impacts will be should the House Finance committee accept the recommendation of the ADFG Subcommittee.

Also please review the economic snapshot we have provided. Given the revenues the state brings in from commercial fishing taxes, fully funding ADFG so that they can maximize fishing opportunity just makes common sense. Without sufficient data, ADFG will be forced to manage more conservatively, which is an economic loser for all of Alaska!

The governor has asked the legislature to back-fill monies that will no longer be coming to the state from the federal government. We anticipate additional reductions to the ADFG budget in Southeast as the details of the federal sequester unfold. The Southeast region is far too dependent on federal money. That is painfully clear when we must write you about the loss of funding for core programs. This matter is of deep concern and something ATA has raised with the legislature for many years. It is literally a house of cards. The governor is making efforts to shore up ADFG and move to stable funding for essential programs and staff, by incrementally replacing federal money with state funds for those items that are not solely federal mandates. He is also adding money for strategic positions, like the Chinook biometrician, whose work helps to defend Alaska's access to an extremely valuable species. This just makes good sense and we hope the legislature will mirror his commitment to a solid ADFG funding program by securing the monies both he and our experts at ADFG have requested.

Please do what you can to make sure the legislature accommodates the Governor's full budget increment of \$550K, and also add ADFG's top Region 1 priority -aerial surveys - to the the ADFG FY 2014 budget

Do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information or perspective on this issue.

Best regards,

Dale 723-8765 cell

Dale Kelley
Executive Director
Alaska Trollers Association
130 Seward #205
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-9400
ata@gci.net

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ian Niecko <Ian@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:51 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Letter regarding BH budget cuts in Alaska
Attachments: Letter fo Finance Committe.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please see attached letter regarding observations as a mental health worker.

Thanks,

Ian

Ian Niecko, M.Div, MA

Behavioral Health Clinic Case Manager II

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

3406 Glacier Hwy.

Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 463-3303

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kim Burrows <reception@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:50 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB 65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Burrows

Kim Burrows

Independent Living Center

P.O. Box 2474

Homer, AK 99603

Phone: 907-235-7911

Fax: 907-235-6236

Life is an attitude!

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Esther Hammerschlag <homerspfsig@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:40 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: testimony on proposed budget cuts to Alaska Wellness Coalition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee members,

I am writing in response to proposed budget cuts of over \$30 million to DHSS, that could result in over \$9 million of budget cuts to innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention programs. One of the proposed cuts would include \$600K in funding to the Alaska Wellness Coalition for a statewide Positive Community Norms media campaign to address underage drinking. The Positive Community Norms model is based on the premise that people do what they perceive most people are doing, and that people tend to over-perceive risky behavior, and under-perceive protective behaviors. By changing perceptions to that which is the true social norm, a change in the behavior can be made. This strategy has been shown to be effective in many other communities in a short period of time. It is a very powerful messaging tool that is non-judgemental, is reflective of the community, and states the facts.

The Homer Prevention Project (HPP) is a coalition based project, with representatives of over 24 groups and organizations in the community participating in needs assessment and strategic planning, including medical and social service providers, schools, law enforcement, DJJ, family planning and teen support services, Big Brothers Big Sisters, CDVSA, Alaska Family Violence Prevention Project, public health, parents, teens and many others that is focused on prevention of underage drinking and adult heavy and binge drinking in the Homer area. As a community coalition, HPP participates in the Alaska Wellness Coalition and is looking forward to continued collaboration to address the issue of alcohol abuse in our state.

Through our community strategic planning process, HPP prioritized a Positive Community Norms campaign in our own community to address the issues of underage drinking and adult heavy and binge drinking. Coalition members selected this model because of its positive approach, because it builds on the strengths of the community, and it is evidence based and shown to be effective in a short period of time. Increasing awareness of the issues in the community, as well as reinforcing positive social norms related to alcohol use, are fundamental to building a sustainable prevention program.

Community coalitions often operate with little funding and, especially, in our smallest communities, are challenged to find the capacity to implement meaningful and effective programs. Through partnerships with the

Alaska Wellness Coalition, and the Alaska Wellness Coalition's development of a statewide Positive Community Norms campaign, smaller community coalitions will be able to further support their own efforts by utilizing the additional capacity and support provided by this larger, statewide coalition. By working to develop a statewide Positive Community Norms media campaign to address the important need of preventing alcohol abuse in all communities across our state, the Alaska Wellness Coalition will effectively support small community coalitions in launching meaningful, effective, and timely campaigns in their own communities. This support is critical.

Consistency in prevention efforts across the state and consistent messaging are crucial to effectiveness of prevention efforts. Imagine if people saw the same messages, from posters hung in local post offices and bars, to PSAs on local radio stations, ads on buses, and finally ads on television stations broadcast across the state. When communities hear consistent messaging from all levels of influence, imagine how much more effective a campaign to reduce underage drinking, reinforce positive and healthy lifestyles, increase resiliency factors, and increase awareness among parents and adults of the effects of underage drinking will be. Imagine the increased effectiveness and capacity that local community coalitions will have when they have the support of a statewide campaign through the Alaska Wellness Coalition. The presence of a statewide Positive Community Norms campaign that small communities can draw from and build capacity on will maximize effect, while at the same time conserving resources. Furthermore, this supports the Alaska Statewide Plan to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking and other state level and regional plans that recommend this campaign take place as one strategy.

Please retain any funding allocated for the Alaska Wellness Coalition to ensure that Alaska can continue to support the development of healthy communities in a collaborative, effective, sustainable, and most importantly, responsible way.

Sincerely,

Esther Hammerschlag

Project Director, Homer Prevention Project

Esther Hammerschlag, Project Director

Homer Prevention Project

1230 Ocean Drive

PO Box 2352

Homer, AK 99603

esther@homerpreventionproject.org

(907) 235-0570

<http://homerpreventionproject.org>

Homer Prevention Project: Collaborating to reduce alcohol abuse in the Homer and Anchor point area

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jennifer Meyer <jameyer2@alaska.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:41 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Please oppose cuts to the general funds for Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Don't take my word for it, listen to the experts here
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-brqskIoBw>
A 30 minute documentary well worth your time.

As you know the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * mental health treatment
- * substance abuse treatment
- * detox services
- * services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- * supported housing
- * peer support services
- * suicide prevention
- * tribal behavioral health services
- * services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
- * parent and peer navigation
- * services related to domestic violence and sexual assault
- * prevention and early intervention
- * programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. In the wake of school shootings this seems like the wrong area to cut.

· Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

· By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a healthy workforce and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Without a doubt the state will spend more in the long run if these cuts go through.
Please practice good stewardship and do the right thing for all Alaskans.
Jennifer Meyer

--

Jennifer Meyer RN, MPH, CPH
Anchorage Resident 99504

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Chris Pearson <Chris@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:40 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Letter on behalf of those affected by Proposed Behavioral Health Care Cuts
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear State Representatives,

I am writing to you on behalf of myself and the Severely Mentally Ill adults that I provide case management services for in the community. The clients that I serve vary in their abilities to successfully participate in society. Some will always need some form of assistance and others just need some help to get back on their feet. Most of my clients are looking to be understood. They are looking for someone they can trust. They are vulnerable individuals that just want assistance so they can feel like they aren't being taken advantage of by others. They are individuals that want navigate the community and be as independent as possible.

I could have talked about how this saves dollars and makes sense but that is not my area of expertise. I am not an accountant, I am a case manager of people. I am a case manager of the people that this budget cut will directly affect. Most of the people I help on a daily basis are not going to have a voice of their own in this fight and it is yet again I find myself advocating for the client's I serve.

Thank you for your time,

Chris Pearson

Case Manager II

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health

3406 Glacier Highway

Juneau, AK 99801

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Elizabeth Korenek-Johnson <ekorenek@nomeschools.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:33 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please Support Best Beginnings

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,
Thank you for your support of Best Beginnings and Imagination Library. Quality books for Nome's children, and children all over the state, along with great early-literacy activities have immeasurable benefits to our state-wide community. Alaska's kids are Alaska's future. Please continue your support of these critical programs. Vote to fully fund Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers, and encourage your colleagues to do the same!

Sincere thanks,
Elizabeth Korenek-Johnson
Nome Imagination Library Chair & Parent, and teacher!!!
PO Box 1295
Nome, AK 99762

ekorenek@nomeschools.com

Check out our Classroom Website:
<http://www.nomeschools.com/~ekorenek/Site>

(If you visit our site often, you may need to "refresh" the page for current updates.)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Barb Nath <bnath@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:14 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Operating budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good morning ladies and gentleman.

I am sending this email to advocate on behalf of items in the proposed operating budget. I am asking that you keep these areas intact and do not reduce them.

The Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC) is a necessary tool in meeting the needs of our children without having to send them out of the state of Alaska. You have been asked to fund an increment of \$450,000. I am asking that you leave this in the budget.

The Infant Learning Program also meets the needs of Alaskan children, especially those who have been the victims of abuse. The Governor has put money in his budget to be given to the IL/IE program (Under OCS) due to increased mandates and an increase in the number of children needing their services. Please, DO NOT take those funds out of the Governor's budget.

Please, think of someone in your neighborhood whose children might be affected if these funds are cut. Would you be able to face them the next time you saw them? Be strong, set the future of Alaska by doing what is right.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I hope you have a great day.

Barbara Nath

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kiel Renick <krenick@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:04 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: opposition to a reduction in funding for behavioral health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Please don't decrease funding to Behavioral Health services in Alaska. Our state suffers from mental illness on an extremely high level, we have a high suicide rate, a high number of veterans, a high number of foster children who need support, a high level of FASD cases, a high level of alcoholism, a high level of violent death, and a high number of homeless people per capita. We also have people that deal with extreme isolation, extreme workforce conditions, and extreme environmental conditions. This year has brought us many violent and sad reminders of how mental illness affects us all, as a community. We need a high degree of care, as a state, and the best way to get that to people is through funding support like the money that could be axed from the Behavioral Health Services budget. I am open to innovating the way we deliver care, developing new systems, or finding other solutions, but reducing funding is not the answer, and Alaska will suffer when Alaskans suffer.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kiel Renick

Juneau, Alaska

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Doug Toelle <dtoelle@accessalaska.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:57 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: House Budget
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Greetings,

I am currently in Washington DC representing the National MS Society otherwise I would be calling in my testimony.

I find it appalling that a state with abundant natural resources constantly and consistently ignores the needs of it's most valuable resource, it's people. The education, health and independence of Alaskan's should be the top priority of Alaska's budget. The current proposed cuts to Behavioral Health and Independent Living impacts Alaska's most venerable citizens. Please restore these funds.

Thank you,

Doug

Douglas Toelle

Development and Advocacy Director

Access Alaska

v 907.479.7940 x120

c 907.460.4720

www.accessalaska.org

Access Alaska was created by people with disabilities for people with disabilities as a private, non-residential, consumer-controlled non-profit to provide independent living services to older Alaskans and those who experience a disability.

As a federally recognized Independent Living Center, our mission is to encourage, promote, mentor, and advocate for the total integration of older Alaskans and those who experience a disability to live independently and productively in the community of their choice.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Angela Elling <Angela@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:52 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Request to Restore \$100, 000 Funding for Alaska CIL
Attachments: Letter re CIL Funding.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rosalie Nadeau <RNadeau@akeela.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgmon@akeg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Jim Sellers; Pat Ventgen; Dick LaFever (cli@ak.net)
Subject: Behavioral Health Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Health and Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million cut to the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). The impact is devastating because it is approximately 15% of the Governor's recommended Division of Behavioral Health's budget, and it is slightly more if one measures it against the current year's budget. I have heard stories of the steep escalation in the budget, but those escalating budgets have not happened in Akeela's programs, and we are one of the largest programs in the State. For instance, in FY-1992 our Akeela House grant budget was \$682,239, and this fiscal year it is \$681,225. Our other large program, a women and children's residential and outpatient program has only increased \$40,477, from the FY-2007 budget of \$856,478, or \$6,746 per fiscal year. Additionally, the mandatory match each program must contribute in order to qualify for the grant has increased from ten to 25 percent.

