

**Testimony to the House Finance Committee****3/5/2013**

Mr. Chair, Committee members,

My name is Faith Myers. For the last decade I have served as a Board member on some of the larger non-profits in the state. I also volunteer as a psychiatric patient advocate.

There are some very good programs in Alaska that help those with a mental or intellectual disability or other disabilities. Good community services are important.

Eight point three million is the proposed cut of the House and Social Services Finance Subcommittee. Without looking at more data, I would have difficulty in choosing which programs do have to be cut, if in fact some have to be cut.

My recommendation is a committee of advocates should be given more information and allowed to put forth their own recommendations. If cuts have to be made, make them intelligent cuts and spare programs that historically have been providing a demonstratively good quality program.

On a related issue, what history and personal experience has taught me is that society has always had difficulty incorporating those with a developmental disability or a mental illness into the communities. At one time the disabled were simply put into locked institutions.

Presently, we have incorporated many of the disabled into the community, but what has not to the extent necessary changed with the times is improvements in the grievance procedure laws for the disabled, and oversight. Alaska has some of the worst grievance procedure laws in the nation for the disabled. We need to improve those laws.

Thank you,

*Faith Myers*  
*Dorrance Collins*

Mental Health Advocates,  
Faith Myers / Dorrance Collins  
3240 Penland Pkwy, Sp. 35  
Anchorage, AK. 99508  
(907) 929-0532

**Testimony to House Finance Committee, March 5, 2013**

Mr. Chair, Committee members,

My name is Dorrance Collins. If there are presently funds in the state budget to improve the grievance procedure law for disabled psychiatric patients and their guardians, I am asking that they not be cut from the operating budget.

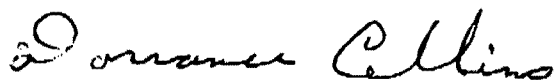
A man denied service at a psychiatric unit walked straight out the door, took all his clothes off and walked around the parking lot until he was arrested. Another man denied service walked straight out the door, stole a taxi, went to the waterfront and committed suicide. Another man denied service walked out the door and shortly after punched a little girl in the face and now maybe she has brain damage.

I can come up with a hundred of those kinds of stories right out of the newspapers or court records in Alaska. A lot of the tragedies can be traced back to psychiatric patients and guardians not being able to file a grievance with providers of psychiatric services in a reasonable way.

There are legislative work drafts whose goal is to improve the grievance procedure law for disabled psychiatric patients. The goal is to cut down on preventable tragedies.

If there is presently no funds earmarked to improve the grievance procedure laws for the disabled, then I am asking that the committee put the money in the budget.

Thank you,



Mental Health Advocates,  
Dorrance Collins / Faith Myers  
3240 Penland Pkwy, Sp. 35  
Anchorage, AK. 99508  
929-0532

Kathleen Fitzgerald  
4521 Southpark Bluff Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99516

March 5, 2013

Representative Alan Austerman, Chair

House Finance Committee

**RE: Public testimony on Complex Behavior Collaborative**

Dear Rep. Austerman, Rep. Stoltze and Finance Committee Members,

I am testifying via written testimony on behalf of the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). Not only do we have early cost projected savings from the services provided through the CBC, we have real accounts from families on the effectiveness of CBC in helping to eliminate and control the extreme behaviors which was putting their son or daughter at risk of costly institutionalization.

CBC is a way of preventing institutional placements through **behavioral evaluation, behavioral plan implementation and training** to staff and families on how to eliminate behaviors. Direct support staff's ability to work with complicated individuals is enhanced and benefits the whole agency and community, not just the person who is the recipient of service. Keeping people successfully in the community keeps families together, builds capacity of service and saves high costs of API or outside placements.

CBC has demonstrated tremendously successful results so far. Please fund the \$450,000 for FY 2014 to allow the project to provide even more data to show efficacy and how the money invested in the project saves many times more that amount in more restrictive placements. The Department of Health and Social Services early data indicates this is an extremely effective project and worthy of continuation. I know that my daughter is an example of a person who would benefit from this expertise in our community based services. Twice in the past has she been at risk of API or out of state placement and I fear without this service, after my husband or I are not around, she would become institutionalized.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to give testimony on such an important service.

Sincerely,  
  
Kathy Fitzgerald

**Peter Hall**

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**From:** Alicia Deaver <alicia.deaver@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:57 PM  
**To:** Peter Hall  
**Subject:** Public Testimony

Hello,

My name is Alicia Deaver and I am writing in support of reinstating the early education funding to align with the governor's proposed budget. Specifically I would like to see the funding for Strengthening Families Statewide reinstated as it is a critical support for families and early educators. With the increase of mental health issues in young children I am also in support of keeping the early childhood mental health funding. Last year it there were 400 early educators trained in supporting children with behavioral challenges and over 900 children supported through the early childhood mental health consultation project. I have worked in the field for 11 years and understand the importance of supporting children birth through five and since so many children are in placements outside of the home, it is crucial to support the individuals who are taking care of them. In summary, I support the Strengthening Families, AK Pre-K, Early Childhood Mental Health, Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings funding reinstatement. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Alicia Deaver, MS, CCLS

**My name is Paul Beran. I am a retired pastor and board member of Juneau's homeless shelter, the Glory Hole. I want to speak against the proposed cuts for Mental Health Services.**

**Consider the need: Alaska has many dysfunctional homes, frequently related to mental and emotional instability. We have a very high suicide rate, the highest alcohol consumption rate, and the highest rate of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Deficit (FASD) of all 50 states. The loss in untold individual potential combined with the costs to our society through social services, judiciary, and prisons is staggering. A dollar spent in helping those needing critical behavioral health services saves many dollars in the future.**

**I spent his past weekend with a family deeply grieving the self-inflicted death of a mother with 3 children. How will these children carry the tragic death of their mother the rest of their lives? What help will be available for them?**

**Jesus taught: "As much as you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers, you did it to Me." Please do not reduce the funding for Critical Behavioral Health Services.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Paul D. Beran**

**Juneau, Alaska  
20 year Alaska resident**

# LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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50 Front St., Suite 203  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Phone: (907) 225-9675

Fax: (907) 225-8546

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Katie Goodale

REPRESENTING: HOPE-Helping Ourselves Prevent Emergencies

BILL# or SUBJECT: House Finance Committee HB66

COMMITTEE AND  
HEARING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am sending this letter to thank your for the funding for new and emerging programs for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. As a non-residential service provider on Prince of Wales Island, this funding will allow us to continue providing advocacy and prevention services to the 4500 residents of Prince of Wales Island. These services are not and cannot be met any other way. With Alaska holding the highest rate of domestic violence in the nation, the prevention and advocacy efforts of new and emerging programs, like ours, help to fill a gap that can reduce the number of people suffering from domestic violence and sexual assault in our communities. Once again, thank you for your commitment to a safer Alaska where all people can develop to their fullest potential without fear of violation.

