

Alaska Legislature budget committee:

3/6/2013

I want to take a moment to express my disappointment to hear that funding for the CBC is in jeopardy and to encourage you to continue supporting rural partnerships with this vital program. My journey as a care coordinator partnering with the CBC began in a way that is far too common for many agencies that serve Alaskans who are at high risk of institutionalization. In working with a young man who has exhibited a range of behaviors related directly to his own safety as well as the safety of those who work with him (assaulting family, school personal and our agency personnel) I received a frantic phone call from his parents begging me to find an institutional placement as they felt they had no options and no place to turn after another assault. The truth is that as a state we lack the resources and expertise to serve such individuals in our rural communities. When you look at what residential or institutional programs are in Alaska you will find a lack of beds available and a number reserved for OCS children. When you couple that with the fact that clients such as mine have special needs due to the particular presentation of their developmental disability and in this case a client who is both dually diagnosed with mental illness and genetic abnormality, I shared the hopelessness and deep concern these parents were experiencing.

It was at this point that I discovered the CBC as a resource to work with Alaskans who were at imminent risk of institutionalization. As we began the process of developing a team which would implement the ABA plan, a new hope that we might prevent this young man from losing his home and community arose. We were able to work intensively with mental health services as well as with the school and family. In particular, as the school was seeing a large percentage of daily aggressive and non compliant behaviors, the CBC was able to work in the school setting and train the para-professionals to implement behavior strategies specifically designed for this young man. As you can imagine, where there was a sense of failure and desperation, this new team felt empowerment and hope.

We are still meeting bi-weekly as a comprehensive team to help this young man. I can say with certainty that if the CBC was not in existence our client would be institutionalized in a setting far from home which might not provide the level of support he requires to find success and some day return to his community and family. Currently this young man has begun to exhibit an increase in compliance and a decrease in violent behavior which speaks volumes.

I want to express to those who would hold the future of the CBC within their decision making process that this young program is just getting its legs and that the value it holds for agencies and families across the state is not yet fully understood. As a care coordinator having been involved in social services in Alaska over the past thirteen years, I would implore that every consideration is made to recognize that the CBC can play a pivotal and vital role in reducing both present and future expenses related to institutional and residential treatment.

Thank you again for your role in supporting our community, schools and families in Homer and throughout Alaska.

Sincerely,

Sean Jones

Care Coordinator.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sean Jones', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Alex L. Kaplan  
Representing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill No./Subject: H.B. 65  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I am a teacher at Homer Flex. This is an alternative H.S. in Homer. Currently our enrollment is at 40 students. Needless to say many of our students are involved w/ the community mental health services in Homer. These services we <sup>are going</sup> receive from the Center are enormous. <sup>many are heavy & go through the crisis management program.</sup> The Center is providing support to these students so they can maintain and thrive in our community. Without the support of the Center so many of our students would most likely drop out. The support they receive eventually will help many of them be self-sufficient, without the support there is a good chance they might drop out and then we know that cycle hurts in so many ways. The money you want to cut will end up not being a ~~savings~~ savings - my guess is the cost we are spending now is definitely worth <sup>it</sup> spending so in the future we won't end up spending <sup>more</sup> money later for the situations that students may end up ~~spending~~ in.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

Name:

Edward R Murphy

Representing:

Bill No./Subject

Medicaid

Committee:

H FIN

Date of Hearing:

3/6/2013

I want to thank Patti Boyle of the Independent Living Center for all her help in helping me with a Miller Trust and the Medicaid program. I am a disabled senior citizen and would probably be without adequate medical treatment (I have heart disease) without her counseling and interventions. I regret to hear that you may be cutting funding for this vital resource for seniors and the disabled.

Edward R Murphy

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Crystal Millien  
Representing: The Center  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65  
Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I work for South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services in Homer and work closely with area schools and non-profits. I would like to start by ~~recognizing~~ acknowledging that budget money must come from somewhere. I recognize that; however, it's important to note that cuts to DBH Grants, early childhood programs, ~~education~~ and programs to address complex behaviors and autism, will not save us money in the long run. The needs <sup>the complex</sup> these programs address are real and rarely <sup>Behavioral</sup> are they fully met at current funding levels. <sup>collaboration</sup> Our agencies relying on these funds are strapped and will be forced to reduce services. When that happens the needs are forced to be addressed by more expensive and ineffective means such as the emergency room, residential ~~or~~ facilities, psychiatric hospitalizations, and incarceration. But these are more than fiscal considerations all of these programs see incredible positive changes in individuals and families that branch out into the community and future generations in the necessary ways that ~~save~~ not only save us money but also facilitate the development of the kind of Alaska where all citizens can be healthy, productive and positively engaged.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Rachel Romberg  
Representing: Haven House  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I am testifying regarding House Bill 65, respectfully requesting that the Committee restore funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed amounts of 937,500 and 1,042,500 respectively.

