

January 25, 2022

Representative Matt Claman  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol Room 118  
Juneau AK, 99801

*Sent via email*

Re: Support for House Bill 183

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust) supports HB183, which establishes an Alaska Criminal Justice Data Analysis Commission, ensuring that the important role the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) currently plays in data collection and analysis can continue to the benefit of Alaskans.

HB183, recognizes the sunset of ACJC, but also maintains a state commission that includes key representatives from Alaska's criminal justice system, as well as victims and persons with lived criminal justice experience. The Alaska Criminal Justice Data Analysis Commission proposed in the legislation can collectively analyze data to identify areas for improved criminal justice stakeholder collaboration, reentry outcomes, public safety, inter-agency efficiencies, and more.

The Trust has long been active in efforts to reduce both recidivism rates and the involvement of Trust beneficiaries in the criminal justice system and has a standing focus area of work addressing disability justice issues. We know that Trust beneficiaries account for more than 40 percent of Alaska's incarcerations each year, and their median length of a jail/prison stay (both sentenced and unsentenced) is significantly longer than for non-Trust beneficiary offenders. Trust beneficiaries also recidivate at a higher level than non-beneficiary offenders. Trust beneficiaries include Alaskans who experience mental illness, substance use disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, and traumatic brain injuries.

There is a collective interest in improving outcomes for Alaskans involved with the criminal justice system. HB183 ensures that data needed to inform public policy decisions will be collected and analyzed and provides a state mechanism to develop recommendations for improvements to our criminal justice system and supports and services for victims and those reentering society following incarceration. We appreciate your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Steve Williams,  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority