

Operating Budget Public Testimony: #3

Community Support Services

Public Health

Public Safety



Phone (907) 586-8228

Fax (907) 586-8226

213 Third Street
Juneau, AK 99801
www.reachak.org

March 17, 2017

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

As President of the REACH, Inc. board of directors, I'd like to thank Senator Micciche for increasing the cap on day habilitation services from 8 to 12 per week. Of all the services, REACH provides to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, day habilitation is the one most frequently requested by individuals and families.

Not only does day habilitation help individuals served acquire, retain or improve the self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills necessary to live successfully in home and community-based settings, they also save the state money. The average annual cost to provide home and community-based services, including day habilitation, in the community to an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities is \$82,655 compared to \$153,009 in an intermediate care facility (institution) for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As a parent of an adult son with intellectual and developmental disabilities, I very much appreciate the services that have allowed him to remain in Juneau and be an active, contributing member of the community.

Thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristine Lewis".

Kristine Lewis, President

REACH, Inc. honors and respects the people we serve by
promoting choice and well-being through advocacy and services



Key Coalition
of
Alaska



540 West International Airport Road
Anchorage, AK 99518

March 17, 2017

Dear Senate Finance Committee Members,

On behalf of Key Coalition of Alaska, I would like to thank Senator Micciche funding to increase day habilitation services from 8 to 12 hours per week.

Day habilitation services are critical services for individuals and families. These services allow them to participate in community activities; increase their independence; learn, improve and retain social skills; and provide a foundation of skills that promote employability. Evidence available through data collection and Plans of Care demonstrates that individual skills and experiences gained through inclusive and skill-building activities promote self-confidence and independence as well as enhances an increasingly positive image of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as seen by community members and the public.

Home and community-based services, including day habilitation, save the state money and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities are able to live productive, meaningful lives in their local communities rather than being served in costly institutions.

Thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Millie Ryan'.

Millie Ryan, President

"Unity, Advocacy, Community for All..."

PETERSBURG LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: petersburg.lio@akleg.gov
907-772-3741/ phone 907-772-3779/fax

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

YOUR FULL NAME: Teresa Streuli

REPRESENTING (ORGANIZATION OR SELF): Self

BILL #: SB22 | **and/or Subject:** Oppose Budget cuts to Public Health Nursing

COMMITTEE NAME: Senate Finance **HEARING DATE:** March 17, 2017

My husband and I have lived in SE AK since 1985, our 3 daughters were born & raised here. Our oldest is a Registered nurse and works in Alaska, our middle daughter is a bilingual teacher currently teaching in Peru and the youngest is attending the University of Montana.

While living in communities on Chichagof and Prince of Wales Is we depended on Public Health for vaccinations, well child clinics and health checkups. The State has already reduced the budget by 20%, over the last 2 years, for AK Public Health programs. You can listen to AK news and across the nation about outbreaks of measles, mumps and whooping cough. Vaccinations for these communicable diseases have been around for many years, but if our State chooses to decrease funding for these preventions these diseases will become more common. Children die from them.

I oppose budget cuts to Public Health nursing services that cut critical Public Health services. Community health clinics are not a replacement for these. They are in addition to. Our Public Health nurses work outside the clinics in homes, day cares, schools and, yes, even in the field with our homeless, abandoned, mentally ill and the addicted and abused. Decreasing the budget for AK State Public Health services will leave these people uncared for and more desperate.

I ask you to please reconsider making these cuts.

Thank you for placing my testimony on the written record.

Doniece Gott

From: Janalee <janaleegage@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2017 4:42 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee; Rep. Daniel Ortiz
Subject: Funding for community based support services

Good afternoon,

Thank you for hearing us today, and I appreciate the work that you have laid out before you.

But please consider the cost in the long run if you cut the cost of housing assistance, homeless shelters, benefits for low income seniors, Pioneer homes, assisted living, substance abuse, mental health treatment, job supports, community health programs, family caregiver, etc.

I wish I could say that I could do things differently,

I wish that we could all have the fore-sight that those who have never had the opportunity to be subject and dependent on programs such as housing assistance, shelters, pioneer homes, assistant living, substance abuse, and mental health treatment. I wish that we could all go through life never having to seek out support, treatment, and assistance to get back on our feet.

I would love to know who these people are and how many of them exist.

21 years ago, as a responsible independent single woman, no kids, good job, etc.

I went in to get what should have been a routine hair appointment and within minutes,

I became disabled.

No warning, no insurance, no assistance. I didn't fit into any of the holes on the board....

I was lucky I had family, friends, and a community that went above and beyond and I am forever grateful.