These programs are a vital part of our ~~to~~ community's health and address the needs of our youngest citizens, ~~which~~ thereby addressing the needs of our future. Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers offer young children, in families facing serious challenges, a chance they might not otherwise have had for health, happiness and success, something all Alaskan children should have the right to. As the Victim Services Program Manager for South Peninsula Haven House, a domestic violence agency, I have worked with both programs. From my professional standpoint, I see the immense difference that these programs make in the prevention and early detection of child abuse and domestic violence. I've seen these programs make the difference in families break the cycle of violence. I strongly urge this Committee to restore funding, <sup>and in doing so</sup> to support our youngest citizens, to support the prevention of domestic violence and child abuse, and to support our future.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

Name: Meg Mitchell  
Representing: SPBHS The Center PRIDE Program  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65  
Committee: Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I am requesting support for funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative, as requested by the Mental Health Trust and the Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education. As a 22 year employee of the PRIDE Program <sup>working</sup> as a provider and a case manager for people of all ages who experience a disability I would like to communicate how impressive and effective the Complex Behavior Collaborative is in helping support of consultation and training services for every community it has been invited into to assist providers and caregivers who serve people with challenging behaviors. This program has made essential, effective training supports that help intervene to improve services for clients with complex behaviors. There is no other training program in the State of Alaska which has provided more common sense supports for teams of caregivers and providers who work with individuals with disabilities and challenging behaviors. Continuing this support is absolutely essential to improve the lives of the individual with the disability, their families and their community. In addition the Complex

Behavioral Collaborative has given the caregivers and providers a road map towards the most effective on-going supports in order to improve their jobs ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> without this program communities will continue to have crises serving people with difficult behaviors, often resulting in hospitalization or being sent out of state to be institutionalized. Please do not cut any funding to the Complex Behavior Collaborative. We need this outstanding intensive support and intervention services to improve lives of the vulnerable Alaskans, their families and all communities across the state of Alaska.

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

Name: RICHARD L. WEBB  
Representing: SELF (BUT WORK AT KBC)  
Bill No./Subject: 65 OPERATING BUDGET  
Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/2013

I would like to register my support for Bill 65 - OPERATING BUDGET (specifically the KBC Student Advisor Position and monies for the operating costs for the Career & Technical Center.

As to the first - The KBC Advisor Position - I work on an almost daily basis with the incumbent of this position. I know first hand the value this position and this person brings to the community and to Alaska. This advisor position has a proven record of success (of being able to retain students and of helping them go on to successful careers.

As to the Career & Technical Position. This supports key economic training & development in key areas Process Technology, Instrumentation & Electronics. These are positions that are already vital to Alaska's economy. Healthcare will also be supported. But most importantly ~~if~~ the center will ~~be~~ Training those workers who will be required for the future economy. One based upon a dynamic Technical infrastructure - and the ability to support it.

R. L. Webb 



HB 65

My name is Kim Burrows and I work at the Independent Living Center in Homer. ~~There are a number of our consumers~~

March 5, 2013

I have a letter to one of our consumers has

Dear Alaska Legislators, asked me to read for us.

I apologize for being unable to present our comments in person and thank you for accepting my written comments.

As the wife of a man who is permanently disabled due to a spinal cord injury, I feel compelled to speak to you on behalf of disabled persons throughout Alaska on the proposed budget cuts to funding for Independent Living Centers in Alaska.

Because my husband's injury was work related and occurred in another state, we are luckier than most in that we have received most of the essential care necessary for his health and survival.

Still, even in view of that, my husband's physician sought the services of the Independent Living Center in Homer when home modifications became necessary for my husband's well being and safety. Before this, we had never heard of them before.

Although we ended up needing only minimal assistance from our local ILC, we did benefit from their several visits to our home to help us access those who could help.

During these visits, we were struck by the kindness, professionalism, and compassion displayed by workers there. In the world of being disabled, or the family of someone who is disabled, this kind of caring is often missing. We were also struck by the fact that many of the workers are volunteers—a small army of dedicated souls who function under the direction of Executive Director Joyanna Geissler and the operating Board of Directors.

Although our story is not outstanding, the stories of others less fortunate than us are.

In the limited time we have known our Homer group, it has been easy to observe the cohesive spirit of giving that means so much to so many—especially in rural areas that are already underserved.

The offices of the ILC are not fancy and the equipment is obviously dated, but the attitude and the sheer volume of work done there are state of the art.

Cutting funding to this deserving non-profit organization would be cutting essential and quality of life services for those it serves. It would be removing the small modicum of independence from those who have already lost so much quality of life through their disabilities—be it a disability with sight, hearing, mobility, or whatever the cause.

When my husband was injured, attitudes towards the disabled were horrendous. They were to be hospitalized and shut away from society. They could not own homes or hope for an independent lifestyle. Thank God that has changed. Thank God

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Jeff vonRekowski  
Representing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill No./Subject \_\_\_\_\_  
Committee: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Life long Alaskan from Sitka AK  
now living in Homer, AK Parents as  
teachers, and best beginnings is an  
essential program to provide the  
utmost care and education to  
families, and children.  
Please continue to support  
our Thank you.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Scott L. Wheat  
Representing: Self  
Bill No./Subject: HB65 - Budget BILLS  
Committee: Hsc. Finance  
Date of Hearing: March 05<sup>W</sup>, 2013

"Through the Chair, For the record, my name is Scott with one t. Please hear me, See me as a fiscal conservative. We will save money more through ~~prevention~~ prevention than belated treatment. Over the last 56 years in Alaska, I have been a customer of the school system K-university. I also have been through Emergency rooms, Department of Corrections, and API. Today I testify that the Independent Living centers TRAILS events are helping me continue to be a student, a tax payer, a parent and a grandparent.