We also agreed to take over the management of a small Southeast Behavioral Health Program that had struggled to stay afloat under the City of Ketchikan's management. It has a grant of \$981,098. The City notified DBH that it would close the program effective July 1, 2010, if no one could be found to take over the service. We stepped into that hole, and have inch by inch brought the program back to life. However, it is still a daily struggle to maintain operations in an area of the State that has few services. Any significant cut would likely result in the complete closure of that program that provides mental health and substance abuse services to over 1,000 children and families.

We also have been told that the committee wants to limit indirect to 15% of the budget. Our company has a 26% indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Federal government that is established by reviewing who spends funds in our company and how and where funds are spent. Administrative costs have grown dramatically in the last several years driven in large part by what we providers call unfunded mandates. For instance, the new Behavioral Health regulations require all of us to be accredited by one of three National Accreditation organizations. We have recently completed that process at a cost of approximately \$75,000 with an annual membership cost of a little over \$5,000. The accreditation is for three years, so the process must be repeated in 2015. We also are required to move to an Electronic Medical Records system. We now have \$300,000 invested in that effort, and we anticipate that we will spend an additional \$200,000 before all of our programs will be operational on the system. It takes personnel to maintain these systems and they are administrative in nature. When I began working for Akeela none of the more sophisticated management systems were required by the State. I believe that in part these required functions have been the State's way of shifting management costs from the Division to the provider. However, to meet these unfunded mandates, we must have personnel that do not neatly fit into the direct service category.

Finally, treatment works and costs less than failure to provide treatment. The best example can be found with our prison programs. Prisoners who have been in substance use treatment show a recidivism rate that is 12% to 16% lower than is the rate of prisoners who have not experienced treatment. The current recidivism rate for prisoners is approximately 67%. If one applies that rate to 100 prisoners at a daily rate of \$115 per prisoner, 67 individuals going back to prison cost \$7,705 per day, while 51 going back to prison cost \$5,865 or a savings per day of \$1,840 based on a 16% difference. The savings over the year at the daily rate savings of \$1,840 translates to \$671,600 for prisoners not returning to prison because they received treatment.

Rosalie Nadeau,

Akeela CEO

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: LIO Fairbanks
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:38 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: House Finance; Sen. Kevin Meyer
Subject: FW: Complex Behavior Collaborative Increment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

From: noel murray [njmak2003@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:24 AM
To: Fairbanks_LIO@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: Complex Behavior Collaborative Increment

03/05/13

Fairbanks LIO: Please send the following letter to Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltze, with a copy to Senator Meyer:

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltze,

Recently representatives of the Key Coalition were in Juneau to discuss pertinent issues facing Alaskans who experience intellectual and developmental disabilities along with their families.

One of the critical new services that has been funded is the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC), and the Key Coalition is supporting a \$450,000 increment to continue these vital services that allow Alaskans to remain in their home communities. The CBC offers short-term intervention services provided by experts for each of the four Trust beneficiary groups that are needed to prevent institutionalization in inappropriate settings such as API, hospital or correctional facility. Without the CBC individuals may also face leaving their community, families and loved ones, to be sent out of Alaska for services.

The CBC has been preventing these extreme measures at one-half the cost of the alternatives and data proving success has been gathered by the State of Alaska. The \$450,000 increment will not only offer crucial appropriate services and supports within Alaska, it allows another year to continue data collection to prove the CBC works.

I urge you to consider adding this small increment of \$450,000 to continue the program so vital for many Alaskans. It's the right service, for the right person, at the right time, for the right price, and it's the right thing to do. It saves the state money (now and in the future!), supports our communities by building expertise and infrastructure, and provides Alaskans with quality interventions that work, keeping families whole and healthy.

Please place this letter into the record.

CC: Senator Meyer

Thank you.

Noel J Murray

417 Clara Street

Fairbanks Alaska 99701

907/378-5163

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Anna Sappah <aapaoffice@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:29 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: oppose cuts to behavioral health budget
Attachments: letter to house finance re dbh budget cuts.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please find the attached letter opposing cuts to the behavioral health budget that will be discussed this afternoon during the House Finance committee hearing.

Best Regards,

Anna Sappah

Anna Sappah,MS

Executive Director

Alaska Addiction Professionals Association (AAPA)

PO Box 92580

Anchorage, AK 99509

Phone: 907-242-6638

Fax: 1-866-252-8824

Website: www.sada-ak.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: D. Robbins <d Robbins.r@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:15 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: The budget should include more funds to pay down the unfunded liability of PERS/TRS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representatives,

If you would include more funds in the budget to pay down the underfunded PERS/TERS, the state and people of Alaska could save a lot of money in the long haul. By coasting on this the underfunded amounts continue to grow larger, like when you pay the minimum on your credit card.

The bill will come due and could be much reduced with some effort to pay more now.

Sincerely,

Doris Robbins

--

Doris Robbins

(907) 374-0597
Fairbanks AK 99709-6753
d Robbins.r@gmail.com

Natural Soaps Soothing to the Skin
www.alaskasoaps.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jada Alexander <assist@voaak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:58 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good Morning,

My name is Jada Alexander and I work in an adolescent facility here in Anchorage and Eagle River. If you cut our funding you will be taking away the care and help these young adults need. We as a facility and a treatment center help and shape young adults who are having problems with drugs and alcohol. Many of them do have co-occurring disorders that they mask but with our help and the help of outside agencies we are able to identify them and help not only them but their families learn to deal and cope with it in a healthy and safe way. If you take that away or prevent us and other agencies like us from doing not only our job but something we love to do then the adolescents are the ones who will pay the price. If we can prevent one young adult from doing anymore drugs or taking another drink, then we have helped that young person be able to have a healthy and happy life. Addiction is so hard but it makes it harder when people try to prevent us from doing our job. If the funding is cut then how will we be able to continue giving the best services that we can give. Please, take a moment and think of the young adults, if they do not get the best treatment they can get then they will become adults who will need treatment but it may be too late by then. If you cut our funding then you are also cutting their chances at a fresh start early on in their lives. What does that say about our government? Who is going to show them the way? You basically are keeping them in the dark, preventing us from bringing them back in the light. These children are our future. If we are unable to help them now then who will? By the time they are adults their brains will have been developed and then it becomes ten times harder to save them. Please help us.

Thank you,

Jada Alexander

Office Manager

Volunteers of America, Alaska

907-279-9640

907-276-5489-fax



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: marcia_howell@hotmail.com on behalf of marcia howell <marcialhowell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:53 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Support for the Trauma Care Fund

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am writing to support the Trauma Care Fund. The data that is tracked in the Alaska Trauma Registry (ATR) is critical for the health and wellness of Alaskans. It provides a multitude of organizations with information for prioritizing health issues, enabling them to make decisions that are data based, and serve to help us efficiently allocate funding that will result in getting the most "bang for the buck." For instance, the ATR allows prevention organizations around the state to analyze which types of injuries are most common and cost the state the most money. Using this information, we can then decide to allocate our energy and fiscal resources for prevention efforts that will result in significant change, improving the health and quality of life of Alaskans. The alternative is that we make program decisions based on minor problems that are emotionally charged resulting in our efforts and financial investment having minimal impact.

For example, ATR data shows that falls are one of the most common injury cause of hospitalization for elderly Alaskans. We also know that falls are the number one cause of injury deaths for people over 65. And they are preventable! The ATR data helps us to learn some of the common causes of the falls. With this information, we can design and implement programs that reduce the risk of falling, and prevent premature deaths. I don't know about you, but I'm getting pretty close 65, and my parents are well past that age. I am concerned about this particular issue, and know that the ATR can help make a difference.

Senior falls are just one tiny component of the ATR. Discontinuing funding will have dramatic effects across a multitude of health issues as well as result in poor decision making ability for how millions of other prevention and health dollars are spent.

Thank you for considering continued funding of the Trauma Care Fund.

Best regards,

Marcia Howell
907-441-6746

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Helander, Ken <khelander@aar.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:46 AM
To: Rep. Mark Neuman
Cc: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: Fall Prevention Support
Attachments: Fall Prevention - Support.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Members of the House Finance Committee,

Please accept this letter of support for the budget increment for fall prevention among Alaska seniors. Thank you so much.

Ken Helander

Ken Helander

AARP Alaska

Advocacy Director

907-762-3314

AARP is Alaska's largest member organization – 94,000 strong!

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Michele Vasquez <michele.s.simmons@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:35 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Subject: re: Do Not cut Health Budget!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives Austerman, Neuman and Stoltze:

I am having an extremely difficult time following the logic behind some of the proposed bills this session, but the current effort by the Health & Social Services Subcommittee is the one I will address in this email.

The mere thought of cutting \$8.3 million from the budget for behavioral health services in the state of Alaska is simply absurd, cruel and inhumane! Sirs, this state has a population with a plethora of issues ranging from severe mental illness to alcohol/substance abuse. If you think we have a high suicide rate now, just wait until you cut these extremely valuable and critical services, particularly in the outlying areas of our state. Why is it that those who need the most, those that cannot afford it always be the ones to suffer? Have you no decency? Have you no compassion? Your national party, as well as those on the state level, have blamed gun violence on mental illness yet here you are proposing to gut the very thing you say needs to be addressed! Which is it? You cannot have it both ways, sir!

I implore you, in the name of all things decent and caring, stop this action immediately. Do not cut valuable, critical behavioral health services to those in our state who need it most!

Thank you for your time,
Michele Vasquez
Soldotna

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Alice Mural <amural@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:31 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: cuts to behavior health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman:

As a health care provider, i see the need for more services in behavior health than we have now. `The Emergency rooms are filled daily with people who are underserved and to cut this budget would only increase the cost to all of us. Please do not cut the budget for these services.

Alice Mural, ANP

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Thea Agnew Bemben <thea@agnewbeck.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:29 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Stop cuts to behavioral health services and early education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to implore you to go back to the drawing board and look for other places to cut funding rather than behavioral health services and supports for early education. I understand the Alaska is facing a fiscal crisis in the next decade and that the legislature needs to take a very strategic look at our spending in order to find a sustainable path forward for our state.

I believe that this must be done by making our state healthier and better preparing children and families to live as productive, independent citizens. We also must better develop our economy, which necessitates a productive and highly trained workforce. As an employer of 23 people in a small business here in Anchorage, I understand the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified workers. Being successfully employed requires soft skills that we learn, not in college, but in preschool, as well as the harder skills that we attain in the later years of education. Maintaining employment is key to caring for our families, and seeing a path forward that does not get derailed by drug and alcohol abuse.

If you look at the data for our state, we have very high rates of heavy and binge alcohol use among adults, a child maltreatment rate that is 7 times the national average and a shocking rate of domestic violence and sexual assault, which is alcohol related in the majority of cases. We also have much higher rates of smoking and obesity for Alaskans who have lower levels of educational attainment. You will also find that the cost of providing special education and other services to Alaskan children who arrive at kindergarten not prepared to learn is crippling our local districts and resulting in cuts in educational services to the general school population.

The cuts you are considering to behavioral health and early education will only fuel this downward cycle that we are in as a state. These cuts will lead to higher costs in future years as we continue to pay for corrections, TANF payments, Medicaid costs, not to mention the appalling human toll that child abuse, family violence and addiction takes on our people.