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# ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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907-269-0111/ phone, 907-269-0229/fax

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: BETH SNYDER  
 REPRESENTING: ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
 BILL#/ SUBJECT: STATE-FUNDED PRE-K  
 COMMITTEE &  
 HEARING DATE: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THE ALASKA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM SINCE IT BEGAN 4 YRS AGO I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE MY CONCERN REGARDING <sup>THE</sup> PROPOSED REDUCTION IN FUNDING FOR PRE-K.

PRESCHOOL IS AN INTERVENTION THAT WORKS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES. WE HAVE SEEN STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS + GUARDIANS AS THEIR CHILDREN DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS NECESSARY TO SUCCEED IN <sup>READINESS</sup> KINDERGARTEN. STUDENTS ARE CONFIDENT, COMPETENT AND EAGER TO LEARN.

VULNERABLE, AT RISK FAMILIES WORK TOGETHER WITH SCHOOL STAFF LEARNING ~~TOGETHER~~ <sup>with each other</sup> HOW BEST TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT. THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS SEEN YOUNG CHILDREN ENTER KINDERGARTEN PREPARED, AND CAPABLE LEARNERS.

WITHOUT STATE-FUNDED PRESCHOOL STUDENTS + FAMILIES WILL ENTER OUR DISTRICT WITHOUT THE NECESSARY RESOURCES THEY NEED TO START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH ~~EA~~ PRE-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCHORAGE FAMILIES. PLEASE DO NOT CUT PRE-K FUNDING FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED. IT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR FAMILIES & SCHOOLS Alike.

OUR ASSESSMENTS SHOW STUDENTS COMING TO PREK + THEIR FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED, & ARE ~~BEING~~ socially, physically + AND STUDENTS ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY READY.



**ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Gena Graves  
REPRESENTING: Best Beginnings; Success By 6; Passage House  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: Funding for Early Education HB65  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: Finance Wednesday March 5, 2013

I know the importance of the investment of early childhood education. It benefits the child, their families as well as our community. I know that when children are prepared for school they do better in all aspects of their lives and hope

that you consider reinstating the proposed cuts to these programs. This year we made no requests to increased spending in these programs, because as good stewards of these funds we can continue to do more with what we have been given.

I'd like to share a brief story that illustrates the importance of programs such as these.

As a program coordinator of a young teen parent program in Anchorage I had our moms participate in Parents as Teachers as well as Ready for Kindergarten, put on by

Success by six; They provide information our youth need and do not get from

other places. Most are poorly educated themselves and have had little to no parenting role models in their lives. One such young mom began reading to her son faithfully as each of these programs taught - 20 mins. daily as she did so two things happened. First she noticed her son was not reacting to sounds she made when she read. She stated this to her doctor and found once examined he was having a problem hearing. If she had not noticed and acted he likely would have gone on years without treatment and could have learning deficiencies, or behavioral problems once in school. She would have not acted w/o the information she was given in these programs. She also benefited directly as well. Her literacy level increase as well while "teaching" her child. She has gone back to college and began working in the education field, contributing positively in our community. These are dollars well spent and invested with huge returns for all. Please continue the support of these programs at current levels - Gene Graves

March 5, 2013

# Testimony to the House Finance Committee

## **Current grievance procedure law does not protect psychiatric patients or the general public Please support revising the law**

- **No mandate for due process or an appeal process**
- **No appeal process with due process past the walls of the institutions or units**
- **No urgent grievance procedure**
- **No requirement for the state to keep statistics**
- **No state mandate for enforcement / oversight of grievance procedure compliance by facilities.**
- **No requirement for state-wide uniformity of grievance procedures (current law does not cover all facilities)**
- **No requirement for crisis call-in center for patients denied service**
- **No requirement that patients be given the number to advocacy organizations**
- **No requirement that patients be informed of their appeal process rights, due process, etc. (Patients may be informed that they can file a complaint, but they are rarely informed of their due process, appeal process rights—As of now the facilities do not have to)**

Sec.47.30.847. Psychiatric Patients' grievance procedures. (a) A patient has the right to bring grievances about the patient's treatment, care, or rights to an impartial body within an evaluation facility or designated treatment facility.

(b) An evaluation facility and a designated treatment facility shall have a formal grievance procedure for patient grievances brought under (a) of this section. The facility shall inform each patient of the existence and contents of the grievance procedure.

(c) An evaluation facility and a designated treatment facility shall have a designated staff member who is trained in mental health consumer advocacy who will serve as an advocate, upon a patient's request, to assist the patient in bringing grievances or pursuing other redress for complaints concerning care, treatment, and rights.

( 10 ch 109 SLA 1992 )

**New Grievance Procedure law needed 2012-2013**

**You can support giving psychiatric patients or their  
guardians a better grievance procedure law  
and appeal process**

**Send your support letter as an avocate  
Or your personal experience  
With the psychiatric patient grievance procedure  
To:**

**Faith Myers  
3240 Penland Pkwy, Sp. 35  
Anchorage, AK. 99508  
(907) 929-0532  
Or send by e-mail  
faith.myers@gci.net**

**Turn Page**

**Testimony to the House Finance Committee****3/5/2013**

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There are some very good programs in Alaska that help those with a mental or intellectual disability or other disabilities. Good community services are important.