I receive Social Security Disability Insurance, Medicare Medicaid and other related supports.

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, once allowed to function has worked to prevent unreasonable costs to clean up the mess left by alcohol, drugs, and general abuse of behavioral health symptoms."

*Scott L. Wheat*  
DOB 2353

99603

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

Name: Jill Ross  
Representing: SPROUT  
Bill No./Subject: PRE-K FUNDING  
Committee: HOUSE FINANCE  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

MY NAME IS JILL ROSS AND I AM THE ASSISTANT COORDINATOR FOR THE INFANT LEARNING PROGRAM. BEING IN EARLY INTERVENTION, WE HAVE AN INVALUABLE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARENTS AS TEACHERS PROGRAM. I AM TESTIFYING ON BEHALF OF A FAMILY CURRENTLY RECEIVING SERVICES WITH PARENTS AS TEACHERS: "MY DAUGHTER AND I ARE A PART OF THE PARENTS AS TEACHERS PROGRAM AND HAVE BEEN FOR ABOUT 4 MONTHS. I FEEL THIS IS THE BEST EDUCATION AND INTERACTION MY DAUGHTER HAS EVER GOTTED. IT IS GETTING HER READY FOR SCHOOL AND LIFE. THESE CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE AND IT ALL BEGINS W/ THESE PROGRAMS." THANK YOU

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: LS LINDSEY  
Representing: HOMER INDEPENDENT LIVING  
CNTR.  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65  
Committee: Finance Committee  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

Homer independent living center helped me with many projects. Amanda was especially kind & helpful, as were many people at the center. Kim the receptionist was extremely kind & helpful.

My wheelchair ramp is enclosed thanks to a grant ~~from~~ that the H.I.L.C. helped me obtain. I wanted to thank everyone who helped me. Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart.

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: LARRY TANNER  
Representing: INDEF. LUG CNTR - HOMER  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65  
Committee: FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I've been a resident of AK for 23 yrs & a res. of Homer for 8 yrs now. Got very sick from an injury that lasted for 6 yrs: lost housing / employment / basic life structure. Did not qualify for state or fed aid of any type. It's my belief if the services would not have been there for me @ the ILC in Homer, I would have probably slipped through the cracks and been unable to have a productive life. The ILC has helped me w/ everything from medical to housing to starting my own business. Now I am not homeless - for close to 6 years - and am now a taxpayer in the state of AK. It is my belief if you cut these services, there will be many people that would lose out on a full life here in this great state of AK.

I am in favor of full-funding plus and the state should not try to fix something that isn't broke!

Larry Tanner

1332 Lake Shore Dr. Homer, AK 99603

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Lolita Brache  
Representing: self  
Bill No./Subject: HB 65 operating budget  
Committee: Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

I urge you to support the UA budget to the fullest extent possible. Supporting the programs at Kenai River Campus - including the Career and Technical Center is essential to Alaska's ability to have a skilled work force in the future.

Cutting funding to education is ~~an~~ regressive. We need educated working citizens. Anything that limits our campus' ability to provide high quality programs is going to result in serious gaps in the future.

*Lolita Brache*  
299-0694

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Lolita Brache  
Representing: self  
Bill No./Subject: operating budget  
Committee: finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

Im speaking for myself and many parents who support Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers. Homer has strengthened support to families with these funds. Prevention is more meaningful than remediation! A few things Best Beginnings has done - outreach story hours, trainings and support for child care providers, free activities for parents & kids.

Parents as Teachers builds resiliency in children & parents - connecting parents to resources, providing specific information & skills training. Keep Kids OUT of OCS by supporting parents as teachers.

*Lolita Brache*  
299-0694



## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Catherine H. Knott  
Representing: KPC  
Bill No./Subject: \*65\* Operating budget  
Committee: Finance  
Date of Hearing: March 6, 2013

I am an assistant professor of anthropology at Kenai Peninsula College; I also teach distance courses which include UAA students from all over the state. I am writing to support the UA Board of Regents approved budget items for student success advisors & student advisor's position. These are of critical importance for the success of our students. We have a higher number of non traditional students many years & many have challenges above & beyond their academic classes - in the last year I have had students with major illnesses, accidents, loss of jobs, loss of childcare, & new babies, new spouses, new jobs, students deployed overseas and who have lost a spouse. All of these present serious challenges to the ability of a student to stay in school. Our student advisor & student success staff work one-on-one with the students to make sure that the students don't give up, that they get through critical periods without quitting school, and that they choose courses & majors & degrees which ensure them the best chance for success. Please hear this testimony in favor of the Board of Regents' approved budget.

**John Cannon**  
**3101 Whispering Woods Dr.**  
**Wasilla, AK 99654**

March 5, 2013

Representative Allen Austerman  
Co-Chair House Finance Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Representative Austerman:

I waited at the Mat-Su LIO for over 1.5 hours to testify at the Finance Committee HB65 public testimony held 3/6/13. Unfortunately, I had another commitment and had to leave. I was impressed with the legislators who like you who stayed for the entire session and listened to the heart felt and compelling testimony of citizens from all over our great State. On the other hand, the number of empty seats around the table was not impressive.