But even more than this, your job as leaders is to chart a future course for our state. We need a vision for a healthy, productive future, that is sustainable. Cutting services to our most needy Alaskans, simply because they have no moneyed constituency lobbying for them in your halls, is a cowardly move. We must spend well now in order to better prepare for the future. That is the only effective way to curb our spending and to craft a sustainable future for Alaska.

Sincerely,

Thea Agnew Bemben

Thea Agnew Bemben

Managing Principal

907.222.5424 office

www.agnewbeck.com

Engage, Plan, Implement. Agnew::Beck

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: USAG Tom Gemmell <usag.alaska@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:21 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Gary Stevens; Steven Ricci; Jesse Kiehl; Daniel George; Scott Kelley; Ben Mulligan; Kevin Brooks; cora.campbell@alaska.gov; Christopher Clark; ADFG Commissioner; Hannah McCarty
Subject: HB 65 Finance Committee Substitute - ADFG Funding
Attachments: House Finance Committee re ADFG Budget FINAL 4MAR2013A.pdf; Request for ADFG funding for aerial surveys FY2014 HFIN Legislators 12Feb2013.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good Morning Members of the House Finance Committee,

Please see the attached letters concerning the impacts of proposed cuts the the ADFG Budget for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat.

Your consideration of our request is appreciated.

Regards,

--

Tom Gemmell
Executive Director
United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters
PO Box 20538
Juneau, AK 99802-0538
ph: [\(253\) 237-3099](tel:2532373099) Google Voice
cell: [907-723-3358](tel:9077233358)
<http://www.akgillnet.org/>
usag.alaska@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary Daniel <smdaniel@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:54 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please do not vote for severe budget cuts to education and to health and social services. I urge you to do all you can to fully fund these necessary services. A state with the resources of Alaska should not deny its citizens these essential services. Our state will be better off with educated, healthy, happy citizens.

Mary Daniel
Seward
Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Cathy Bishop <c.bishop@nugensranchak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:37 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: HB65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing in response to **HB 65**. An \$8.3 million reduction in Behavioral Health Services would be a devastating blow to services that are available and provided to all Alaskans. It is difficult to access these services now because the availability is so limited. If you pass a budget cut the services will be even harder to obtain for those in need. I strongly encourage you to look at the trickle down effect this budget cut will create. Employees that work for grant funded agencies work for less pay than those that work for private agencies and a budget cut might force them out of their jobs increasing the unemployment rate. People that can not obtain these services (because of the unavailability of services the budget cut would create) will flood hospital emergency rooms and increase the number of calls received by law enforcement due to an increase in crime. There will be an increase in the homeless problem and several other issues I could mention. Please re-think this budget cut – you are affecting the lives of All Alaskans.

Respectfully,

Cathy L. Bishop

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Monika <cscadm@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:31 AM
To: Rep. Mark Neuman
Cc: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: Letter of Support for Senior Fall Prevention through the Health Promotion, Disease Prevention senior grant program from Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The Honorable Mark Neuman

March 5, 2013

State House of Representatives

Alaska State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Neuman:

I am asking for your support of \$150,000 GF/MH for the Health Promotion, Disease Prevention targeted for senior fall prevention strategies included in the Governor's budget.

Following is just one example of the impact our Fall Prevention program made to one local senior.

A Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center resident started attending our Wellness and Exercise program a couple of years ago. As part of our initial fitness assessment to gauge the mobility and strength of a client before starting any fitness program we asked the client to lie down on the floor and get back up. She was not able to get up on her own, not even with the help of a chair. She was also dependent on using a walker to get around. Of course the fear of falling in her apartment and not being able to get up, even if she wasn't hurt, made her feel dependent on others and she was not very confident about living on her own. After about 3 months of an extensive exercise and strengthening program, the same initial assessment was repeated to see if her mobility and strength had increased. She was not only able to get up off the floor unassisted, she even began walking without her walker and still does. Her confidence level rose and she felt healthy and strong enough to be able to live on her own.

Part of Fall Prevention and Health Promotion is education which is provided by our Health Outreach Nurse and exercise provided by our Wellness department to help strengthen our seniors and therefore making them feel confident in living in their own home, which ultimately saves our State money. Independence is a key factor in keeping our seniors happy and maintaining their quality of life.

- Falls are the #1 cause of non-fatal hospitalized injuries for Alaskans age 65. Falls can lead to a loss of independence, depression, and poor health. The consequences of a senior fall can change lives and devastate families. Falls are not a normal part of aging. **Falls are preventable.**

- Falls are expensive. Alaska's median cost for senior fall-related hospitalization is \$28,350 per incident. The Governor's proposed \$150,000 increment could help just 5 older Alaskans from falling; the increment would pay for itself from hospital cost savings.

- Research shows that multi-faceted interventions are most effective and include age appropriate exercise, home assessment and rehab for accessibility, and medication management.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration on this very important senior issue and thank you for all your work.

Sincerely,



Linda Hendrickson, Executive Director

Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center

Phone: (907) 688-2679

E-mail: execdir@mtaonline.net

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Daphne Coen <aztecgoddess21@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:17 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Mental Health Funding Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear representatives,

I think that it is appalling that a cut in the funding for mental health services is even being considered in this state. We have an epidemic of mental health issues including domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual abuse as well as depression and suicide. Please do not cut this much needed funding.

--

Daphne Coen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Pam Watts <Pam@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:11 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Behavioral Health Budget Concerns
Attachments: Behavioral health budget.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Pamela L. Watts, M. Coun, LPC, NCC

Executive Director

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

3406 Glacier Highway

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Ph: (907) 463-3303

Fax: (907) 586-3877

pam@jamhi.org

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Elizabeth Johnston <lizjohnston27@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:09 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Therapeutic Courts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee,

I cannot call in to comment on the potential Therapeutic Courts denial of funding, but I hope that you will accept this e-mail for your consideration.

I am currently the Assistant Public Defender working up in Barrow (the only one here), but I write in my own personal capacity. Though we are too small of a system here to offer a traditional therapeutic court (we do have some systems that act in a similar capacity), I was able to be a part of the court that had recently started in Juneau when I interned with the Public Defender office there. Through that experience, I met people who were taking steps to change their life around, and people who had graduated the program and were working to help support those going through it. In my brief time there, it was clearly a very, very powerful program that was changing the lives of those in it. It was very powerful for me to watch.

Therapeutic Courts are also apparently cheaper to run than jail. So why not spend less money in a program with a better success rate than more money to send people to prison where their likelihood of re-offending is higher? It seems like this should be an easy decision.

I think and hope that you will be bombarded with many facts supporting this program and heartfelt testimony over the next couple of days. I have little else to say except to put in my support for them. They are fairly new here in Alaska, and it would be tragic not to provide the funding they need to continue to grow.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J Smith
(Current Barrow resident, though I consider Juneau home).

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Carol Shuler <CShuler@spbhs.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:07 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara
Subject: HB 66

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing in support of HB 66 funding necessary Mental Health services, including the Complex Behavioral Collaborative.

The CBC is a “Swat Team” that allows experts in complex behaviors to come to rural communities to assess complex behaviors, devise a behavior plan and provide on-going support to the individual and the community team providing supports to this individual. This has proven to not only be **very effective in decreasing challenging and even dangerous behaviors, but it is cost effective** in that the alternative is often to send these individuals to Northstar or API, and then eventually, out of state to residential treatment. This allows the individual to stay in their chosen community and assists the state in meeting its Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for community services. We have found this service to be very effective with the individuals we serve who have utilized the CBC and are now identifying many more individuals who could benefit from this service.

Please continue funding for this very important service.

Carol Shuler
215 Ocean Drive Loop, Apt. B

Homer, Alaska 99603

907-235-3805

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: axmakers <axmakers@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:03 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: ADF&G Budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Rep. Austerman,

I am a commercial fisherman and understand the importance of the Alaska Dep. of Fish and Game in maintaining our fisheries. I urge you to please put the \$550 million back in their budget. Thank-you for your consideration in this matter.

David Axmaker
F/V Maranatha

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: larrybemis@ymail.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:00 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: NB65-FYI 14 Re store S.E. funding,aerial funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom it am concern:

Commercial fishing is my living and is my main source of income . I live in a small community where commercial fishing drives our economy. I support this bill to be funded.

Larry Bemis

Box 192

Yakutat, Ak 99689

President Yakutat Alaska Fishermen Alliance Chairmen Yakutat Regional Aquaculture Association

Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Debra Arthur-Wilkinson <Debra@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:44 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Finance Committee:

Let me introduce myself, I am Debra K. Arthur-Wilkinson, a resident of Southeast Alaska , and an interested party to the purposed budget cut of \$8.3 million dollars to the Division of Behavioral Health's base budget.

Having been both a recipient of community mental health services and a provider of community mental health services, has allowed me the unique experience of being able to know how much each of those Behavioral Health dollars are truly worth. As a younger woman, I left an abusive relationship to be a single mother of two, working and providing for our daily lives. This situation left me feeling very depressed and often times out of hope and self-motivation. Through counseling at the local community mental health center, help with medications, and some additional services for my young daughters I was able to get in control of my depression and moved forward with my life. Behavioral health dollars also allowed my children and me to reside in a domestic violence shelter for 37-days. For every one of those 37-days, my daughters and I were afforded safe shelter, food, assistance with transportation for me to go to work each day and my children to be safely transported to school and day care. Through the support of other individuals, peers who had successfully run the gambit of domestic violence and mental health issues, I was able to see a future for myself and my daughters. I managed to complete two college degrees and to earn a Master's in Psychology while working fulltime to support myself and my daughters. I am now the Supervisor of Emergency Mental Health services for a community behavioral health center. I am giving back to the field that assisted me in my past life to live the healthy, happy, productive life I have today. If those Behavioral health dollars had not been available, I wonder how my life might be going now.

Oftentimes, monies applied to behavioral health are thought of expenses. And as every financially responsible concerned individual knows it is always good to cut expenses. I would argue the monies earmarked for behavioral health services are not an expense but an investment. As my life is testimony to. And, that investment did not stop with me. I have managed to raise two college educated daughters who are also productive members of the community of Southeast , Alaska; one working for the state of Alaska dealing with children in need, and one who is moving forward with employment with the City and Borough of Juneau. I

would encourage each of you to give consideration to the expenses you are cutting or the investments you are willing to make.

Thank you for attention,

Debra K. Arthur-Wilkinson, MA, LPA

Debra K. Arthur-Wilkinson, MA, LPA

Emergency Services Supervisor

3406 Glacier Hwy

Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 463-3303

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: elaine pfeiffer <pfeifferelaines@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:31 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: House budget - Behavioral Health cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I encourage you to maintain ARCH at the current funding level. I've personally visited ARCH and witnessed transformations of **chemically dependent teens**. The home-like treatment setting combined with abstinence literally gives kids back their lives. Once exposed to a life without chemical dependency, they are astounded by the choices they have. The benefits to communities they return to cannot be measured. Imagine the example a young person sets when he or she returns to their home - in towns and rural villages. Please continue funding for ARCH.

Elaine Pfeiffer

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Danielle Smith <dsmithz_70@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:49 AM
To: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Public Comment - (H) Finance Committee - Therapeutic Courts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltze-

I am writing to you, as co-chairs of the House Finance Subcommittee, to urge you and the Committee **to include the Alaska Court System's increment request of \$689,000 to support DUI Therapeutic Courts** in the SFY14 Operating budget. The requested increment will support the operations of six DUI Therapeutic Courts that have been operating since 2001. These courts have a proven track record and we need to support therapeutic courts as a cost-effective strategy to reduce criminal recidivism, while protecting the public. Otherwise, we can expect to continue the trend of incarceration and plan to spend millions more dollars for the construction and operation of a new correctional facility in the very near future.