Eight point three million is the proposed cut of the House and Social Services Finance Subcommittee. Without looking at more data, I would have difficulty in choosing which programs do have to be cut, if in fact some have to be cut.

My recommendation is a committee of advocates should be given more information and allowed to put forth their own recommendations. If cuts have to be made, make them intelligent cuts and spare programs that historically have been providing a demonstratively good quality program.

On a related issue, what history and personal experience has taught me is that society has always had difficulty incorporating those with a developmental disability or a mental illness into the communities. At one time the disabled were simply put into locked institutions.

Presently, we have incorporated many of the disabled into the community, but what has not to the extent necessary changed with the times is improvements in the grievance procedure laws for the disabled, and oversight. Alaska has some of the worst grievance procedure laws in the nation for the disabled. We need to improve those laws.

Thank you,

*Faith Myers*

Mental Health Advocates,  
Faith Myers / Dorrance Collins  
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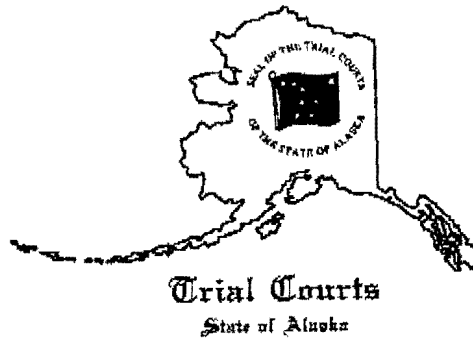
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Thank you,



Mental Health Advocates,  
Dorrance Collins / Faith Myers  
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**STEPHANIE RHOADES**  
DISTRICT COURT JUDGE

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
825 W. 4TH AVENUE  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-2005

(907) 264-0666  
FAX: (907) 264-0872

March 4, 2013

Members  
House Finance Committee

I want to make clear at the outset that I am commenting here today in a personal capacity as a district court judge with 20 years of experience and not as a representative or spokesperson for the Alaska Court System. My comments should not be construed as the position of the Alaska Court System or the Alaska Supreme Court.

I want to urge you to consider the interplay between the criminal justice system and community behavioral health grants in the administration of justice, and the foreseeable, though doubtless unintended, costs to the criminal justice system if the recommendation by the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services of an \$8.3 million reduction in community behavioral health grants is accepted.

According to a 2007 study of Alaska's Corrections population conducted by Hornby Zeller Associates, 42% of inmates in Alaska correctional institutions on June 30, 2006 are mentally ill, developmentally disabled, seniors with dementia or other related brain disorders, traumatically brain injured, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and alcoholics w/psychosis. They qualify as beneficiaries of the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

People with these disorders have an increased likelihood of being "criminalized" (or being processed through the criminal justice system instead of through the mental health system) for publicly acting out the symptoms of their mental disorders. They are also more than one and one-half (1.6) times more likely than other offenders to be re-arrested and returned to the correctional system and to do so sooner according to the 2007 study. Alaska already pays a high price for inadequate mental health and substance abuse treatment in jail overcrowding costs and funding the building and operations of our new prison. The recommended reduction in behavioral health grants will worsen these problems.

In response to the serious overrepresentation of people with behavioral health disorders in jails and prisons, the Alaska Court System established Mental Health Courts in Anchorage, Palmer and Juneau. Mental health courts divert offenders with

Page 2

these disorders from jail and into community treatment and provide hands on judicial supervision of community treatment plans to promote public safety. Offenders with the above disorders experience complex and difficult to manage behaviors. Without community supports, they easily escalate into crisis, requiring acute and costly institutional care. Offenders who adhere to treatment requirements, on the other hand, cycle through jails, emergency rooms and psychiatric hospitals far less often.

The hitch is that in order for mental health courts to divert sick people from jail and into community treatment, community treatment must be funded and available to the court and its participants.

The recommendation by the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services of an \$8.3 million reduction is hugely problematic to therapeutic courts seeking to link persons with behavioral health disorders to community treatment since grant dollars directly provide detox and suicide prevention services, mental and substance abuse treatment, medication management, case management services and supported housing. These services are basic requirements. Unfortunate court participants have no insurance and rely solely on grant funds. Those who have Medicaid or Medicare, the proposed cuts will spur a terrible ripple effect, since those insurance rates don't cover the actual cost of services for those on fee for service reimbursement. Grant dollars make up the difference. Any drop in grant dollars means many more vulnerable people with mental and substance use disorders, seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders will be placed at higher risk than they presently are of being incarcerated or institutionalized for their care.

There can be no question that the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care even when that care is provided by the Department of Corrections. How much higher than 42% of our corrections population do we want to fund to provide 3 hots, a cot and treatment inside the Department of Corrections when grants can provide considerably less expensive community behavioral health treatment?

As a judicial officer, I also find the recommended cuts ironic in their timing, given that many other states are increasing behavioral health funding in the aftermath of Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Aurora and the plethora of other misguided mass shooting incidents, troubling to all who seek to protect the public from violence and which might have been prevented by the greater availability of behavioral health services. For these reasons and in the interests of the administration of justice, I urge the House Finance Committee to reject the recommended cuts to behavioral health services grants.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Rhoades  
District Court Judge



## ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

Elaine Dahlgren

REPRESENTING:

Volunteers of America AK

BILL#/ SUBJECT:

HSS Budget

COMMITTEE &amp;

HEARING DATE:

3-5-2013 House Finance

I believe that cuts to this budget will increase corrections and prison population + clients to a degree that we will never be able to address.

As the CEO of a treatment program for adolescents I see change - amazing change - in people's lives. Change that saves Alaska money & lives.

Please do not cut this budget that funds services to our most vulnerable state citizens. They deserve more & help from all of us.

I thank you.

Elaine Dahlgren

**ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Tom Turner  
REPRESENTING: Self/Citizen  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 607 Mental Health Budget  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: House Finance 3/15/13

In this state, in this day and age  
to consider any cuts to mental health  
spending is ludicrous.

Our state is large & with such a  
diverse population, there is no question  
about the need for stable funding for  
mental health issues.