Following are the comments I would have made for the record.

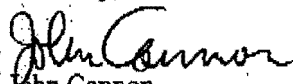
Good afternoon Chairman Austerman, Chairman Stoltze, and members of the committee. My name is: John Cannon, I live at 3101 Whispering Woods Dr., Wasilla. I serve as the President of the Key Coalition of Alaska. On behalf of Key, I want to thank you both, the members of your committee and their staff for taking time out of their busy schedules a few weeks ago to meet with individuals with disabilities and their family members who traveled to Juneau to talk with legislators about their challenges and their successes. Mr. Chairman, today I want to speak in support of the complex behavioral collaborative.

After closing out their budget subcommittee process, the House Finance Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services did not add funding for continuation of the Complex Behavior Collaborative, as requested by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and partner advisory boards. Mr. Chairman I am here today to ask your committee to reconsider this decision. I respectfully request support of a funding increment to continue the critically needed support services provided through the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative.

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 is saving the Alaska money. According to state staff, the Collaborative helps reduce service costs by 50% when crises are averted. Mr. Chairman on behalf of Alaskans who need these critically important services I strongly urge your committee to fund the requested \$450,000 increment needed for the complex behavioral collaborative. Thank you.

Sincerely,



John Cannon  
907-376-6063

## **GLENNALLEN LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

Email: [Glennallen\\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Glennallen_LIO@legis.state.ak.us)  
907-822-5588/ phone, 907-822-5591/fax

### **WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Sheila Horton

REPRESENTING: CRNA

BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 65/HB 66 Operating and Mental Health Budget

COMMITTEE &

HEARING DATE: HFIN 3/6/13

My name is Sheila Horton, and I am a BHS Clinical Director for CRNA.

I would like the legislature to reject any cuts to the Behavioral Health Budget because of already present unmet behavioral health needs in Alaska. Alaska has the highest rates of substance abuse, depression and suicide of any state in the U.S.

For the many years that I have been in Alaska, I have watched as one Substance Abuse center after another has closed its doors. And as a long term mental health provider, I have treated countless people who suffer from depression, thoughts of suicide, and suicide attempts. This population is vulnerable and disenfranchised already. Why would we, the people of the state of Alaska, push them further to the edge?

And speaking of vulnerable, disenfranchised people, what of the chronically mentally ill; those who can have fulfilling enriched lives, if they can receive the support and counseling provided by the very programs that will be gutted if the legislature makes the proposed cuts.

## **GLENNALLEN LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE**

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907-822-5588/ phone, 907-822-5591/fax

### **WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

NAME: Lejla Berberovic

REPRESENTING: CRNA

BILL#/ SUBJECT: HB 65/HB 66 Operating and Mental Health Budget

COMMITTEE &

HEARING DATE: HFIN 3/6/13

Thank you for your time.

My name is Lejla Berberovic, and I am a Behavioral Health clinician. I work for CRNA. I work mostly with children. CRNA has been able to extend my position so that we can provide services at our schools. This helps the families with things such as transportation. Also, this helps our schools since they don't have the funding to provide mental health services themselves.

I can tell you that all of the children I work with have academic difficulties and a lot of them are at least one year behind.

I truly believe that their academic problems stem from their mental health problems such as trauma. Often this trauma is because they belong to a lower socio-economic bracket which is exactly the bracket we at CRNA tend to serve. I want to urge you to not cut funding to mental health services to both adults and youth because these services are helping these children function at their optimum today and therefore, better theirs and our futures.

March 6, 2013

Dear Governor Parnell, Legislators & Committee Members,

I'm Valarie Kingsland. I work in a school library and I'm a Regional Representative for the Alaska Association of School Librarians.

I have a BA from UAF and I'm currently a grad student in an online program for a Masters in Library and Information Science at San Jose State University.

I am Inupiaq and have lived in Unalakleet, Fairbanks, Selawik and Shishmaref before moving to Seward.

On behalf of the School Librarians of Alaska and the rural education community, I request continued funding for Live Homework Help. In addition to providing tutoring from kindergarten through college, it also offers help with GEDs, Citizenship, a Writing Center and Career Center that included job search and resume writing skills. As a participant in the free online Introduction to Alaska Digital Resources class and a competent writer and successful grad student, I've used the writing center and found it to very helpful. It was one of the most valuable lessons in the class.

On behalf of rural communities and fellow Alaska Natives, I request continued and full financial support for the OWL broadband project. I was encouraging a young person to attend the online graduate program I'm in; only to be disappointed that it isn't possible because the bandwidth required to participate in such online education programs is not available in his village. Online education opportunities are increasing and the potential to reach rural participants is powerful and transformative. It's time to take broadband off the road system and to the rest of Alaska for the benefit of those who have the least opportunity and resources in Alaska.

Each of these programs empowers your people, Alaska's people, to learn and contribute to the welfare and future of Alaska.

Thank you for your time.

Valarie Kingsland

Seward, Alaska

[valariek@alaska.com](mailto:valariek@alaska.com)

[www.about.me/vkingsland](http://www.about.me/vkingsland)

March 6, 2013

To the Chair  
House Finance Committee:

Today I am testifying on behalf of Alaska Vocational Technical College in Seward, AK. While the proposed cut of \$200,000 may sound very small in the scheme of things, this proposed cut will result in program reductions at AVTEC. Any class cut could very well be the one required course someone needs to complete his/her degree.