Thank you for your consideration and your public service for Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Danielle Williams
2029 Blueberry Street
Anchorage, AK 99503

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mark Robinson <robsrule@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:02 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Proposed cut to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Finance Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to resist the proposed cut to the budget of Behavioral Health Services. I am most concerned about this cut in the light of the continuing mass killings throughout our country and to which Alaska is not immune. Yesterday I listened to a radio program where gun advocates were saying that restrictions on guns do not work and that we need to better address the root causes of why people choose to misuse guns in this way. I basically agree although I favor a balanced approach that includes taxing gun and gun equipment sales. Behavioral health programs are the very programs the progun advocates are talking about. Alaska is a pro-gun state. We are also a state with some of the highest rates of alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic and sexual assault and mental illness, situations where guns are often misused and lives are altered forever. Alaska is not likely to enact restrictions or taxes on guns so it is imperative that we adequately address the root causes of gun and other violence against others. We can't have it both ways if we are to have healthy communities and citizens. Alaska must fund programs to assist people with the above problems. The climate and the dark here are demanding; we must support our citizens by providing adequate support to behavior health programs so that people get the treatment they need and can develop the coping skills they must have to lead productive lives.

I guarantee it will take much more money at a later time to address the havoc these cuts will wreck because the problems will be worse than they are now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Lander
Homer

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lolita Brache <lolitagrace@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:43 PM
To: Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: rep.bill.stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: SAVE funding for Best Beginnings and PAT

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Wilson,

I am very discouraged to hear that you are sponsoring the bill that would cut \$137,500 from Best Beginnings and \$242,500 from Parents as Teachers.

These two programs have brought outstanding services to young families in the greater Homer area. Best Beginnings funding has helped build and maintain a strong collaborative network of agencies and individuals committed to supporting early learning, the educators that work with young children, and the parents that raise them. Parents as Teachers is a **PROVEN** program that connects families with one another and with professionals who can help them build resiliency. I know that you and all your fellow representatives are well aware of the cost **SAVINGS** when we help families up front-- to **PREVENT** child abuse and neglect, and when we work with young children to prepare them for school. The few dollars you think you are "saving" by cutting these programs, will only have to be spent somewhere else-- foster care for children of a family that has disintegrated in isolation? or "special services" for a child that enters school unprepared? Where would you rather spend our precious pennies?

Please preserve the original funding levels (which are the same as last year; no increase was sought).

Lolita Brache
PO Box 2508
Homer Ak
299 0694

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jamie McLean <gjmclean52@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:21 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Please Support Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

As a mental health clinician who has lived in Juneau for the last 31 years, I am very concerned about the proposed budget cuts to behavioral health services. Without the support of agencies such as JAMHI, JYS and others that support people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders, our community puts these people in higher risk for institutional care and decreases their ability to live a meaningful and productive life. Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Thank you for your careful and compassionate attention to this important issue.
Sincerely,

Jamieson McLean

G. Jamieson McLean M.A, L.P.C.
114 Franklin Street, Suite 207
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 586-3373

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: susan wylie <creativewellbeing@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 7:40 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Mental Health Emergency!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

This funding cut is draconian and completely out of touch with the needs of Alaskans. Any of of would be hard pressed to not know of a person or family effected by suicide, mental illness or substance abuse. We are the number one state for suicide! How can we even think of cutting services?

I am a behavioral health provider in private practice, who urges you to support our public behavioral health services. Please consider the following:

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * **mental health treatment**
- * **substance abuse treatment**
- * **detox services**
- * **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
- * **supported housing**
- * **peer support services**
- * **suicide prevention**
- * **tribal behavioral health services**
- * **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
- * **parent and peer navigation**
- * **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
- * **prevention and early intervention**
- * **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.

- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5

times less expensive than institutional care.

· **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Thank you for your consideration,

Susan Wylie, MS, LPC

Susan Wylie

4014 Ridge Way

Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907)523-0437 Home

(907)209-3976 Office/cell

(907)523-0438 FAX

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rachel Ludwig <rludwig75@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 7:21 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: REGARDING CONCERN FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear sirs and madams,

My name is Rachel Ludwig. My 20 year old son was diagnosed with schizophrenia three years ago. By passing a bill that limits funding to the behavioral health services, you risk the continued treatment and future services that my son and MANY others that seek these services they so desperately need. As it is now, Alaska is lacking in services and resources to these people, why put them on the chopping block when there are so many other cuts that could be made? I hear a lot of Politicians talking about "the good of Alaskans", these my friends ARE Alaskans. Let's NOT forget that OR them.

I implore you to reconsider this recommendation for the good of the people you serve.

Sincerely,

Rachel Ludwig

--

"The five separate fingers are independent units. Close them and the fist multiplies strength. This is organization."

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Tina Walsh-Morgan <tmmorgan@alaska.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 7:05 PM
Subject: \$8.3 Million Reduction to Mental Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please do not make cuts to mental health services. Access to mental health services impact the sufferer and their families throughout the state. My family and I have personally benefitted from access to mental health services.

Thank you

Tina M. Morgan

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Marion Nelson <mmkn@ptialaska.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 6:55 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Alan Austerman,

I like saving money as much as the next person especially when it comes to keeping people at home for medical and social services. It just makes sense for all concerned. Cutting 8.3 million from the Behavioral Health Services does not seem fiscally responsible. Please keep the budget in tact.

Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—**at home and in their communities close to family and friends.**

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- **By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.**

Regards,

Marion Nelson
POB 3612, Kenai 99611
907 283 4632
907 398 8669

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: GARY LEHNHART <lehnhart@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 5:48 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Representative.Bill.Stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Representative.Tammie.Wilson@ak.leg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker; Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sean.Parnell@alaska.gov
Subject: No Subject Education funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Legislators,

I understand that the Finance Committee will be discussing the operating budget tomorrow, which gives you the opportunity to hear testimony and think about our public school funding. I believe in public schools. I have four children who have attended school here in Juneau and I have the opportunities every day to witness the realities of our public schools. I am an elementary art teacher here in Juneau. The only one for our district of 6+ elementary schools. I serve 95 classrooms, going from school to school. It is both thrilling, because there is nothing more hopeful for our future than children being innovative and creative, and discouraging because I see the stress that teachers and students are feeling with strained school funding, resulting in larger and larger class sizes and the many difficulties and barriers to learning that this imposes.

I would like to ask you to please support raising the BSA this year after several years of flat funding and many cuts to many districts. It's raising the BSA that really makes the most practical difference.

I would also like to invite you, while you are in Juneau, to accompany me into a classroom while I teach an art lesson. I would enjoy meeting you and I think you'd really appreciate the opportunity to get out there and see what's going on. Please let me know if you are interested! I am very serious and sincere about this invitation.

I am hopeful that we will see good things come of your hard work and your creative thinking this year. We are counting on you. I believe there is nothing that has a higher impact on the future health of our state, than the intelligence, and mental and emotional health of all of our states children, thus placing the public schools in the position of the highest impact point for our states dollars.

Thank you so much for your hard work, your willingness to listen while you deliberate, and your leadership to come up with good solutions and support for our public schools.

Nancy Lehnhart

Juneau, (907) 321-0603

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kaia Dahl <kdahl1999@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 5:38 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB 65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Mr. Austerman

I am very concerned that the fish and game is looking at 550k budget cut this is directed toward things in the SE Alaska that need funding if these things are cut they will effect fishing time and then also effect the crew shares the supplies need to conduct these fisheries and also the fish tax that is generated from these fisheries

Thank you Jerry Dahl

please contact me for further information if need 907 518 0860

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Daniello, Denise L (HSS) <denise.daniello@alaska.gov>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 5:04 PM
To: Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Munoz, Cathy N (LAA) (representative_cathy_munoz@legis.state.ak.us); Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Lindsey Holmes
Cc: Paula Pawlowski
Subject: ACoA Support for Senior Fall Prevention Funds
Attachments: House HSS Finance Subcommittee, ACoA Support for Senior Increments.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Chair Neuman & House HSS Finance Subcommittee Members:

The Alaska Commission on Aging appreciates your consideration and support for the Governor's proposed increment for the Health Promotion, Disease Prevention program to target senior fall prevention and for continued funding of the Complex Behavior Collaborative. Our support letter is attached. Thank you.

Denise Daniello, Executive Director
Alaska Commission on Aging
P.O. Box 110693
Juneau, AK 99811-0693
907-465-4879 (Phone) / 907-465-1398 (Fax)
denise.daniello@alaska.gov
www.alaskaaging.org

Healthy Aging for Alaskans Across the Lifespan

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dave Berube <dpb_99518@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 5:02 PM
To: Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Fully fund TBI program and AK Complex Behavior Collaborative

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

My name is Dave Berube and I live in Anchorage. I have a 28 year old son named Brandon who was born three months premature and a severe cognitive/intellectual disability. He was also diagnosed in his early 20's with Schizoaffective – Bi-Polar disorder. We have been struggling with his challenges which are several including behavioral issues. He tried to commit suicide three times last year and his mother and I are grateful for the assistance of the Anchorage Community Mental health center.

However more is needed and I am asking for **you to please support full funding for continuation of the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative**. People with disabilities are at a higher risk for experiencing complex and difficult-to-manage behaviors. People with disabilities include those with developmental and intellectual disabilities, behavioral health disorders, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, autism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc.) Alaskan service providers report they lack adequate intensive support and intervention services for clients with complex behaviors.

Family members who's loved ones suffer from complex behavior issues such as my son find themselves alone and need help in order to help the loved one affected. When caregivers are given tools through consultation and training the individuals they serve are more likely to stabilize and avoid being sent to more costly institutional care—such as Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), incarceration, nursing homes, or out-of-state residential treatment.

I am also asking for your support on **FULLY funding the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program**. I have worked with individuals who were clients and a couple of friends who's loved ones sustained a traumatic brain injury from either a motor vehicle accident or a fall. It has been devastating to family members in the past who reached out for help only to find there was none. The **Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program brings real hope and positive changes to not only the person's life who is affected but their family as well. This can be done through** case management services which are a critical support service and is a cost effective way to coordinate and link people to services that will support recovery efforts.

Case management supports the family to fully understand brain injury and provides tools for the challenges that brain injury brings. In the past 20 years, there have been nearly 15,000 Alaskans who have been hospitalized for Traumatic Brain Injury. Brain injury support services (such as case management) have been available in the Lower 48 since the 1980's, yet this service has yet to be fully developed in Alaska

Access to case management to an individual means it:

- Reduces inefficiencies in the utilization of public and private services

- Reduces emergency room visits – which happens a lot
- Deters more costly care by keeping people within their own homes
- Along with other program services, increases readiness for vocational rehabilitation and/or employment.

Please support both of these programs. Thank you for your time and attention to the request.

Sincerely,

Dave Berube

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Walter Majoros <walterm@jys.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:46 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sen. Dennis Egan
Subject: Proposed \$8.3 million cut to Behavior Health Grants

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members

I was saddened and shocked to see that the House Finance Subcommittee is recommending a \$8.3 million cut to behavioral health grants. These community-based services are critical to help people with mental illnesses and substance use disorders remain in their communities, and avoid more costly institutionalized care in jails, emergency rooms, psychiatric institutions and nursing homes.

At Juneau Youth Services, we serve 500 children/youth and their families each year. We offer an array of outpatient, school-based and residential services for youth with mental health and substance abuse problems. Most of these youth come from families who have experienced domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse and/or substance abuse. As you know, Alaska has some of the highest rates of domestic, sexual, child and substance abuse in the country.

