

Hospice of Anchorage

Caring for Families since 1980

Public Testimony – Senate Finance – Capital Budget
4/1/2013

Thank you, Senator Meyer and Committee Members for taking your time for this public testimony on the capital budget.

I'm representing Hospice of Anchorage – a volunteer hospice that by regulation does not charge for the care we provide. I'm an RN and the Executive Director.

I am requesting your support for HOAs \$600,000 Capital Request for the Talking About it Project. The "it" in "Talking about It" – is a subject we all prefer to avoid - dying.

Most of us don't like to even think about dying, much less talk about it. We all hope we will die in our sleep after living for a healthy 100 or more years. But that isn't realistic nor is it the reality – with the advances in medical treatments most of us die from an acute episode of a chronic illness or the frailty of old age.

As 100% die, Hospice volunteers, board and staff hear countless stories about families who did not learn about the choices they might be faced with during serious illnesses; a loved one who could not speak for themselves received either more interventions than they wanted or not enough.

Making our wishes known protects our freedom, autonomy, dignity and comfort. It protects families from facing agonizing choices. It saves money for Alaskans and the Alaskan health care system.

This is a one-time request for a 3-year project. It would bring together consumers, volunteers, and professionals to improve our ability and willingness as individuals, families, and health care professionals to learn, plan and talk about how each of us would like to be cared for in the event of a life threatening illness if we cannot speak for ourselves.

This project fulfills a finding and recommendation on End of Life from the Alaska Health Care Commission.

Thank you for your consideration of this project that impacts all Alaskans.

Donna M. Stephens

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Hospice of
Anchorage is a
501(c)(3)
Non-profit Agency

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Our Mission: To help people meet the transition from life through death and to cope with loss and grief.