AVTEC specializes in training the future workers needed for Alaska. Welding, carpentry, heavy diesel mechanics, maritime training, electricity, and plumbing are just a few of the courses offered. Students learn how to make a good living and provide stable support for the State of Alaska.

We need to train Alaskans to work in Alaska!

Right now, there are opportunities we have to take advantage of, such as the expansion of the Bering Sea fishing fleet by its moving from Seattle to Alaska. Shell Oil is becoming a larger presence and will shortly begin drilling in the Arctic; it is anticipated during the summer of 2014. The railroad is also expanding its capabilities.

Now is the time to increase training opportunities for our workforce so we can meet the needs of Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

Vanta Shafer  
Current Seward City Council member  
Former Mayor, City of Seward

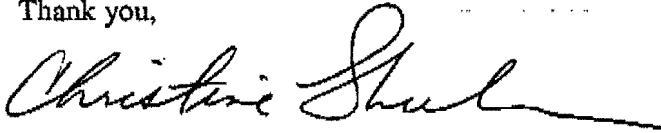
1004 2nd Ave  
Seward, AK  
907-224-2525

March 6, 2013

Dear Representative,

I am a guardian for a 62 year old developmentally and physically disabled adult in Seward, Alaska. Due to her physical and developmental disabilities, she can easily become isolated and shut-in. The Independent Living Center here has been a God send for her in connecting her to the community so she can make friends, gain access to activities that greatly improve the quality of her life, and improve her mental health. I strongly support this wonderful program that already operates on minimal funding. Please do not deny the \$100,000 incremental funding that can enable the Independent Living Center to provide these services to more of those who are in our trust of care.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine Sheehan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christine Sheehan  
Seward, Alaska

POB 2982  
491-0260

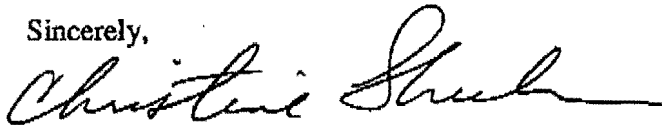
March 6, 2013

Dear Representative,

I was shocked to see the magnitude of the proposed cuts to Behavioral Health Services in Alaska. I am a guardian for a developmentally and physically disabled adult who also suffers from mental illness. In addition, I work in the administration of a community behavioral health agency. I see the individual need first hand, and I see the day-to-day struggles of the agency trying to keep solvent in order to continue to offer services. It is a huge challenge as many are suffering and need these services to cope in their daily lives. Many do not have resources of their own to pay for services, relying on Medicaid billing, but the reimbursement rates are fixed. The agency cannot continue to absorb the lack of resources on its own, and be able to continue to provide the much needed services; as well as maintain competent staff with the below par wages that are all we can offer.

Please reconsider the impact that these cuts will have on the ability of small agencies to continue to provide these much-needed services in their communities.

Sincerely,



Christine Sheehan  
Seward, Alaska

P.O. Box 2982

491-0260





P.O. Box 1045  
302 Railway Avenue  
Seward, Alaska 99664  
Phone: 907.224.5257  
Alaska toll free: 1.888.224.5257  
Fax: 907.224.7081

Co-Chairmen,  
House Finance Committee,

Dear Sirs,

My name is Dr. John Craig Williamson, I am a psychologist and Behavioral Health Director for SeaView Community Service in Seward, Alaska. Our agency is a non-profit community mental health agency which offers 12 unique programs in our facility. We provide services for mental health, substance abuse, disability services, group home assisted living, transitional community support, youth and family services, infant learning, domestic violence and sexual assault, and tele-behavioral health. We primarily serve the poor and the working poor in Seward and the surrounding communities of Moose Pass, Cooper Landing, and Hope.

I am writing today to urge you to not pass House Bill 65. The reason for my request is that the demand for all of the services we provide continues to increase. We observe that as the economy worsens the stresses it produces on our citizens and their families also increases. The waiting list for our outpatient substance abuse counseling is almost three pages. We have had twenty new requests for behavioral health services since the middle of February. Our tele-behavioral health program provides psychiatric medication management to fifty area residents. Several of these people are seriously mentally ill, and would require hospitalization or possibly be incarcerated if it wasn't for a service like this to monitor and help support them living in the community. Using programs like tele-behavioral health we have been very successful in keeping many mentally ill people in the community rather than be admitted, or re-admitted to API.

Our agency maintains a 24 hour crisis line to handle requests for behavioral health emergencies such as suicidal individuals, psychiatric emergencies, and domestic violence and sexual assault. We are proud to provide services to all the residents in our catchment area regardless of their ability to pay. We are able to offer these services because the State of Alaska, Division of Behavioral Health, Department of Public Safety, and other state granting agencies help us with grants to help provide vital services for many who could not otherwise afford them. Please carefully consider these Alaska citizens when you make your decisions. Thank you.

J. Craig Williamson, EdD

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[www.providence.org/alaska](http://www.providence.org/alaska)

March 7, 2012

Re: Proposed cuts to State Trauma Fund



Dear Legislators,

My name is Robert Reeg. I am a physician and the Trauma Medical Director at Providence Seward Medical Center, a Level IV Trauma Center. I would like to express my concerns about proposed cuts to the State Trauma Fund. I have been practicing in Seward, Alaska for eight years and during that time I have seen lives saved and vast improvements in patient care as a direct result of the State Trauma Fund.