Cutting behavioral health grants will work directly against the Governor's Choose Respect Initiative to end domestic violence, sexual assault and child sexual abuse in Alaska. It is important to remember that these are generational cycles; unless we help children and youth who have experienced or witnessed these forms of assault and abuse, domestic violence and sexual abuse will continue to run rampant in our state.

Please restore the \$8.3 million that is being proposed for cuts to behavioral health grants. These services are vital to the healthy future of Alaska's children, youth and families.

Walter Majoros
Executive Director
Juneau Youth Services
523-6531

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: sandikohtz@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:37 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; rep.david.gutenberg@akleg.gov; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in Alaska

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am currently the Director of Rainforest Recovery Center in Juneau. I am encouraging you to support maintaining the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Health & Social Services budget. Without maintaining at least the current funding level, we will be unable to continue providing the level of services we are currently providing for Juneau and the state of Alaska. We currently remain at capacity with a waiting list for services.

The current level of funding does not cover the entire cost of treatment services, but allows us to have a foundation from which to build and provide the services we provide. The majority of our clientele do not have Medicaid or insurance which covers treatment for co-occurring disorders. The current funding allows us to provide services to them when they have no income. For every dollar invested in the treatment for substance abuse and mental illness, you save approximately \$4 in the cost of corrections and other non-treatment services.

I am hoping that you will consider my request. I would be willing to discuss any issues with you to answer questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me at 907-796-8499 or my cell phone at 775-813-8700.

Sandra F. Kohtz, LCSW

Director

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jenny Martin <jenny.martin@bbbsak.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:32 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Restore Best Beginnings Funding
Attachments: CommCafe2013-kids.JPG; CommunityCafe2013.JPG; lang&literacy_training.JPG

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance committee:

I am writing to request that you restore funding for **Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels** -- Best Beginnings \$937,500 and Parents as Teachers \$1,042,500.

In our local partnership, Best Beginnings Homer, funding has gone to help support local services for young children and their families. Here is just a snap shot:

- 25 parents and 18 children attended our community cafe on Feb 16 where we partnered with our local Paul Banks elementary school to provide educational sessions parents and free child care.
- 11 child care providers, librarians, parents and early learning professionals attended a language and literacy training we coordinated locally with faculty from UAA.
- Avg. 15 families and children are attending our outreach storyhour program coordinated by our public library 12 miles out EastEnd road - for families who have difficulty attending the local storyhour at the library. In addition, the kindergarten class at the Russian Old Believer village of Razdolna also are provided a storyhour every other week for 12 weeks.
- 15 book bags are being created by Kachemak Kid child care program through a grant provided by our program to help improve language and literacy with young children. These books bags are being made locally and will be available for checkout with parents at the program.
- approx. 10 emergency drop in slots are available at Stay Play Learn child care program through a mini grant offered by our program to help families in need.
- Playspace assessments have been completed for both indoor and outdoor play spaces and play grounds - in addition to a survey completed by parents and child care providers about local trails and walkways.

The funding we have received from Best Beginnings has been instrumental in improving early learning services and increasing awareness of the importance of early learning. Spend a \$1 now and save thousands later! Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,
Jenny Martin
Best Beginnings Homer coordinator
907-435-7101

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Olivia Shears <oshears@nwresource.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:27 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Best Beginnings Homer

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Having worked with foster youth, foster parents, Child Protective Services (Investigations/Initial Assessments) over the past 7 years, I have experienced an up close and personal understanding of the negative impacts when children are not cared for adequately, whether due to lack of education, lack of resources or other variables. Children, families, and whole communities suffer. Parents and providers need resources to help them prepare to do the most important job there is, caring for children.

Best Beginnings provides information, trainings and resources for families and providers across the state. I believe that mental health field is people working towards changing the brain. We know the developing years of young children is crucial; therefore it is absolutely critical to be proactive and continue to invest in young children's development and well being. I am asking you to restore funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels -- Best Beginnings \$937,500 and Parents as Teachers \$1,042,500.

This is a sample of what BBH has provided:

Update on Best Beginnings Homer - coalition of agencies, individuals and families who support early childhood education in our area. Over the last several years, we have helped support:

- Paul Banks Community Café - provided free child care, lunch, and educational sessions for parents on language, literacy, kindergarten readiness and other topics
- Outreach Storyhour program in collaboration with Public Library for families who cannot make it into the library
- Free parenting classes with free child care when needed
- Mini grants for child care providers to improve their services and equipment.
- Emergency 'drop in' child care grants for local child care programs to provide as needed to families.
- Playgroups for families through Parents as Teacher program
- Free educational trainings for parents, professionals and child care providers
- Assessment of local playspaces to make sure they are safe and child appropriate for young children - including park clean up days at Bayview park and providing a port-a-potty during summer.
- Week of the Young Child events and advocacy in the community

- New work group which is advocating support for local child care providers/programs to help improve the quality of services in our area and work with businesses to improve family-friendly policies and services.

Thank you for your time.

Olivia Shears | Family Support Specialist *Alaska Center for Resource Families*

A Division of Northwest Resource Associates

840 K Street, Suite 101; Anchorage, Alaska 99501 | (: 907.279.1803

*: oshears@nwresource.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: John Regitano <johnr@FamilyCenteredServices.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:28 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Proposed DHSS Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 4, 2013

To: Representative Austerman

I am writing in regard to my concerns on the 8.3 million recommended cuts to behavioral health grants proposed by the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee.

Based on my personal experience as a Director for a Behavioral Health nonprofit corporation providing mental health treatment services to children I can say with certainty that the proposed cuts will likely result in significant damage to the behavioral health service system in Alaska. This will result in harm to children and families and in the long-term result in higher costs to the citizens of Alaska in many ways and through many other venues. The degree of damage will vary from community to community and for each provider agency but in all cases it will likely result in reduced access to service or the complete elimination of essential mental and behavioral health services.

Because grant funding for many providers has remained flat or decreased over the last decade behavioral health organizations have been struggling financially for some time. This in large part is due to the increase in the need for services occurring simply from the population growth in the State, cost of living increases, and the continuing increase in Federal and State oversight demands that have required the redirection of provider resources. For our organization, which provides mental health services to children and families from all regions of Alaska, our State grant has not changed since Fiscal Year 2003 when it was reduced by 10%. While Medicaid funding has increased for most organizations in recent years the increase has not eliminated the importance of grant funding to help address the fact that Medicaid payment rates do not cover the full cost of the services that are provided by any behavioral health provider in Alaska. If anything in the last decade the flexibility afforded to provider agencies with the grant funding has made the funding even more essential to the stability of the Alaska behavioral health provider network.

I appreciate your assistance in helping to reinstate the proposed cuts into the house budget.

Sincerely

John W Regitano

Executive Director

Family Centered Services of Alaska

John W. Regitano

Executive Director

Family Centered Services of Alaska

1825 Marika Road

Fairbanks, AK 99709

Telephone: (907) 474-0890

Fax: (907) 474-3621

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Shere Baechler <SBaechler@KPBSD.k12.ak.us>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:24 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: please support early learning

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Legislators,

Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers makes a difference for families with young children and for our community!

I am a teacher of young children with special needs in the Homer area. These programs have been so helpful in providing services for these children and their families with direct services to meet their needs, offering informational opportunities and for their efforts to improve the quality of childcare.

Please restore funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels -- Best Beginnings \$937,500 and Parents as Teachers \$1,042,500.

Thank you.

Sheryl Baechler, Special Education Teacher, PaulBanks Elementary School, Homer, AK

Homer resident and registered voter@

295 E. Fairview Avenue

Homer, AK 99603

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Gus Marx <gusm@jys.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 4:15 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sen. Dennis Egan
Subject: No on \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

House Finance Committee:

This letter is to request that you do not reduce the general grant funds for Behavioral Health Services.

Saturday morning I learned that the Alaska House Finance Committee made budget decisions on Friday regarding Health & Social Services. It appears you are recommending an over \$8.3 million reduction in general funds for behavioral health services, amounting to a 31% reduction in DH&SS's grants funding. This appears to be counter-intuitive to the Governor's initiatives for healthy families and an end to violence against women.

I have a list of "talking points," which I'm sure you will have cut and pasted to each of you a number of times during the next few days. Each of those points is perfectly valid.

However, I'm not going to veil my own self-interest. I am a grant writer for Juneau Youth Services, a non-profit that provides a wide spectrum of services for kids and their families. And to be honest, this cut will affect a number of our programs, including our suicide prevention program, which worked with nearly every ninth-grader in the district. It will impact (perhaps close) our transitional living program, which is currently facing possible federal funding cuts, as well. This budget decision may cripple our new Early Childcare Services program, which struggles with its current level of funding. I can mention a few other programs, but ultimately what this comes down to is that our State grant funding hasn't increased in years. Medicaid reimbursement hasn't kept up with inflation, and a 30+% cut to most of our State grants is probably more than Juneau Youth Services can withstand. We started trimming fat a few years ago because of the stagnant operating funding, and we're scraping bone now.

We've reduced staffing from a high of 180 to about 150 now. We are mandated by the State to maintain staff-to-client ratios, and we can't reduce staffing further and still maintain those ratios.

I ask you to reconsider this Health & Social Services budget reduction. Most of the service providers are stretched too thin now, and if I had the courage, I'd ask that you consider increasing the grant funding. Fortunately, I'm not confrontational. That said, I am hoping that the \$9 million in substance abuse funding that the State has reported it will receive (or has received) will not be used to replace this reduction in funding.

Thank you for considering not reducing the Health & Social Services grants funding.

Sincerely,

Gus Marx
Grants Coordinator
Juneau Youth Services

Phone: (907) 523-6511
FAX: (907) 789-2106

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Simmonds, Foster <fps@achc.asrc.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 3:40 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: "No" to BUDGET CUTS in CRITICAL Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

My name is Foster P. Simmonds

P.O. Box 786

Barrow, Alaska 99723

(907) 367-3044 C

(907) 852-3006 H

(907) 852-8374 W

I oppose cuts in the "Behavioral Health Services".

During this critical time, please to not cut programs in Behavioral Health Services, because of other, just as important mitigating circumstances.

There is a Nationwide concern, *growing steadily*, because of school shootings, multipul-shootings etc.

Because the problem is not as visible here at home in Alaska, does not mean we should not be concerned.

What happens in the Lower 48 usually follows later in Alaska.

I have a son who benefits from the services recommended for cuts,

I do not stand alone, but I fight on for others who, as I have been through...will be brought to tears because of circumstances they cannot understand.

Those individuals will have no-where to turn, as I had no-where to turn. Before My wife and I decided that the only way to save our son was to have the State take custody. Since then a lot of things have happened

- 1) Mental health was moved from Seattle to Alaska
- 2) Mental health was reorganized
- 3) Mentally ill are receiving services at home in Alaska
- 4) The state in general has become more aware of the scope of mental health issues we as a state are responsible for.
- 5) And the importance in addressing them to the benefit of our mutual future.

I with my High school education cannot presume to know all the issues, but I have been involved with mental illness issues for an awfully long time, because I love my son, who at times was unlovable.

It is my sincerest prayer & hope, that you will somehow find a way to continue, fully funding these program.