The needs range from villages to towns,  
elderly to youth & civilians to soldiers.  
To take more away from "problem  
solving solutions" is like "shooting ourselves  
in the foot". We need to continue  
funding, continue treatment, counseling etc  
to stop problems before they start.

I believe the calamities at Virginia Tech,  
as well as Newtown Ct only underscore  
the larger need for mental health solutions.

## ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Martha Harper

REPRESENTING: \_\_\_\_\_

BILL#/ SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMITTEE &amp;

HEARING DATE: 3-5-13

My name is Martha and without the finding available to me I wouldn't have learned all about my past behaviors and about myself. I am very grateful for the substance abuse treatment programs and people who helped me save my life. I am a changed person today, before I was considered weak and always played the victim, when in fact I created victims due to my substance abuse. I did not recognize how my family's substance abuse carried on to me and I was on the path to destruction. I now use all the tools and I learned from the programs to better my life. I <sup>now</sup> control my life in stead of life controlling me. Instead of running to alcohol (like I usually did) I now go to other people who helps me ~~put~~ ~~me~~ ~~back~~ with my addiction. Without the finding available to others, ~~because~~ I believe your not giving them a second chance in life, because people can change and I am living proof.

Thank you

## ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

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### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Dawn Smith  
 REPRESENTING: Akeela  
 BILL#/ SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_  
 COMMITTEE &  
 HEARING DATE: 3-05-13

my name is Dawn Smith I am here to let people know that yes people can get clean on there own But in Reality without the tools to stay clean & sober you will either end up dead, in Jail or unhappy with yourself. My story is I self-medicated with heroin I have been clean 1yr 18. It wasn't for the tools I have learned at Akeela I honestly think I would be dead I graduated Sept 2012 I have learned patience & forgiveness not only with myself but with people I come in contact with a daily basis. Everybody has a story to tell its just who will listen and I believe Akeela will they listened to me helped me become the person I am proud of. The person I am today is a intelligent, responsible, outgoing person with goals in life to become a better mom, sister, and daughter. I have my life now it took me 3 times to get an assessment the 4th time I got it. and a yr later here I am 1yr clean. I am grateful to have been a part of this treatment facility they have changed my life for the better. People do need guidance and direction they guide you in. The tools of thought stopping, core beliefs, playing the tape through and when in doubt reaching out. the difference is knowing you need to do things for yourself. wanting the help or its not going to work. Acceptance and open to change. vs Keep in living like faste fulfillast as can today. thanks to Akeela the life of not knowing, suicides, and criminal activity for me is over. Im not saying its not possible to relapse. its all about using the tools you have taught. Thank You For giving me the time to tell my story I hope it helps at least one gain the courage to change as life is a Blessing.

**ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Amy Simpson  
REPRESENTING: Infant Learning Programs  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: House DHSS Budget  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: March 5, 2013

Thank you for taking my feedback on the House DHSS Budget. I would like to advocate for resources for service for young children including Parents AS Teachers, early intervention Mental Health services. The deep and wide cuts to behavioral health will cost the state more in the long-term. The only budget that was not cut in this budget was corrections. More dollars in corrections is exactly what we will need if more vulnerable children fail to receive services to help them succeed in the future.

In addition, the note to reduce the administrative costs allowed by DHSS grantees to 15% appears to be an excessive jump from the current 28% allowed costs. Most grantees are able to control costs efficiently and are below 25% overall. Perhaps the recommendation for admin costs could be raised to a more ~~reasonable~~ obtainable number or redefine admin. costs, so that grantees can be in compliance and continue to provide vital services in the community.

**ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Terri Lynn Draeger  
REPRESENTING: UAA Students  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: UAA/ UAF engineering building  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: 3-5-2013

Hi, my name is Terri Lynn Draeger. I'm a UAA student majoring in Biology. The new engineering buildings are needed to fill jobs in this state.

Right now Diamond High School, Eagle River High School and Sobeth High School have implemented Engineering Academies through Project Lead the Way. We will see a continued influx of engineering students. Our spaces are already too small - more students need more space so we can have more Alaska-grown engineers in the work force.

Employers prefer to hire VA graduates as they are more likely to remain in Alaska. Graduates from UAA & UAF are essential especially when addressing arctic engineering issues and requirements thereof.

Thank you for all the work you all do.

For the record my name is Paul Albers. I am a case manager at The Brother Francis Shelter.

I am requesting your support to FULLY fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program

I have been working with a gentleman I will call B. B has been homeless for most of the past 10 years. He has been unable to hold a job or maintain housing.

B first applied for Social Security Income in March of 2010. He has been denied several times. In 2010 B applied for services with DVR and was denied based on a psychiatric evaluation which said it would be difficult for DVR to find a suitable training program.

In August of 2012 the Alaska Brain Injury Network gave B a grant to get a neuro psychiatric evaluation. Based on the results of that report B has recently been approved for SSI. With continuing supports B will now be able to move out of the homeless shelter and into his own apartment.

Homelessness in Anchorage has received a lot of attention in the press and in public conversation. B is an example of how funding fully the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program can help put a dent in homelessness.

**ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Sandra Ozenna  
REPRESENTING: SELF @ Alaska Women In Recovery  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: Finance 3-5-13

My name is Sandra Ozenna. I am one of the graduates at Alaska Women In Recovery at Akeela. I am 22 years old. And I would like to say that without the help of the program, the staff, the groups and the resources I would still be a hopeless alcoholic and drug addict roaming the streets of downtown. I am sober today because of the help I received at Akeela. I would love to say that these programs work for those who work it. I am proof that addicts could change with the help of Akeela. I am a better person today. A good daughter. A good auntie. And a good citizen of society. I believe it is worth it to keep these programs running. And I hope you all would lend an ear, some empathy, and faith that these programs do work. Please don't cut budgets for helpful programs. Thank you for your time and consideration.



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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME:

Rachelle L. Griffiths

REPRESENTING:

Self

BILL#/ SUBJECT:

COMMITTEE &amp;

HEARING DATE:

March 05, 2013

My journey began in detox, then  
2 residential treatment centers w/ Southcentral  
Foundation and Akeela Inc. Both provide  
mental health services which I participated  
in. I wouldn't be where I am today w/o  
these programs. They gave me my life back.