It is well documented that a small percentage of people live in rural areas, but approximately half of all traumatic injuries occur in small communities like Seward. Examples of life threatening injuries we encounter include car, motorcycle, and snow machine accidents, gunshot wounds, stabbings, and severe life threatening injuries from falls off Mount Marathon. We encounter the same types of injuries that are often seen in big cities, but we have multiple disadvantages. Our transportation times to more advanced care in Anchorage are prolonged due to our location as well as weather. We also don't have the trained staff, capabilities, or the equipment of larger hospitals. We don't have Trauma Surgeons, board certified Emergency Physicians on permanent staff, or other experienced staff. Severely injured patients are often limited to our small hospital staffed mostly with Family Physicians and nurses when they sustain a life threatening injury.

Despite these disadvantages, we strive to provide the highest level of care to our patients. We struggle financially like other rural hospitals. The State Trauma Fund has been vital to our successes and without this funding I question whether or not our hospital would be able to afford the infrastructure to continue to provide this level of care. We currently use State Trauma funds to finance trauma education for physicians and nurses. The funds have also allowed us to provide advanced trauma training to 24 local EMS providers yearly. We have also been able to purchase life saving medical equipment including a video intubating device which has already saved multiple lives. We have also significantly benefitted from the expertise, guidance, training, and outreach provided by Julie Rabeau, the State Trauma Program Manager.

Please consider continuing funding of the State Trauma Fund. I can say with certainty that this program has and would continue to save lives in Seward and other Alaskan communities. I greatly appreciate your consideration of my comments.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Robert Reeg, MD  
Trauma Medical Director, Providence Seward Medical Center

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Ann Dixon  
Representing: Homer Public Library  
Bill No./Subject: Proposed Cuts to Governor's Education  
Committee: Budget - OWL Program  
Date of Hearing: 03/06/2013

Please restore funding of \$761,800 as in the governor's budget for the OWL program. ~~Thank you!~~ Please see attached. Thank you!

## OWL Funding

*Restore funding please!*

The OWL project has been instrumental in upgrading public access to the Internet for people who live in the Homer area and make use of the library's Internet and computers. Last year we registered nearly 50,000 Internet sessions. Many people cannot afford Internet access in their homes, or the access they have is too slow to support certain functions, or they ~~do not have~~ <sup>do not have</sup> printers and printing at home.

The OWL ~~budget~~ <sup>program</sup> helps pay for the bandwidth we use to support this public access. Without it, the library budget would not be able to provide the amount of bandwidth we currently offer. Yet demand for bandwidth only grows. People need computers and internet access to apply for jobs, get health information, retrieve government documents and forms, find legal documents, conduct business, and many other essential activities of modern life.

OWL has also provided us with computer equipment, most notably the fabulous videoconference equipment we now enjoy. So far we've used it to provide cost-effective training for staff, air the presidential debates, offer a hands-on robotic workshop ~~program~~ for youth, a job interview, a thesis defense, both receive and broadcast live story times for children, and numerous other educational and civic programs.

Libraries need this funding in order to afford this access to technology and information for our communities. Funding for bandwidth benefits people in all age groups and from all segments of our community. I urge you to support full funding for Governor Parnell's budget of \$761,800 for the OWL program.

*Thank you very much.*

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

Name: Ruth Allison Reynolds  
Representing: Parents as Teachers, Best Beginnings  
Bill No./Subject: House Bill 65  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

Please restore the funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings to the levels proposed by the Governor

I am the parent of a four-year-old child with developmental delays. These delays often manifest as what most people who are not educated in early childhood development would simply call "bad behavior." I spent several years in frustration as every technique I read about in parenting books, and all of the advice from other parents failed with my child. As my frustration escalated and I felt more and more helpless, I went to Sprout in Homer and signed up for Parents as Teachers. My Parent Educator immediately saw signs of developmental delays in my daughter and gave me several questionnaires to fill out. She also told me about how much a pediatric occupational therapist might help my daughter. She has also recommended many good parenting books to help me deal with my daughter's needs. Best Beginnings held a free parenting class with free childcare that taught me how to discipline my child in a way that suited her needs. My Parent Educator also helped us get into a neurodevelopmental clinic that I otherwise would not have been aware of. If it was not for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings, I believe I would still feel lost as a parent, and my daughter would not be getting the therapy she needs.

Thank you for serving this wonderful state -  
rich in resources and people.

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Caroline Venuti  
Representing: Kachemak Bay Campus  
Bill No./Subject: H.B. # 69  
Committee: House and ~~Means~~ Finance  
Date of Hearing: 6 March 2013

My name is Caroline Venuti, I'm a  
live-long Alaska. I am an educator. I  
taught in Alaska for 33 years. I currently  
am the Learning Resource Coordinator at  
Kachemak Bay Campus.

I'm hold a Bachelors' Degree from U.A.F.  
and a Master's Degree from U.A.A.