Foster P. Simmonds Sr. 3/4/13

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Chuck Wright <cwright@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 3:26 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

I am very concerned about the proposed very significant reduction in funds for Behavioral Health Services. These are essential community-based services which have provided necessary assistance to Alaskans. Community services have been proven to be the most helpful and most cost-efficient means to help people whereas the institutionalization that invariably results without these services are the most expensive. My concern is for the welfare of the people involved and the loss of very useful services to them. There can be no argument that Alaskans should be allowed to remain in their communities and with their families instead of in psychiatric institutions, nursing homes and potentially jail. The many beneficial treatments, programs and other services provided by Behavioral Health Services do allow for the former to occur. Taking them away by the proposed reduction will require the latter. It shouldn't be a difficult choice. I hope you'll seriously consider the ramifications of this decision.

Thank you.

Chuck Wright

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dale Valcarce <Dale@jamhi.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 3:14 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Proposed Budget cuts to the Division of Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

To Whom it may concern,

Upon accepting a position at Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. (JAMHI), I moved to Juneau in February 2011. This has been my first position in the mental health field. Since having the opportunity of working at JAMHI I have gained a better perspective of the needs of people that are seriously mentally ill. This population definitely needs help from the Federal as well as State Government.

The Budget cuts that the legislature is proposing to the Division of Behavioral Health would be devastating for a large population in Alaska. Cuts up to 31% would have a lot of negative effects on communities all over Alaska. I really believe that the state would have higher incidents of homelessness, higher visits to hospitals, and higher incidents of people using illegal drugs and alcoholism. The outcome of these items would put a strain on the medical system that is overloaded now.

One of the many problems I see in the behavioral health field is the need for services and the ability to pay. Most of the clients at JAMHI rely on Medicaid. Medicaid represents about 53% of JAMHI's revenues. Under 2% of revenues come from other insurance and self-payers. That leaves the State of Alaska Behavioral Health Grant to cover services that most of JAMHI's clients are not able to afford. That state grant amounts to 29% of total revenues. Without that money JAMHI would have to cut services to many Alaskans. On July 1, 2010, JAMHI had 386 clients. At the end of February they had 438. The grant that JAMHI receives from the Division of Behavioral Health has not increased in over 3 years but yet they are serving 13% more clients than they were serving in 2010.

JAMHI over the last 5 years has had to take a serious look at it's cost and has reduced a lot of them. Just recently the Chief Operating Officer's position and an accounting position have been eliminated putting a stress on remaining positions. If JAMHI were to lose 31% of it's state grant, up to 6 positions would have to be eliminated and they would most likely be direct service positions.

I really believe that the state needs to reconsider funding for the Division of Behavioral Health and should increase funding instead of taking it away. The safety and well being of the entire state is in jeopardy.

Sincerely,

Dale Valcarce

Chief Financial Officer

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

3406 Glacier Highway

Juneau, Alaska 99801

Ph: (907) 463-3303

Fax: (907) 586-3877

dale@jamhi.org

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lee Anne Crafton <lcrafton@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 2:59 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: NO to DBH cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Alaska Legislative Member,

I am writing to voice my resistance to DBH cuts currently on the table for discussion. As a person who has experienced the result of underserved mentally ill populations in my work and my personal life, I highly object to reducing funding to provide services to this needy population. We are already under serving the many people in our state, and country, who experience debilitating mental illness that affects ability to manage day to day life. Many of these people have already suffered poor advocacy and care and have ended up in jails across the state, not to mention the costs of institutionalization in hospitals and API. Community supports are what provide the safety net for many people experiencing mental illness and dual diagnosis.

I have seen it repeatedly over my 20 years in this state; in the summer streets of Anchorage, on a busy winter intersection in the Valley; at the doors of the slime line on the Peninsula; at homeless shelters and phone calls to my office. People who cannot make good decisions for themselves, left to their own devices without support end up costing us so much more money and time.

I personally met with a gentlemen this very morning. He came through my office door on a whim, and asked for some help. He is facing 2 years of prison, is legally deaf, and is struggling to find a way to stay out of institution.

Say NO to this cut, please.

Lee Anne Crafton, HOPE Care Coordinator

420-3608 Voice

260-9435 Fax

47202 Princeton Avenue Soldotna 99669

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sally Saddler <teal@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 1:50 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Senator_Dennis_Egan@legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz; 'School Board'
Subject: FW: HB65 Support for Education Funding
Attachments: 3 4 13 JSD letter to Austerman.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

and now for the email with correct email addresses!

Please note, that the Governor is also copied on this letter but I sent his email separately.

From: Sally Saddler [mailto:teal@gci.net]
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 11:38 AM
To: 'alan.austerman@akleg.gov'; 'bill.stoltze@akleg.gov'
Cc: 'beth.kerttula@akleg.gov'; 'cathy.munoz@ak.gov'; 'dennis.egan@akleg.gov'; 'School Board'; 'Knuth, Dorothy K (EED)'
Subject: HB65 Support for Education Funding

Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltze:

Please accept the attached letter from the Juneau School Board President and Clerk in support of education funding in the operating budget in HB65.

We plan on having at least one of our board members present at today's hearing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sally Saddler, President

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Robert Croley <rcroley@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 1:48 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: are you people crazy?
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Really... an 8.3 million dollar cut in mental health services...

Consider very carefully the impact to Alaska as a whole if you do this. Years ago when Regan chopped the mental health budget for the country thousands of people were impacted, put out on the street with absolutely no ability to manage for themselves.

You're wanting to do the same thing here... you'd better have a chat with your psychiatrist and get yourself a degree in psychology because with all of the people that I'm going to send to your office for services You're going to be working double time... The homeless population in Anchorage alone has skyrocketed in recent years and you want more of this... You've gotta be crazy.

Robert Croley

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Chris Maack <cmaack@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 12:47 PM
To: Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Subject: Tsunami funds

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 4, 2013

Dear Governor Parnell,

There's a worrisome rumor that you would be opposed to using State funds to clean up debris from the Japanese tsunami.

I urge you to reconsider, if that is the case. Although our budget is squeezed, like everyone else's, the present financial paralysis in Washington does not bode well for getting federal dollars for this effort. The clean-up needs to be done sooner rather than later, and it is **our coastline, our ocean resources, our fisheries** that will suffer if we allow the tsunami flotsam to break up further, causing leakage of contaminants and dispersal of ever smaller bits of plastics into the food chain. We now know that even plastics are not inert but release chemicals that can act as endocrine disruptors, which are slow acting degraders of health in humans as well as other creatures.

If we hold out for federal intervention, nothing will happen until it becomes a national outrage and brings a lot of negative publicity to our seafoods. By then too much damage will have been done.

Thank you for your consideration,

Christine Maack
Anchorage, AK

Cc: Senator Pete Kelly, Senate Finance Committee
Senator Kevin Meyer, Senate Finance Committee
Rep. Alan Austerman, House Finance Committee
Rep. Bill Stoltze, House Finance Committee

From: Karen Wood <karen.k.wood@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 1:43 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Fully fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

-For the record, my name is Karen E Wood.

-I request your support to FULLY fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program.

My personal story: I am the mother of a son who experienced a traumatic brain injury as a teenager twenty-six years ago. Then knowledge and treatment of closed head injuries was negligible. Awareness of the long term implications and support for patient and family were non-existent. We are just recently becoming aware of the significance of this type of injury and it's lifelong lasting affects.

The Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injury Program funding

- will provide case management to 100 Alaskans.

- Case management services are a critical support service
- Case management is a cost effective way to coordinate and link people to services that will support recovery efforts
- Case management supports the family to fully understand brain injury and provides tools for the challenges that brain injury brings
- There are nearly 700 Alaskans each year who experience moderate to severe traumatic brain injury who need this service. The current funding request is to support only 100 Alaskans.
- In the past 20 years, there have been nearly 15,000 Alaskans who have been hospitalized for Traumatic Brain Injury.

Access to case management:

- Reduces inefficiencies in the utilization of public and private services
- Reduces emergency room visits
- Deters more costly care by keeping people within their own homes
- Along with other program services, increases readiness for vocational rehabilitation and/or employment

- Please also support funding for continuation of the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative

- People with disabilities are at a higher risk for experiencing complex and difficult-to-manage behaviors. People with disabilities include those with developmental and intellectual disabilities, behavioral health disorders, Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia, autism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc.)
- Alaskan service providers report they lack adequate intensive support and intervention services for clients with complex behaviors.
- Caregivers and providers who are not equipped with specialized behavior management skills struggle because they are not always able to handle those in their care with challenging behaviors.
- When caregivers are given tools through consultation and training the individuals they serve are more likely to stabilize and avoid being sent to more costly institutional care—such as Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), incarceration, nursing homes, or out-of-state residential treatment.
- In FY12, funding was allocated to set up the Collaborative and develop the provider agreements. In FY13, the Collaborative began serving clients and continues to expand its consultant and client base. In FY14, we are seeking annualized funding to ensure that the consultation and training services of the Complex Behavior Collaborative continue to be available for caregivers and providers, and the individuals they serve.

- Research shows that when individuals with complex behaviors have on-going supports they are more likely to remain stable, productive, and functioning successfully in the community.
- Without supports, people with difficult-to-manage behaviors can more easily escalate into crisis, requiring more acute and costly care at API (Alaska Psychiatric Institute), emergency room care, incarceration in Alaska's correctional facilities, or out-of-state institutionalization. The Complex Behavior Collaborative helps providers avoid crises and acute care situations by:
 - 1) building community-based service capacity to deal with difficult behaviors;
 - 2) building expertise related to maladaptive behaviors within Alaska;
 - 3) providing services in the community to prevent or reduce the need for hospitalization and acute institutional care.

Thank you!

Karen E Wood

PO Box 85228

Fairbanks, AK 99708-5228

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Cindy Lelake <l lakeecindy60@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 1:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Please don't victimize the most vulnerable among us by reducing Behavioral Health Services general funds

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The House Subcommittee on Health and Social Services has recommended an \$8.3 million reduction in general funds for Behavior Health Services. These local, community-based services include mental health and substance abuse treatment, detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbances and suicide prevention services and services related to domestic violence and sexual assault--to name only a few of the most vital programs offered.

Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

Without these community supports, people experiencing substance abuse and mental illness are at higher risk for much costlier institutionalized care--jail, psychiatric institutions, nursing homes.

Without these community supports, people with behavioral health disorders are more likely to seek help in emergency rooms, and are at greater risk for institutionalized care--again, far more costly alternatives.

By serving people at home and in the community, we are able to provide cost-effective ways to insure that all Alaskans live meaningful and productive lives.

Very truly yours,

Cindy Lelake
Anchorage

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: wilks@acsalaska.net
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 1:13 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Proposed cuts to Behavioral Health funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Shannon K. Wilks
2941 Westwind Court
Anchorage, Alaska 99516

March 4, 2012

Dear Representative Austerman;

I have read with dismay the proposed \$8,368,800 cuts to behavioral health services in Alaska. At a time when mental health and substance abuse are in the national press and affecting broad populations including returning veterans, children, adults and families cuts of this magnitude will only add to the costs of emergency services including emergency room costs, response costs by police, fire departments and village safety officer and costs of hospitalization at Alaska Psychiatric Institute and other hospitals state wide.

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * mental health treatment
- * substance abuse treatment
- * detox services
- * services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- * supported housing
- * peer support services
- * suicide prevention
- * tribal behavioral health services
- * services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
- * parent and peer navigation
- * services related to domestic violence and sexual assault
- * prevention and early intervention
- * programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

Sincerely,

Shannon Wilks

Phone: 907-345-2846

Email: wilks@acsalaska.net

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Gail French <gailpfrench@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 12:33 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: mental health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

In response to the Sandy Hook massacre there was a call for increased mental health intervention and restriction of large ammunition clips reduction. Any kind of gun control is difficult, that leaves mental health intervention.

SO now an eight million dollar reduction in mental health services funding is recommended???????????