My 5 year old daughter is happy, healthy  
and loved. Her mom is getting better  
everyday. I thank God.

I am a productive member of society.  
The knowledge I have gained is passed  
on to others around me. This is true with  
many others. This saves lives and generates  
hope.

I have benefited greatly from these  
federally funded programs and I believe  
they strengthen and improve our  
community. Please continue funding.

Thank-you for your time. And all that you  
do.

Rachelle Griffiths

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.

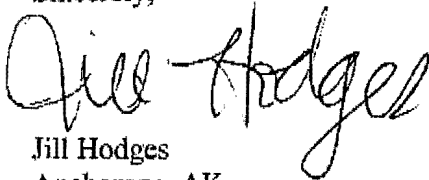
Alaska ~~does not have~~ <sup>has extremely limited</sup> brain injury services. There have been nearly 15,000 Alaskans that have been hospitalized for TBI in the last 20 years. These families have further insult to injury by having very few, if any, medical, rehabilitation or community supports.

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)

House Finance Committee Members  
March 5, 2013  
Page 2

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. *They help put people back together.*

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

## ANCHORAGE LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Anchorage\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us  
907-269-0111/ phone, 907-269-0229/fax

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Grace Snider  
 REPRESENTING: individual, myself  
 BILL#/ SUBJECT: TABI Program funding; Complex Behavior Collaborative Nrc. B, 3 Million Reduction  
to Behavioral Health Services  
general funds.  
 COMMITTEE &  
 HEARING DATE: House Finance Committee, March 5, 2013

My many pleas: Thank you for your time.

Please fully fund the traumatic and acquired brain injury program. Please fund the Complex behavior collaborative. Please keep the \$3 million dollars in the general funds for behavioral health services. I personally am  
The sister of a 40 year old woman who was hit by a car, surviving with a severe TBI. I have felt and witnessed the frustration of my sister and our parents as they slipped through the cracks due to a lack of  
programs for brain injury. I see her face and hear her voice in the individuals I work with in my job. I have the privilege of working daily with people affected by acquired and traumatic brain injury.  
Just today, I met with a woman who is homeless, desiring work and suffering memory loss and severe headaches due to "domestic violence assault" in 1976. She also has bipolar disorder and is struggling to take the steps to fight alcoholism, the latter of which she did not suffer before the brain injury. She is recently out of APTI and currently being denied services. I personally have had my own mental health challenges and have benefitted greatly from peer support.  
I have a wonderful job with a non-profit in Anchorage, serving Alaskans; I have a home, loving partner, no debt, and a great quality of life. I know that if these cuts are made and programs such as, TABI, the CBC, detox services, supported housing, peer support services, independent living centers, etc, more people will be lost to institutions, prisons, and the streets. I urge the House Finance Committee to participate in preventative health care, we tend to be reactionary in this society, meaning we wait for crisis before helping our neighbors. Let's work together to  
thank you.

Grace  
Snider



# KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kodiak\_LIO@akleg.gov  
907-486-8116/ phone, 907-486-5264/fax

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Jennifer Eubank  
REPRESENTING: self, children I teach  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB65  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: House Finance Committee

Hello. I'm a special education teacher. I have been teaching for over 17 years. I am very concerned for the level of funding for education the legislature is considering. Our lawmakers are once again considering shorting students, programs and schools but, yet, you keep demanding more - greater assessment results, more topics to teach, greater responsibilities and less and less support. With the Governor's proposal we will be stuck with a budget that will lead to staff cuts - increasing class sizes, decreasing a teacher's ability to individualize and support a child's understanding and learning.



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the H FINANCE  
committee name  
committee on HB 105/104, dated 6 MARCH 2013.  
bill/subject

I am here today because I am working hard to quit smoking. I have used services at Kodiak Area Native Association and they have made a big difference

Quitting smoking is probably the hardest thing I have ever had to do. Without the help of the program at KANA, it would be even harder.

I have access to one-on-one counseling and group counseling to help me quit. That kind of support is critical for me.

Now is not the time to cut tobacco prevention funding. I know I am not the only person trying to quit and I know others really need the same services I am using.

Cutting the program now will not only make it harder for me to quit, but it could also lead to more kids starting. I don't want any young person to have to go through what I am going through. It's better to keep them from starting in the first place.

I want to quit smoking. I want to live longer, I want to be healthier. I wish I had never started. I need your help. PLEASE DON'T CUT TOBACCO PREVENTION FUNDING!

Thanks!

Signed: MARLON INGA  
Testifier  
self  
Representing (optional)  
1055 MISSION RD KODIAK  
Address  
907-512-8073  
Phone number

## KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kodiak\_LIO@akleg.gov  
907-486-8116/ phone, 907-486-5264/fax

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: GEOFFREY SMITH  
REPRESENTING: myself & my son  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 65  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: HOUSE FINANCE 3/6/13

- First I am disappointed by the lack of attendance by committee members at this hearing.

- Children are our greatest resource to not fund or flat fund for the 3<sup>rd</sup> yr in a row is unacceptable!

We need to invest in our future!

- from Alan Austerman's news from the Hill ED. Reform & workforce Development

- provide educational opportunities for AK students.
- Improve AK Schools & student performance
- insist on accountability & results
- prepare Alaskans for Alaskan jobs
- increased emphasis on Voc Ed & educational relevance

These all take money. Flat funding will not get it done. it is unacceptable!



- funding a rocket launch facility that provides ~~not~~ no services is a waste of money. IT IS TIME TO SHUT THE DOORS TO THIS FACILITY.
- I encourage you to not pass housebill #65

G@GSMITH@gmail.com

# KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kodiak\_LIO@akleg.gov  
907-486-8116/ phone, 907-486-5264/fax

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Patricia M. Olsen

REPRESENTING: self

BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 65

COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: House Finance March 6, 2013

I am a 34 year resident of the State of Alaska. I am very unhappy about the proposed operating budget released this week. I am shocked that we are giving away \$1-1.5 billion dollars in the Governor's oil bill. While OUR oil is being given away, education funding for Pre-K is being cut. I consider the children of Alaska our most precious natural resource and by eliminating the early childhood funding, what message are we sending? Legislators in Juneau keep asking for guarantees on what works in education. Well, research shows that quality pre-K instruction increases academic performance. The ~~current~~<sup>proposed</sup> budget dramatically cuts funding for this important academic program. There's something wrong with this picture.