I'm concerned about the budget not  
being supported for K.R.C. and K.B.C.  
Carol Swartz and Gary Turner are  
pros at budgets. You need to know  
they put many hours looking at a  
fair budget for their community needs.  
Fairbanks and Anchorage are large city  
centers - both campuses are large. But  
for some students small is what is  
needed. The Old Believers and native  
Alaskans are two groups that benefit  
from small classes, lots of support,  
and opportunities to be active in  
student govt.

One size doesn't fit all!  
Please look again at the funding for  
Kenai Peninsula College.

~~I see it 2 ways:~~

You can be remembered as the legislature  
that helped ~~all~~ colleges campuses meet  
the community needs. The choice is  
easy/ support R.P.C.

Signed: Carolyn Veruti  
Box 3652  
Homer, Ak. 99603

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Name: Karen Shemet  
Representing: Sprout / PAT, BB programs  
Bill No./Subject: 65  
Committee: House Finance  
Date of Hearing: 3/6/13

Please restore Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers & other early childhood funding back to the governor's proposed funding levels.

I've been a family/home visitor in Homer for over 12 years now & I've seen dramatic improvements in families lives when they get support from programs such as PAT, ICP, BB, Imagination Library etc.

PAT, in particular improves parenting practices, increases early detection of developmental delay + health issues, promotes safe + healthy relationships + improves school readiness + school success.

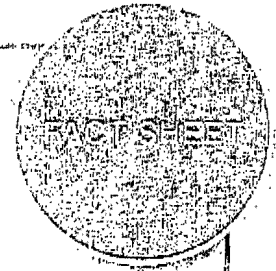
I was a parent in the program & it works!

See Attached: Please  
- Why invest in PAT 2 pages fully  
- Parent support letter, find  
Thank you





Parents as Teachers™



## Why Invest in Parents as Teachers

*An evidence-based home visiting approach builds strong families and promotes positive parent-child interaction so children are healthy, safe and ready to learn.*

Few investments have the rate of return of early childhood programs. Investing in children, starting with the earliest years, produces significant long-term impacts for individuals and communities.<sup>1</sup> Children who participate in early education programs receive immediate benefits from improved kindergarten readiness and long-term benefits from school success, better employment, and reduced delinquent and criminal behavior.<sup>2</sup>

### What experts say: An independent cost-benefit analysis

A 2004 study conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy titled "Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth"<sup>3</sup> found that:

- > Parents as Teachers realized an \$800 per child return on investment for communities (\$4,300 in benefits of the program minus costs over 2.5 years).
- > Parents as Teachers had the largest benefit per dollar of cost (\$1.23) of all reviewed pre-kindergarten education programs for children up to age 3.

### The difference

Home visiting is critical to high-quality preschool programs. Parents as Teachers curriculum are often selected by preschool programs as the resource on home visiting to support their early childhood services.

Parents as Teachers is designed to:

#### 1. Enhance parent knowledge of child development and improve parenting practices.

- > Most brain development occurs in the first few years of life and parents are the most important influence on children during this critical period.
- > Parents who participated in Parents as Teachers were more involved in their child's school, increasing the chances of long-term academic success.<sup>4</sup>

#### 2. Increase early detection of developmental delays and health issues.

- > Parents as Teachers detects delays and refers children to appropriate resources for early intervention which results in long-term savings.<sup>5,6</sup>

- Annual special education costs per student = \$8,080<sup>7</sup>
- Annual cost for non-special education student = \$4,394

- > In the 2009-2010 program year, Parents as Teachers parent educators identified thousands of delays:<sup>8</sup>

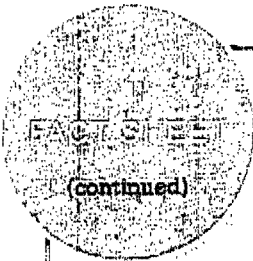
- 3,000 social emotional problems
- 2,400 vision problems
- 2,600 physical delays and health problems
- 3,400 hearing problems
- 18,000 developmental delays

- > Nearly 10,000 children with developmental delays received access to specialized follow-up services.

#### 3. Promote safe and healthy relationships to prevent child abuse and neglect.

- > Children who are safe, healthy and ready to learn are able to achieve success in school. Children who have been abused and neglected have higher rates of juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, school failure, alcohol use and psychiatric illness.<sup>9</sup>

Our vision is that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential



- > Parents as Teachers equips families with the information and tools necessary to provide a healthy and safe home using five protective factors to strengthen families: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and children's social and emotional development.

#### 4. Improve school readiness and school success.

- > Children who are prepared for kindergarten continue to do well in the early grades of elementary school, are more likely to graduate from high school and achieve success in life.<sup>10</sup>
- > Parents as Teachers, combined with preschool, narrows the achievement gap between low-income and more affluent students both at kindergarten entry and at third grade.<sup>11</sup>

**Every year 4 million children are born in the United States; if each of these children participated in Parents as Teachers, more than \$17 billion in benefits could be realized.<sup>12,13</sup>**

<sup>10</sup> Cunha, F., Heckman, J., (2007) Conference Presentation. Research funded by Partnership for America's Success

<sup>11</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2004 report. <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3001>

<sup>12</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2004 Report <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3001> and U.S. Census data

<sup>13</sup> Piantanelli, J., Lamborn, T. and Yarnall, V. (1996). Second Wave Study of the Parents as Teachers Program

<sup>14</sup> Drazan, S.M. & Houtz, M. (1994). *Preventing Special Education Costs via Early Intervention*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Finance Association, Nashville, TN. Savings of over \$27,000 was reported for the 1993-1994 school year in a program which served 43 children in Binghamton, NY.