Gail French

--

Gail French
gailpfrench@gmail.com
344-6261

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kjersti Bowen <kjersti.bowen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 12:23 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Budget cuts to Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 4, 2013

Dear Representative Austerman;

I just heard that the The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. While cutting the budge makes a good sound byte, and certainly fiscal responsibility is to be hoped for, this budget cut misses the mark.

Cutting services to the most vulnerable members of society is easy as they have the least voice and ability to be heard. However, it is a shortsighted move. Not providing the kinds of services listed below will increase the long-term costs to our neighborhoods and communities. It will increase the costs of law enforcement, the judiciary, corrections, and emergency services. Research shows us that cuts to services of this sort result in increased institutionalization with its many times greater cost.

In many cases to cut funding would be to have wasted the money previously spent, e.g., suicide prevention and prevention and early intervention programs, another form of fiscal irresponsibility.

It is my understanding that the local, community-based services that would be affected by the budget cut include:

Mental health treatment	Substance abuse treatment
Detox services	Services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
Supported housing	Peer support services
Suicide prevention	Tribal behavioral health services
Parent and peer navigation	Services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
Prevention and early intervention	Services related to domestic violence and sexual assault
Programs that support reunifying and keeping families together	

I have worked with a number of Fairbanks and Anchorage residents who have benefited from programs listed above, and I know many more that have found long wait lists a barrier to services, but persisted in hoping for their turn.

Our population of seniors is the fastest growing in the nation. Alaskans commit suicide at a rate far exceeding that of other states. Alaska has high rates of sexual assault and child sexual abuse when compared with the rest of the nation. Alaskans need and use all of the services which are slated for cuts.

Please stand up against this budget cut, stand up for Alaskans, especially for those vulnerable Alaskans whose voices are seldom heard, for that is truly the role of government.

I urgently ask you to please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget, and to use your influence to persuade others to do the same.

Sincerely,

Kjersti Bowen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kris Jez <kjez@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 12:06 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Say No to behavioral health services cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman,

Please say no to the proposed cuts to Behavioral Health Services. The proposed cuts will only cost more money in the long run. Behavioral health supports keep people who experience mental illness and substance use disorders in the community, surrounded by family and friends. Without community supports, people with behavioral health issues tend to be at greater risk, which can then lead to higher incidents of hospitalization and the possibility of institutionalization. All of which cost more in the long run.

Community services has proven to be the most cost effective way of delivering services. I personally have family members who experience mental illness and it is their ability to receive services within the community, surrounded by family and friends that enables them to live a full and meaningful life.

Again, please say NO to the proposed budget cuts.

Thank you,

Kristan Jez

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dennis Gann <dennisdgann@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 11:46 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: No Cuts to Critical Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

Please do not cut Critical Behavioral Health Services as recommended by the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services.

These general funds support critical community-based services including, but not limited to: mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbance, supported housing, peer support services, suicide prevention, tribal behavioral health services, services for seniors with co-occurring disorders, parent and peer navigation, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault, prevention and early intervention, and programs that support reunifying and keeping families together.

These funds support healthy communities, show our compassion to our fellow citizens, and save money in the long run by keeping people out of the much more expensive alternatives including jail, emergency rooms, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

thank you

--

Dennis Gann
943 W 19th Avenue
Anchorage AK 99503
[907-299-2239](tel:907-299-2239)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Joe Cannava <jcannava@pchsak.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 11:27 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services
Attachments: \$8.3 Reduction in Behavioral Health Services.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am writing this letter in opposition to the House Budget Subcommittee on Health and Social Services recommendation for an \$8,368,800. reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services because of the adverse effect it will have on the 725 mental health patients from Soldotna and Kenai that we treat on a regular basis at Peninsula Community Health Services.

I am the Director of Behavioral Health at Peninsula Community Health Services (PCHS) located in Soldotna Alaska. In 2012 PCHS worked with 725 different mental health patients providing mental health treatment to youth and families with a Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) and Chronically Mentally Ill Adults. PCHS also provides on-call mental health clinicians for the emergency room at Central Peninsula Hospital (CPH).

If this reduction in general funds happens then Peninsula Community Health Services (PCHS) would have to reconsider providing services to underfunded clients and limit mental health services to clients. Our current behavioral health program is losing money because of the services being provided and the lack of funding for many clients. The Department of Behavioral Health grant (FY 14 CBHTR RFP) we receive from the State of Alaska current assists in our ability to provide mental health services to clients with limited funding. Although the grant does not even come close to funding the services we provide the money provides a cushion for the services to continue. Our current behavioral health program is losing money because of the services being provided and the lack of a funding source for many clients. The grant has not increased in over ten years and without it our ability to provide on-call services at Central Peninsula Hospital (redirecting people away from in-patient treatment) and mental health services to the Central Peninsula would be jeopardized. Other Community Mental Health programs have been shut down because of lack of funding.

The services that Peninsula Community Health Services provides assist Alaska so that they can live meaningful and productive lives-at the same time saving money by reducing in-patient hospital visits. For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-3 time less expensive than institutional care. Also, without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutional care-such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

Peninsula Community Health Services (PCHS) employs 230 employees. These hard working employees work with Chronically Mentally Ill Adults (CMI) and Severally Emotionally Disturbed (SED) Youth and Families because of the difference they make to clients that without their help these patients would normally be isolated in their homes, in correctional facilities, in local emergency rooms, and in institutional care.

I wholeheartedly hope you reconsider the \$8,368,000 reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services.

Joe Cannava, LPC 

Director of Behavioral Health

Peninsula Community Health Services

230 E. Marydale Ave. Ste. 2
Soldotna, AK 99669

Direct: 907-260-3691

P Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Monica Adams <MAdams@pchsak.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 11:22 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Opposition to BH Cuts
Attachments: Austerman.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Please see attached letter in opposition to the House Budget Subcommittee on Health and Social Services recommendation for an \$8,368,800 reduction of general funds for Behavioral Health Services.

Sincerely,

Monica Adams, MA, MBA



Executive Director

Peninsula Community Health Services

230 E. Marydale Ave. Ste. 3
Soldotna, AK 99669

Direct: 907-260-7300

Fax: 907-260-7301

"Strengthening our community by providing accessible, affordable health care."

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Gregg Bigsby <greggbigsby@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 11:12 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: F&G Budget / Haines Gillnetter perspective

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Rep Austerman,

My name is Gregg Bigsby, I have been a Haines fisherman for 35 years, and gillnetting and seining since 1971.

Please don't cut funds for Genetic Testing, port sampling, etc. in Northern Southeast, that would affect the future negatively.

From my personal perspective, I have seen overfishing in Icy Straits a few times, and Fish and Game will never admit to this. The UFA would endorse it!!!

At this point of the issues regarding Allocation of Enhanced Salmon in Southeast Alaska, it is written in Code (Findings of The Board of Fish, 1992) the Fish and Game will commit to an adequate testing/port sampling system.

Also at this point of the issues regarding Purse Seiners in Icy Straits, The proper escapements for sockeye runs in Chatham Straits and Lynn Canal are at peril; The Feds want to see progress in The State of Alaska's ability to manage our public resources of salmon in Northern Southeast, and progress can be made by NOT CUTTING this budget. The State of Alaska does not want to see Federal controls on Fisheries Management in Northern Southeast Alaska!!!

Thank you,

Gregg Bigsby
F/V Rustler
Haines

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Bryce Wrigley <deltaswcd@wildak.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:46 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: farm to School funding
Attachments: Farm to School letter.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Sorry,

I mistakenly sent an unsigned draft of the letter

Thanks,

Bryce Wrigley

Alaska Farm Bureau

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Linda Kumin <kuminak@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:45 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: NO to mental health cuts!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

It is distressing to hear that the legislature is planning on cutting mental health funds. It is very important to help these vulnerable people. We took away state institutions but we have never replaced them with good, on-going care. Substance abuse is a major problem in this state: we can't cut funds here! Domestic violence and child abuse are major problems in this state: we can't cut funds here! Sexual assault is a major problem in this state: we can't cut funds here! Suicide is rampant in this state: we can't cut funds here! Mental illness isn't a choice! The safety of society requires that we help people in distress.

Forget new roads across the wilderness, helping the oil companies become richer, a bridge across the inlet (until we can get renewable energy from that bridge it should be a no-go and well-paid authority members should be sacked), etcetera ...

People make bad decisions for many reasons but with constant agitation for every fetus to be born, we need to accept that we must take care of all folks in unfortunate circumstances too!

Sincerely,

Linda Kumin

4572 Sandy Beach Drive

Anchorage, AK 99502

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary Beth Bragiel <mb_oulliber@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:30 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: cuts to behavioral health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing to ask that you not cut behavioral health services. As a worker in the social services field, I see the effects every day of lack of services. As a concerned individual and citizen, I believe that we need to support those who need this help. It will cost us, as a society, more in the long run to not provide these services. **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Mary Beth Bragiel
14610 Elmore Road
Anchorage, AK 99508

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Bryce Wrigley <deltaswcd@wildak.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:29 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Farm to School funding
Attachments: FB Letterhead.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am attaching a letter from the Alaska Farm Bureau requesting that the funding for the Farm to School Program be reinstated. It was cut by the DNR Budget Subcommittee last week. We have seen the great impact this program has had during its short life to open a market for Alaska Grown food and Alaska caught fish. Not only does this program benefit us as producers by encouraging school lunch programs around the state to source locally grown food, it also educates students and teachers about the wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods available by putting them on the lunch menu.

Please reinstate the funding for this program, which helps build markets that in turn helps increase supply of local food.

Sincerely,

Bryce Wrigley

Alaska Farm Bureau

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Patricia Stark <pstark@mosquitonet.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am writing to ask you to restore funding for Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers, and the state's pre-kindergarten education program to the Governor's proposed funding levels. This would be Best Beginnings at \$937,500, Parents as Teachers at \$1,042,500, as well as the state's pre-kindergarten program at \$2.48 million.

The Imagination Library, an organization that provides books once a month to children from birth to 5 years of age, receives some funding from Best Beginnings. This is an excellent program which has been shown to help prepare children for school. The Parents as Teachers program provides parents with the tools necessary to help children become successful not only in school, but in later life. The state's pre-kindergarten education program is a pilot with most students coming from Native households or homes at or below the poverty level. It was given high marks in a 2011 report.

Research has shown that children receiving early childhood education are more successful in school and in life. Our children our Alaska's future. Please provide for these programs.

Sincerely,
Patricia Stark

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Steve Rollins <ansjr3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 10:26 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please Help our Students--funding for the Live Homework Help program
Attachments: Live Homework Help Digitizing Alaska GovernorFY14Budget.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

I am writing to ask for your support for our students.

Please support our students by restoring the funding in the Governor's budget for the Live Homework Help service. \$138,200 in funding was included in the Governor's Digital Education in Alaska request (see attached budget sheet) Live Homework Help has been supported by grant funding and it has proven to be highly successful in helping our students do better in our schools and universities. The demand for this service has exceeded expectations and the grant funding is no longer adequate to maintain the high level of service. This year we expect 20,000 sessions will be conducted. This program serves all students in all grades and at the universities at a very affordable cost.

Last month for example, 2125 sessions were conducted online and here are the satisfaction rates.

Is this service helping you study for school?	97%
Are you glad your organization offers this service?	98%
Would you recommend this service to a friend?	97%
Is this service helping you complete your homework assignments?	94%
Is this service helping you improve your grades?	92%
Is this service helping you be more confident about your schoolwork?	97%

Thank you.