The Governor is GIVING ~~to~~ to the oil companies while TAKING from Alaska's children. Who exactly does the Governor work for? Please do not support HB65.

# KODIAK LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kodiak\_LIO@akleg.gov  
907-486-8116/ phone, 907-486-5264/fax

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Anjali Grantham  
REPRESENTING: Self, Alaska Historical Society  
BILL#/ SUBJECT: Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aid  
COMMITTEE &  
HEARING DATE: Operating - House Finance

I am the president of the Alaska Historical Society + a museum professional, representing the AHS's board of directors and our near-500 active members. We ask that the Alaska State Museum's Grant-in-Aid program is funded at \$150,000. This is re-granted to AK's museums + cultural centers. With these grants we accomplish crucial collections, exhibit, and program activities that otherwise likely wouldn't occur due to lack of funding. Increasing the \$ available means we can better care for our objects, better serve the tens of thousands of school children, visitors + tourists, and ensure the protection of our cultural patrimony. We also ask for a new line item of \$25,000 for the ASM's Grant-in-Aid program, specifically for an internship program for Alaska's museums. With graduate interns, small Alaskan museums get expert assistance in conservation, research, and exhibits - assistance that is otherwise prohibitively expensive. Alaska's museums + cultural institutions serve the tourism industry, our state's schools, and are important contributors to Alaska's economy. Please help museums to do our important work better.

Carlen Williams  
SE AHEC Director  
Ketchikan, Alaska

As the Director of the SE Area Health Education Center (AHEC) I am requesting your support of the AHEC increments in the University of Alaska's Budget. The Alaska AHEC is a statewide program that has five regional centers including the Southeast region which I am representing. The Alaska AHEC Centers do three things: Promote, Engage and Retain Healthcare professionals within the State of Alaska.

We promote to the youth of Alaska the opportunities they have in the healthcare field within the State.

We engage Alaskan students with opportunities within Alaskan educational programs and future Statewide employment options.

We retain by providing resources in continuing education and training needed to keep our healthcare professional here in Alaska.

Alaska AHEC supports the production of "homegrown" healthcare professional through awareness, education, and workforce development throughout the State of Alaska.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

  
Carlen Williams

SE AHEC Director

3100 Tongass Ave, Ketchikan AK 99901

907-228-8455

cwilliams@peacehealth.org



March 6, 2013

Dear House Finance Committee

Please continue to support Farm to School by **granting the fourth year of spending for this invaluable program**. This program gets thousands of pounds of local foods into the schools, builds relationships between children and the natural resources around them, helps create and sustain local economies, develops jobs so that people can continue to support themselves in their communities, and helps Alaska participate in America's food movement to make food healthy for those that eat it, sustainable since transportation/fuel usage is minimal, and enjoyable. Here in Sitka, the Farm to School program has supported the community's Fish to School program by giving us mini grants for our projects, which have enabled us to offer 1,500 students local seafood! These programs are invaluable for our youth, community, health, and economy.

Thank you for your time,

Ray Friedlander

109 Jeff Davis St., Sitka, AK 99835

CC'ed:

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

Dear House Finance Committee,

As a Southeast Alaska fisherman and parent of a young child enrolled in an Alaskan public school, I am writing to voice my strong support for the Farm to School Program and its continued funding.

For the last three years, my community's schoolchildren have benefited from healthy Local Fish Lunches—an award-winning Farm to School offshoot—served through the Sitka School District's school lunch program. These lunches bring donations of locally-caught seafood from fishermen like myself to children who otherwise might not have the chance to benefit firsthand from one of Alaska's most valuable natural resources.

Sitka is a model for communities statewide who wish to make local foods available in other school lunch programs—and rightly so, as the benefits to our state's children are many:

- Access to healthy foods, regardless of family income level
- Access to foods produced right here in Alaska
- Awareness of our state's natural resources and the importance of good stewardship
- Pride in Alaska's unique way of life and, in turn, an impetus toward good citizenship
- Future job opportunities in the emerging local foods sector
- Greater food security that comes with decreased dependence on imported foods

Just as I believe our state's schoolchildren should be among the first to enjoy locally-harvested seafood, I also believe Alaskan children should have access to locally-grown produce—the plethora of fruits and vegetables that thrive in our rich soils. Please ensure this happens throughout our state by voting for continued funding for the Farm to School Program.

Thank you for your service to our great state, and for your time.

Sincerely,

Beth Short-Rhoads  
111 Jamestown Drive  
Sitka, AK 99835  
907-738-9942

3-6-13



Sitka Conservation Society  
Box 6533  
Sitka, Alaska 99835  
(907) 747-7509  
info@sitkawild.org  
www.sitkawild.org

*"Protecting the natural environment of the Tongass while supporting the development of sustainable communities in Southeast Alaska – since 1967."*

Dear House Finance Committee,

The Alaska State Farm to School Program has been a huge asset to the Fish to Schools program in Sitka. Fish to Schools works toward a sustainable community that offers all school children the health benefits of locally-caught seafood, equips them to understand how this food source is obtained, and empowers them to one day enjoy the full cultural and economic advantages of local seafood resources. Farm to School has been integral to our success—through connections, support, and grant funding we have received. Through a partnership with Farm to School we are now able to offer 1,500 students in our community local fish twice a month!

The benefits to of Farm to School are many. By funding Farm to School, we can ensure schools connect with local, regional, and state farmers and fishermen. Farm to School networks create in-state markets for our producers, bolstering our local production and economies. And students benefit by eating local, healthy foods full of nutrients that feed their growing brains.