<sup>15</sup> Piantanelli, J.C. & Zigler, E. (2007). *Prekindergarten experiences, school readiness and early elementary achievement*. Unpublished report prepared for Parents as Teachers National Center. PAT participation related to higher kindergarten readiness for children with special needs. Early identification of special services for minority children helped reduce the minority gap in school-aged special education placement. Since special education costs are more than double that of regular education, PAT services provide considerable educational savings.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families*. Washington, DC, 2002. [http://www.ed.gov/initiatives/ose/srds/whospecialeducation/report/summary/Program\\_Fup.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/initiatives/ose/srds/whospecialeducation/report/summary/Program_Fup.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Parents as Teachers 05-10 Annual Program Report

<sup>18</sup> Child Welfare Information Gateway, [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubslcts/abuse/and/term\\_consequences.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubslcts/abuse/and/term_consequences.cfm)

<sup>19</sup> Snow, C.E., Burns, M., and Griffin, P., (1998) *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*

<sup>20</sup> Piantanelli, J.C. & Zigler, E. (2007). *Prekindergarten experiences, school readiness and early elementary achievement*. Unpublished report prepared for Parents as Teachers National Center. PAT participation related to higher kindergarten readiness for children with special needs. Early identification of special services for minority children helped reduce the minority gap in school-aged special education placement. Since special education costs are more than double that of regular education, PAT services provide considerable educational savings.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families*. <http://www.ed.gov/initiatives/ose/srds/whospecialeducation/>

<sup>22</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count 2004 data [www.kidscount.org/](http://www.kidscount.org/)

Sprout Family Services  
2691 Ben Walters Lane, 4  
Homer, Alaska 99603

To Whom it May Concern:

I participated in the Parents as Teachers program with my children and I am very grateful to SPROUT for sponsoring this wonderful program. P.A.T. is very rewarding and beneficial for children and families, and the skills we have learned have helped our family grow closer. We have been very pleased that SPROUT and P.A.T. Russian rural program have respected our Russian Orthodox Old Believer culture, and have also supported our language and traditions.

The P.A.T. program has been such a positive experience for my family over the last year. It has provided an easy and convenient way to enhance the learning opportunities of our children. Our parent educator Yulia Kern is very knowledgeable and eager to assist me with my questions, Yulia is able to refer me to the appropriate resources.

I will hope that the program will continue with the same service, as always. We truly value the knowledge we have gained on how to encourage our children's development, in age-appropriate ways. Both SPROUT and P.A.T. have not only enriched our child's life, but ours as well. Special thanks for Yulia Kern, who is establish PAT program in our Russian village.



**South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services, Inc.  
3948 Ben Walters Lane, Homer, AK 99603**

Child, Adult &  
Psychiatric  
Treatment  
907-235-7701  
Fax:  
907-235-2290

3/5/13

Dear Legislators;

24 hour  
Emergency  
Services

Rehab  
Services  
The Annex  
907-235-6990

DD Services  
PRIDE Program  
907-235-9287  
Fax:  
907-235-7834

[www.spbhs.org](http://www.spbhs.org)

My name is Susan Drathman. I work at South Peninsula Behavioral Health Services, Inc. as the director of the PRIDE Program, which provides home and community based services to people experiencing Developmental Disabilities. About 40% of the people we serve also have Mental Health challenges. We do an excellent job of serving most of the people in our program. We do however have some individuals with extremely challenging behaviors that we are not able to serve effectively. When this occurs, we have limited options in our small community and people have to leave Homer and their families for more expert services, generally for a hospitalization or to enter institutional care. People may be gone for a short time or for many years.

There are several serious concerns with this service model. First, there is the anguish of people leaving their family, friends, and community behind to the impersonal care of an institution. This trauma for the individual and family can resonate throughout many years.

Next, when the individual is ready to return to the community, the community is not ready for them. There will have been no local opportunity to improve skills for the professionals and families who will resume care.

Finally, there is the extreme cost of institutional care which can be in excess of hundreds of thousands of dollars per year per individual.

This service model has been repeated all over the state for many years. We even have a program called **Bring the Kids Home** that has been funded for a number of years to encourage and support the return of children who have been institutionalized out of state because programs and communities lacked the capacity to respond to their extreme behaviors.

As a result of these problems, the **Complex Behavioral Collaborative** was formed for the purpose of enabling people with challenging behaviors to remain in their home communities. The Collaborative has access to experts who can respond to urgent requests from service agencies to quickly intervene in times of crisis and give the caregivers the tools they need to become more effective in their service delivery. Through consultation and training they assist in stabilizing the individual and avoiding more costly institutional care, such as 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.

We have been very fortunate at our agency to have had several individuals served through the Collaborative and 2 more pending. We have found this approach to be very effective and has allowed children to remain with their families who would have otherwise left the community. Our staff and direct care providers have received training and support to allow them to expand their skill sets and expertise.

In summary:

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.

**Please continue to support funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative.**

Respectfully,

  
Susan Drathman

PRIDE Program Director