Steve Rollins

12840 Lupine Road
Anchorage, AK 99516

House District 27, Senate District N

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kevin Dee <kevin@kmdconsulting.biz>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: House HSS fin. committee proposed \$8.3 million cut.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representatives,

I first want to thank you for your service in addressing the needs of our great state and all that live here.

I am writing to you to request that you remove the proposed \$8.3 million in cuts to critical Behavioral Health Services from consideration. I do not ask you to reconsider this cut lightly as I am sure that we need to be more austere and prudent in how our state monies are used now, and in the future.

I ask you to not cut these CRITICAL services for several reasons.

1. They save money by keeping people out of institutions by providing services , if absent, would cost several times more to the state in residential care and emergency room services.
2. These essential services address many of the hot button issues of our populace throughout the state that if anything, need more funding (suicide prevention, domestic violence etc.) to address some of Alaska's largest problems.
3. Alaska must continue on its path to economic growth and vitality by continuing to create a more livable and reasonable quality of life thru healthy communities and services that support healthy communities and cutting what are already minimal services delivered at minimums of funding will and can only be viewed as a Band-Aid approach that does not even succeed in reducing the problem.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Dee, President

KMD Services & Consulting

Providing Leadership Development, Management Consulting and Human Resource Services for over 25 years

907 277 3477 ph

907 230 1771 cell

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mary Geddes <ismar@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:41 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Budget Funding

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am a married 30 year Alaska resident. We have three children (2 adult and one teenager). I am a retired federal worker.

I understand that the House Budget Subcommittee on Health and Social Services has recommended a reduction of 8 million dollars in general funds for behavioral health services. I also understand that your committee, the House Finance Committee, is now considering this proposal.

I am glad you have a seat on this committee because this is indeed an occasion on which you can make a singular difference to an important outcome. I strongly urge your disapproval of any cuts to mental health funding. The long term consequence of reducing DBH funding is increased social dysfunction, criminal recidivism, family violence and costs in incarceration.

This is a "pennywise, pound-foolish" proposal. The reduction of mental health and substance abuse funding will impact many populations and this impact will lead to more expensive consequences in the long run.

The availability of substance abuse, alcohol treatment, and services for youth with severe emotional disturbance is crucial in order for many to avoid involvement in the criminal justice system. As for those already in the criminal justice system, the availability of those programs after their incarceration is critical to avoiding recidivism. Warehousing addicted, alcoholic and emotionally disturbed individuals works no cure, but community based treatment does. And its cheaper.

As I understand it, other groups of Alaskans will be effected by the proposed cuts. Teenagers at risk of suicide, exploitation and homelessness - and there are many - will lose out. Families experiencing domestic violence will be lose out of some important supports. Parents who need better skills to care for their children may remain unaided, and their children will suffer from the lack of care and supervision. Disabled individuals who could live successfully in the community but require some organizational support may need to be institutionalized instead.

Addressing such basic social and mental health needs should be paramount in the legislative agenda. I hope you agree and I look forward to your response.

Mary Geddes
1113 N Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: stephen hunter <sehunterb200@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:18 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Legislator,

I am an adoptive parent of three children who receive behavioral health services from a community based agency. My children will need support throughout their lives for mental health services related to the post-traumatic stress disorders that caused their severely emotionally disturbed behaviors. They will be at a higher risk for needing substance abuse avoidance and other assistance with housing and how to communicate properly with peers and people in positions of authority i.e. the police. Without adequate funding of behavioral health programs my children face a much greater risk of incarceration and abuse from perpetrators. Personally, and as a resident of the State of Alaska who understands how great the need is for Behavioral Health Services, I am totally aghast that funding for behavioral health services might be cut when the need is so great and benefit to the society so well described in study after study. Multiple studies clearly describe the long term cost benefits of behavioral services versus paying for someone to be in jail. As a state we can pay a little now or a lot more later. I want my legislators to invest in all the people of my state. Therefore, I do not support any cuts/reductions/reallocations of the general funds for Behavioral Health Services.

Sincerely,
Stephen E. Hunter

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jack Fagnoli <fagnoli@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 9:16 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: behavior health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please vote NO on **an \$8.3 million reduction to CRITICAL Behavioral Health Services! Things are tough enough for people these days. Do not punish the most vulnerable among us. Thank you .**

Allison Fagnoli

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Nancy Simpson <nsimpson@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: 8.3 million reduction to mental health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman,

I have worked in Juneau for the last 28 years as a mental health therapist. Just last week I called another representative to see if there was a way to increase Office of Children's services funding after hearing a story about a baby with 4 foster homes in his short 8 months. Research is showing consistently that good care in early childhood is society's best bet for reducing crime and overcrowded prisons.

But now, seeing the proposal to cut 8.3 million from mental health services is beyond belief. Alaska is already way behind many other states in caring for its citizens. Please do not make these cuts. The potential escalation of crime and drug use in our communities cannot be over stated. No one benefits from extreme measures like these.

Please hold a place of and for sanity.

Sincerely,

Nancy Simpson LMFT

Juneau, Ak

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ann Arrisi <aarrisi@hopealaska.org>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 8:31 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: budget cut to mental health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

House Finance Members,

I am writing today on behalf of the thousands of people who experience mental illness and substance use disorders to include seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders. Their disorders impact all of us and to reduce the budget will have a devastating impact to all Alaskan's.

Please consider the following when making your decision:

Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Arrisi

Person-Centered Outreach Coordinator & Trainer

Hope Community Resources, Inc.

aarrisi@hopealaska.org

Direct number: 907-631-3702

Fax number: 907-357-3751

Main number 907-357-3750

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Nell Pederson <pednell@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 8:16 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Parents as Teachers

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Representative Austerman:

Please restore funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings to the governor's proposed levels, \$1,042 and \$937,500 respectively.

These vital programs support families raising young children with crucial information and activities to provide the best brain development at the earliest and most critical times of the child's life.

This minimal investment is a long term commitment to Alaska's future.

Respectfully,

Polly Smith
Executive Director
Alaska Literacy Program

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ann Turner Olson <ann_turnerolson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2013 6:56 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: 31% Behavioral Health Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear members of the Finance committee,

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget

I expect you will receive numerous letters from your constituents who be be seriously impacted by the proposed **\$8.3 million in behavioral health budget cuts.**

In a time in our state and nationally where the connection between untreated mental illness and gun control and other social and economic issues has illustrated the importance of continued -- and even increased -- funding for mental health services it makes absolutely no sense to cut these important services across our state. It is well known that Alaska has the dubious distinction of having one of the highest substance abuse and suicide rates in the nation.

As a private mental health practitioner in Juneau, I can tell you without hesitation, these cuts will create enormous hardships for families whose children receive school, home and community based services through Juneau Youth Services and other communities' children's mental health services. The impact of cuts will trickle down to classroom teachers with students receiving school based mental health services and impact entire schools systems.

Adults with chronic and serious mental illness who receive services through community based mental health centers, such as JAMHI in Juneau, will be significantly impacted by cuts to services. The impact will be felt through our community, and all Alaskan communities, in social and economic ways.

before you vote to pass these cuts, please take a moment and think about someone you know, are related to or who is a constituent of yours who may be affected by cuts to behavioral health services and ***Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.***

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Turner Olson
Juneau

Ann Turner Olson, LCSW
Counseling Services
Ph# 907-790-1090
fax: 907-790-1091

cell: 907-723-5219
email: ann_turnerolson@yahoo.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: jcurry@ufa-fish.org on behalf of UFA Julianne Curry <jcurry@ufa-fish.org>
Sent: Friday, March 01, 2013 12:51 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Fwd: Southeast ADF&G Funding Items

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Julianne Curry
United Fishermen of Alaska
Office 907.586.2820
Cell 907.957.4747

Begin forwarded message:

From: SEAFa - Kathy Hansen <seafa@gci.net>
Date: March 1, 2013, 10:34:27 AM AKST
To: Julianne - UFA <jcurry@ufa-fish.org>
Cc: Eric Prestegard <eric_prestegard@dipac.net>, John Burke <johnb@ssraa.org>, Steve Reifenstuhl <steve_reifenstuhl@nsraa.org>
Subject: FW: Southeast ADF&G Funding Items

From: UFA Julianne Curry [<mailto:jcurry@ufa-fish.org>]
Sent: Friday, March 01, 2013 10:27 AM
To: Kathy Hansen; Tom Gemmell -USAG; Jerry McCune; Brian Lynch; Dale Kelley -ATA; Bob Thorstenson; Bruce Wallace
Subject: Southeast ADF&G Funding Items

SE salmon groups (let me know if I'm missing anyone),

Yesterday evening, the House Fish and Game Finance subcommittee **zeroed out a line item for "GF to continue salmon stock identification projects expiring under federal Alaska sustainable salmon fisheries grants" to the tune of \$550.0**. I just wanted to send you all a note to let you know what the implications of this reduction in funding means. *To avoid confusion, this funding is completely unrelated to the Genetic Stock Identification (GSI) funding the Governor amended his budget for last year to sample sockeye in the Chatham corridor. That \$330.0 was a three year funding increment and was included in last year's budget.*

This funding request was submitted by the Department to replace a continuing loss of PST funds from the Federal government. **This funding for Southeast that was allocated to port sampling (\$440.0) and biometrician funding for PSC (\$110.0). Without this increment the Southeast port sampling program will cease to exist after July 1st, 2013.**

PORT SAMPLING INFO: Port samplers collect vital basic data that is used to implement sustainable salmon fisheries throughout the region. **This data is evaluated to prove we are meeting out obligations under the Pacific Salmon Treaty.** Without data to prove we are meeting treaty obligations, we are looking at reduced fishing opportunity in some of the most important fisheries in SEAK. **This data is also used to determine on an inseason basis if we are on track to meet escapement objectives,** mostly for coho salmon. Port sampling staff collect pink salmon sex ratios that give seine managers run timing info on an inseason basis. Without this data, managers would be forced to manage the seine fishery more conservatively. ADF&G uses sex ratios to figure out where we are in the run, early in the season it is predominantly males and we fish harder (later on females are higher proportion). There are different run timing curves for various stocks, and this is one reason ADF&G strives to have techs placed in ports throughout the region. Another part of port sampling is to evaluate Chinook landings. Port samplers look at thousands of Chinook and coho for coded wire tags, and in the spring troll fisheries those tags are evaluated. More hatchery fish means more fishing time.

BIOMATRICIAN INFO: The biometrician supported by this increment provides critical technical support for the Alaska Delegation to the international Pacific Salmon Commission. The increment helps in protection of the Chinook salmon fisheries in Southeast Alaska from unwarranted encroachment. The Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon fisheries are of vital importance for the regional economy with the sport fishery accounting for more than 40% of the total sport caught Chinook landed in the State. The Southeast commercial Chinook fishery is the largest in the state.

WHAT TO DO: You may want to consider contacting representatives in the House Finance committee and start prepping the Senate Finance committee.

HOUSE FINANCE

HOUSE FINANCE 519 No Time available MTWTHF

Standing Committee

CO-CHAIR: [Representative Austerman](#)

CO-CHAIR: [Representative Stoltze](#)

VICE-CHAIR: [Representative Neuman](#)

MEMBER: [Representative Costello](#)

MEMBER: [Representative Edgmon](#)

MEMBER:	Representative Holmes
MEMBER:	Representative Munoz
MEMBER:	Representative Thompson
MEMBER:	Representative T.Wilson
MEMBER:	Representative Gara
MEMBER:	Representative Guttenberg
ALTERNATE:	Representative Hawker
ALTERNATE:	Representative Kawasaki

Julianne Curry

Executive Director

United Fishermen of Alaska

Office: 907.586.2820

Cell: 907.957.4747

<http://www.ufa-fish.org>

jcurry@ufa-fish.org

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