Farm to school benefits our economies, our communities, and our students. Thousands of pounds of fresh produce and seafood are now offered to Alaskan students, a direct result of this state program. Please reinstate funding for Alaska's Farm to School program so we can continue to see local seafood, Alaskan Grown, and traditional foods served in our schools.

Sincerely,

Tracy Gagnon  
Fish to Schools Coordinator  
Sitka Conservation Society

3-6-13



3/6/2013

Dear House Finance Committee,

As you conduct your research into budget items worthy of funding this legislative session, I hope you will give due consideration to the Farm to Schools program. I have seen more children in my school eating school lunch on the days local fish is offered, and as their teacher, I feel good about what they're eating. This program is just the smallest seed, but it is effective and making good things happen in our schools.

Please feel welcome to contact me in Sitka with any questions regarding the benefits of Farm to School funding for the students here – it is a small program that packs a punch and I hope you will support it in the budget process.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Himschoot  
(907) 738 6744

3/6/2013

Dear House Finance committee;

As a commercial Fisher in Sitka, and the mother of a Keet Gooshi Heen elementary school student, I very much hope that you will consider reinstating the fourth year of funding for the Farm to Schools program.

With the rising cost of groceries here in Alaska, and the rising cost of shipping Alaska's products South, it is very important that we do the best we can to keep as much of Alaska's local produce and seafood here in the state. As a commercial fisher, I see my shipping costs rise substantially every year. This eats into my bottom line and makes it harder for me to remain a successful local business. By far the best returns I see are from products I sell locally. That extra money I make from saved shipping costs stays in Alaska and benefits the local economy. By "buying local", The Farm to School Program supports local fishermen, processors and farmers here in Alaska.

As a parent of a school aged child, I am very concerned about the quality of food served in school lunches. I am certain that the local fish students are now eating through our Fish to Schools program, in partnership with Farm to School, has higher dietary benefits than the normal fare. Fish caught here in Sitka Sound, processed at our local seafood processors, and cooked here at school happens in just a five mile radius and that's pretty fantastic!

I love the fact that when my child eats lunch on a "Fish to School" lunch day, she is aware of the fact that her dad, or one of his fishermen friends probably caught the fish she's eating. I believe this makes her more in tune with both the food she chooses to put in her body, AND with her community. If our younger generation realizes that their community is making the effort to invest in their healthy future, they will grow up to value their community and give back. "Sense of Place" is a very real thing, and the Farm to School Program is teaching a whole new generation where their food comes from, and why they need to support the community that provides it.

In closing, please reinstate funding for the Farm to School program.

Thank you,

Wendy Alderson  
F/V Ocean Cape

Another letter!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Elizabeth Short-Rhoads** <[elianise@yahoo.com](mailto:elianise@yahoo.com)>

Date: Wed, Mar 6, 2013 at 11:39 AM

Subject: Please support the Farm to School Program

To: "[Representative Bill Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Representative_Bill_Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us)"

<[Representative Bill Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Representative_Bill_Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us)>

Cc: "[peter\\_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:peter_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us)" <[peter\\_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:peter_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us)>,

"[joe\\_michel@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:joe_michel@legis.state.ak.us)" <[joe\\_michel@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:joe_michel@legis.state.ak.us)>, "[joe.michel@akleg.gov](mailto:joe.michel@akleg.gov)"

<[joe.michel@akleg.gov](mailto:joe.michel@akleg.gov)>, "[daniel.george@akleg.gov](mailto:daniel.george@akleg.gov)" <[daniel.george@akleg.gov](mailto:daniel.george@akleg.gov)>,

"[darrell.breese@akleg.gov](mailto:darrell.breese@akleg.gov)" <[darrell.breese@akleg.gov](mailto:darrell.breese@akleg.gov)>, "[ryan.mckee@akleg.gov](mailto:ryan.mckee@akleg.gov)"

<[ryan.mckee@akleg.gov](mailto:ryan.mckee@akleg.gov)>, "[Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov)"

<[Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov)>

Dear Senator Stoltze,

As a Southeast Alaska fisherman and parent of a young child enrolled in an Alaskan public school,

I am writing to voice my strong support for the Farm to School Program and its continued funding.

For the last three years, my community's schoolchildren have benefited from healthy Local Fish Lunches—an award-winning Farm to School offshoot—served through the Sitka School District's school lunch program. These lunches bring donations of locally-caught seafood from fishermen like myself to children who otherwise might not have the chance to benefit firsthand from one of Alaska's most valuable natural resources.

Sitka is a model for communities statewide who wish to make local foods available in other school lunch programs—and rightly so, as the benefits to our state's children are many:

- Access to healthy foods, regardless of family income level
- Access to foods produced right here in Alaska
- Awareness of our state's natural resources and the importance of good stewardship
- Pride in Alaska's unique way of life and, in turn, an impetus toward good citizenship
- Future job opportunities in the emerging local foods sector
- Greater food security that comes with decreased dependence on imported foods

Just as I believe our state's schoolchildren should be among the first to enjoy locally-harvested seafood,

I also believe Alaskan children should have access to locally-grown produce—the plethora of fruits and

vegetables that thrive in our rich soils. Please ensure this happens throughout our state by voting for continued funding for the Farm to School Program.

Thank you for your service to our great state, and for your time.

Sincerely,

Beth Short-Rhoads  
111 Jamestown Drive  
Sitka, AK 99835  
907-738-9942

--

Tracy Gagnon  
Community Sustainability Organizer  
Sitka Conservation Society  
(907) 747-7509  
[tracy@sitkawild.org](mailto:tracy@sitkawild.org)

# SITKA SOUND SCIENCE CENTER



834 Lincoln Street, Suite 200  
Sitka, Alaska 99835  
Admin Phone: 907.747.8878  
Email: info@sitkasoundsciencecenter.org

March 5, 2013

Dear Legislators,

**This is a letter in support of the Fisheries Seafood and Maritime Initiative that includes an expansion of the University of Alaska Fisheries Technology Program.** The expansion is critical to strengthening a program that is already helping Alaska by training people in aquaculture and fisheries biology.

The Sitka Sound Science Center is a support facility for the Fish Tech program and we see first-hand how this job training program helps Alaskans land jobs in fisheries and aquaculture.