I was in Harbor view for 31 days with a bill of over 2.5 million dollars.... My mother was told I would be there for a year...

imagine my bill if I had been there for a year....

Lucky for the Government, I am stubborn, healthy, and wanted to go home as soon as possible.
Lucky for the government, I had family, and support systems to help me reach this goal.

THESE support services that made this possible were,

Home Health, S.A.I.L. and multiple other Ketchikan, and hospital agencies, including the funds raised by the community of Ketchikan, so that my mother could take 6 months off from work to care for me.

I went home, I had at home PT daily for the first 3 months, and a nurse that came to my home daily to work with me, and the required care so that my skin grafts needed to healed 100%

Give or take based on my bill just for the month of June 1995 we would have been looking at over 30 million dollars if I had to stay at the hospital the whole year.

And that doesn't cover the cost of a family member monitoring the hospital, to make sure I was being cared for properly, and a lawyer to make sure I wasn't being double charged for things, like slippers for each day I was there, even though I couldn't wear or use slippers of any kind. (yes this happened, and yes my lawyer caught it among other things).

Two years I was in physical therapy, Two years I was without work,

I applied for disability and was treated like a thief;

I applied for food stamps and was stared at, at the grocery store when I went.

I had people tell me to stop milking my injury... as if like an ER episode I could get better within an hour.

When I was told by the doctors and physical therapist I could go back to work I couldn't wait!

Course now I had to do something different.....

I applied for work here in Ketchikan.....

First question.... Why haven't you worked for 2 years..... I explained..... Next question.... How do we know you will show up to work instead of calling in sick all the time.... Next question.... Why do you want to work, you have disability and a settlement....

My self esteem was shot....

I had to move out of Ketchikan just to get a job where I could prove myself and get off disability of \$700 a month.... No one can live in ketchikan on \$700 a month... and for that matter no one can live anywhere on \$700 a month....

I was 30 years old, I wanted a job, ... I wanted my life back and I found myself being rejected.

Based on stigma a person with a disability is a liability...

prior to my accident, I was offered a policy with blue cross in April of 1995 that started out at \$125.00 a month... I was accepted and my start date for insurance was June 1, 1995...

My accident happened on May 31, 1995 ...and my leg became preexisting...

Every year my insurance went up which drove me to need a job...I couldn't afford it anymore...

Even though after I was done with everything that I could do with my leg, and I only had to go to the doctor for my preventive care,

Blue Cross raised my monthly payment from \$125.00 a month to \$554.00.... I had to get a job... with insurance because I couldn't afford blue cross anymore... even though I barely used it...

EVEN IF YOU SAVED YOUR WHOLE LIFE and prepared for retirement, did everything right... if you had an accident or was diagnosed with cancer or other disease the bill would wipe you out.... And you would be dependent on the services above....

Ask yourself what will you do if these services are not available to you or your family when that time comes?

Please understand that Ketchikan is an amazing community that steps up to the plate and constantly backs all their programs however; we can only do so much, I work in substance abuse, and I can tell you that with the programs we have in place the success in those who have been able to get assistance both in substance abuse, and mental health have been huge... I see less and less repeat offenders... Last year alone through our DART Team we assisted 3 people in finding safe affordable housing so that they no longer had to live in a violent situation or abusive situation out of desperation or homelessness.

I know that we have to consider cuts but please do not do it on the backs of our most vulnerable who with the support services and assistance could get the help they need so they too may one day find their way to being independent of services like myself and become a voice in their community and help others.

Thank you again for your time...

Sincerely,
Janalee L. Minnich Gage

2512 3rd ave
Ketchikan AK 99901

907-204-0635

Doniece Gott

From: Kathy Home <spark.ko.1208@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 17, 2017 4:25 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Cc: Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Subject: Public Health proposed cuts

>

> I am writing in support of continued funding for Public Health Nursing with NO budget cuts. Public Health has already been significantly cut resulting in less Nursing positions and clinics closing. Specifically, the clinics in Wrangell and Haines were badly needed and the Public Health Nurses left have been stretched to cover patient care. They cannot sustain any further cuts.

> Public Health nurses provide services in the Clinic but also provide valuable services in the community that is not duplicated by other providers, especially to under served populations. They tackle the growing opioid use problems, infectious disease surveillance and teen pregnancy prevention. They focus on youth, the under served and those without insurance who cannot be served by Tribal Health or local clinics that are not present in the smaller communities.

> With the changes proposed at a national level, it is even more critical to keep Public Health staffing as it is or even increase the funding to provide basic health care and access to health care to our smaller Alaskan communities.

> Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

> Kathy O'Gara

> an active voter in the State of Alaska