

Doniece Gott

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2026 7:12 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB 178

My name is Kristen Spencer and I'm writing in support of Senate Bill 178. SB178 expands Alaska's Infant Learning Program by lowering the eligibility threshold from a 50% delay to 25%, allowing more children to receive early intervention when it is most effective.

I am the parent of a child who has a disability. I am also a board member of REACH Inc. in Juneau. I have seen firsthand the impact early intervention has on families. This change will help more Alaskan children while also saving the state money long-term.

Investing in early intervention yields a strong return—up to 400%—and reduces the need for costly special education later. These savings matter, but the true impact is on children and families who benefit from early support.

Please support SB178. Thank you.

Kristen Spencer

[REDACTED]
Juneau AK 99801

Doniece Gott

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2026 5:28 PM
To: Senate Finance Committee
Subject: SB178 support

Good afternoon,

My name is Tom Hiratsuka and I'm writing in support of Senate Bill 178: Expand Eligibility for Early Intervention. I respectfully urge the committee to support Senate Bill 178 as it expands Alaska's Infant Learning Program early interventions, which helps parents become the best teacher for their children with developmental delays or disabilities.

I am the CFO of Hope Community Resources, and I have seen the impact early intervention has had on our community. Expanding ILP eligibility from 50% developmental delay to 25% delay helps more Alaskan families and saves the state money. I know the budget is tight. That's why it's important to recognize that in addition to being the right thing to do, investments in early interventions in SB178 promise to result in a 400% return on investment for the State of Alaska. Data shows that nearly half of the children who receive the early intervention in SB178 will not need higher cost special education services when they get to K-12 schools. Small investments upstream can help children, families, and the state budget.

Thank you for your consideration!

Tom

Alaskans share a Vision of a flexible system in which each person directs their own supports, based on their strengths and abilities, toward a meaningful life in their home, their job and their community. Our Vision includes supported families, professional staff and services available throughout the state now and into the future.

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ALASKA
MENTAL HEALTH BOARD
ADVISORY BOARD ON
ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

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Kermit E. Wilson, Executive Director

February 12, 2026

Senate Health & Social Services Committee
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SB 178 – Expand Early Intervention Service

Dear Committee Members,

The Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ABADA) and the Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) are statutorily charged with advising, planning, educating, and coordinating behavioral health services and programs funded by the State of Alaska. The Boards are also tasked with evaluating federal and state laws concerning mental health, alcohol, and other drug and substance misuse prevention and treatment services (A.S. 47.30.661, A.S. 44.29.100).

SB 178 will expand access to Alaska's Infant Learning Program, including early intervention, healthcare, and therapy services to children who experience developmental delays, thus reducing the need for more intensive and costly care later. This bill lowers the eligibility criteria for children from 50 percent to 25 percent.

AMHB-ABADA supports the passage of SB 178, believing that early recognition and intervention is critical to addressing complex behavior needs before they become acute and more costly.

Thank you for introducing this legislation.

Sincerely,

Bobby Dorton, Chair
Advisory Board on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

Tonie Protzman, LPC, Chair
Alaska Mental Health Board

Kermit Wilson, Executive Director