The Fisheries Technology Program offers classes that are based on the needs of the aquaculture industry. This expansion will benefit students living in small communities in coastal Alaska.

Your support of this Initiative is critical to strengthening commercial fisheries in Alaska

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Busch', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Busch, Executive Director



## Petersburg Mental Health Services, Inc.

P. O. Box 1309  
Petersburg, Alaska 99833

(907) 772-3332 main  
1-800-858-8850 fax

March 6, 2013

To Our Senators and Representatives:

As a third generation Alaskan and the director of a nonprofit behavioral health provider, 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 us safe! Petersburg Mental Health Services can help if you give us the means to do our jobs.

Sincerely,

Susan Ohmer, LCSW

Director

P.MHS, Inc.

To Our Representatives and Senators:

I am writing to support funding for Behavioral Health Services in Alaska and oppose any proposed cuts to current funding.

My name is Rebecca Beltrami and I work as a behavioral health clinician at Petersburg Mental Health Services in Petersburg, Alaska. I have witnessed the many benefits of a community-centered, wraparound approach to behavioral health care. The proposed cuts threaten to decrease our ability to effectively serve our clients in their community, increasing the likelihood of them requiring interventions that are more restrictive, more expensive and are delivered away from family, friends, and community supports. I strongly encourage you to reconsider your plans to cut behavioral health funding.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Beltrami, MSW

March 6, 2013

GOOD AFTERNOON

MY NAME IS JENNIFER RAY

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LISTENING TO MY TESTIMONY TODAY .

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU WHY I AM TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT OF FULL FUNDING OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BUDGET.

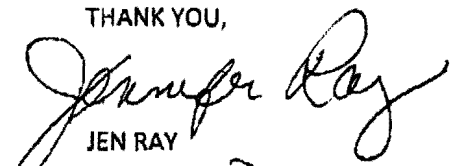
I HAVE A DAUGHTER WHO IS 26 YEARS OLD. SHE HAS HAD A SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS FOR THE LAST 7 YEARS AND IS DISABLED BECAUSE OF IT. PETERSBURG MENTAL HEALTH IS WHERE OUR FAMILY GOES FOR HER MENTAL HEALTH CARE. I HAVE FOUND THAT MY DAUGHTER'S USE OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IS INTEGRAL FOR HER GROWTH AND MAINTAINING HER STABILITY. I RECEIVE COUNSELING ON HOW TO HELP MY DAUGHTER WHEN I AM CONFUSED OR UNCERTAIN AS TO WHAT TO DO. OUR ENTIRE FAMILY AT ONE TIME HAS BEEN COUNSELED REGARDING OUR CHILD.

PLEASE SUPPORT 100% FUNDING OF PETERSBURG MENTAL HEALTH AND ALL THE OTHER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AGENCIES THROUGHOUT ALASKA . UNTIL WE ADDRESS MENTAL ILLNES HEAD ON WE WILL BE DOING A DISSERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITIES.

I AM PERSONALLY WORKING WITH FOUR NAMI (NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS) TEACHERS HERE IN PETERSBURG TO BRING THE **NAMI FAMILY TO FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAM** TO OUR COMMUNITY. THIS COURSE IS DESIGNED TO EDUCATE FAMILY MEMBERS OR CAREGIVERS SO THEY CAN BETTER ASSIST THEIR MENTALLY ILL LOVED ONES. WE ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS AND WANT TO HELP AND SHARE WITH OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

I HOPE THAT YOU, OUR STATE LEADERS, WILL EXTEND THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY IN YOUR VOTE FOR FULL FUNDING OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH. YOU WILL BE SERVING OUR COMMUNITY AND PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH.

THANK YOU,



JEN RAY

P.O. Box 1864

Petersburg, Ak 99833

907-772-2030



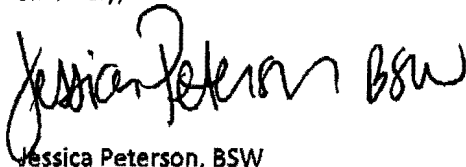
To Our Representatives and Senators:

I am in support for maintaining current funding levels for all Behavioral Health Services in Alaska.

My name is Jessica Peterson I work for Petersburg Mental Health Services Inc. in Petersburg, Alaska for the past ten years as a substance abuse counselor and behavioral health rehabilitation counselor. I have seen over the years a progression of many changes at the State level effecting and impacting the services and treatment provided. It seems with each passing year a reduction in funding and additional tasks/obligations on us to demonstrate our worth.

Without community supports individuals with behavioral health needs may be more apt to rely on emergency services and are at greater risk for requiring institutional care which will increase costs significantly. Meeting people where they are at benefits the residents while saving money overall by avoiding costly interventions. I strongly hope you re-consider your plans to reduce behavioral health services in all communities. A reduction in funding would significantly hinder our ability to serve our community members locally and would not be in the best interest of our consumers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Peterson BSW". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Peterson, BSW

PMHS, Inc.

Dan Masoni  
Unalaska City Librarian  
Member of the SWAMC Broadband Technology Planning Committee  
Member of the Unalaska City School Board

I'm speaking as the Unalaska City Librarian in favor of full funding for the Governor's Digital Initiative.

Broadband access is developing as a primary driver of economic, educational, and cultural exchange in rural Alaska.

The Online With Libraries Project has provided a strong backbone to most rural Public Libraries in Alaska. It creates a "community commons" that fosters ideas, education, and economic growth. SWAMC has recognized the need for this interchange in its most recent Broadband Implementation Plan.

Many small municipalities cannot afford the bandwidth currently provided by the OWL Project. If OWL support is cut, then those libraries and municipalities will have no alternative but to reduce public access and programming.

Ultimately the funding recisions recommended by the Subcommittee will disenfranchise 20% of the population of Alaska who live in roughly 70% of the State.

Live Homework Help is heavily used by students in Unalaska both from home and the Public Library. The system provides guidance for children whose parents either can't or won't help them with homework. A very strong educational tool will be lost if Live Homework Help is eliminated.