

From: [Sandi Koval](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Regarding our beloved Alaska Seniors and FY2017 statewide operations budget
Date: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 1:00:47 PM

Dear Senate Finance Committee,

Regarding our beloved Alaska Seniors and FY2017 statewide operations budget:

I am asking you to please remember that many of our beloved Elders in this state are the very pioneers who have contributed to and have supported our communities for decades. Now, as they enter their final years of life it is our responsibility to help them maintain their dignified independence. Services such as senior nutrition programs and Care-A-Van senior rides are NOT luxury items; rather these are the very necessities which promote continued dignified ageing and independent health-promoting lifestyles. Without such access as senior-rides many of our Elders will honestly become shut-ins; unable to get out from their homes, their lives will have less purpose and they will become sedentary and health will deteriorate in multiple unfortunate and PREVENTABLE ways. Further, many Elders simply no longer have the appetite, energy, and/or money to prepare a daily healthy meal with all of the thoughtfully prepared nutritional value that a senior meals program can offer. Congregate settings also offer a meeting place for our older-ones and there is no monetary value to put on such an important necessity in a social-being's healthy life! Furthermore, home-delivered senior meals bring this life promoting nutrition to our frail Elders who quite obviously need this service. Malnourishment should never be a reason that an Elder can no longer live in his/her home – or what sends her/him to the hospital. This is the truth of it: If our state budget decision-makers choose to cut funding for these types of services, then MANY Elders will suffer. Know this is factual as you make your decisions; and please, please remember that as Alaskans we must honor our Elders and do all that is necessary to promote and support their health and dignity to the very end. A cradle to grave society never questions or sacrifices the necessities. It is not too far-reaching to hope that as our beloved senior citizens take their final breaths of life in Alaska that they do so knowing the state of Alaska they've loved and supported for so long still gives value to their existence.

Thank you for inviting me to testify as a citizen.

Respectfully,

Sandra Koval

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