

Alaska FASD Partnership

**Over 75 organizations
and individuals
supporting:**

Advocacy • Diagnosis

- Case Management
 - Prevention
- Substance Abuse Treatment for Pregnant Women
- Parent Navigation
- Training for Parents
- Public Awareness
 - Alternatives to Incarceration
- Court Interpreters
 - Peer Support
- Training for Judges, Public Defenders, and Prosecutors
 - Training for Educators and

Medical Professionals

- Traditional Healing
- Supported Housing and Employment
- Family Support



March 30, 2012

Senator Kevin Meyer
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Meyer,

It is with great pleasure that the Alaska FASD Partnership supports SB 151 to include FASD as a mitigating factor in sentencing.

The intent underlying Alaska's sentencing structure – that people will modify their behaviors based on the criminal justice system's response to their crimes – is not met when applied to individuals with FASD. These disabilities manifest as deficits in executive function, resulting in impaired adaptive behavior, memory difficulties, an inability to plan, and a failure to recognize the consequences of actions. In the interest of justice, it is important to take these deficits into account during sentencing. Neither the offender nor society benefits from holding individuals with FASD to community standards that they cannot possibly attain given their impairments.

The cost of incarceration in Alaska's prison is about \$136 per day. Over the course of five to ten years in an Alaskan prison, an inmate is expected to cost the state close to \$250,000-\$500,000 (not including medical, mental health or other specialized treatment while incarcerated).

The cost of intensive case management, including electronic monitoring and probation/parole, is about \$76 per day (\$48 for intensive case management, \$21 for electronic monitoring, \$7 for probation/parole) – for a savings of \$21,900 per person, per year.¹

According to the 2009 ISER Study, *The Cost of Crime: Could the State Reduce Future Crime and Save Money by Expanding Education and Treatment Programs?* the cost of providing services is less than the cost of incarceration. With appropriate supports, clients with FASD and other brain-based disabilities can live successfully in the community as contributing citizens, *and* provide jobs for Alaskan case workers, clinicians, assisted living providers, mental health and substance abuse counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists. Not only does SB 151 further

¹ Source for Prison, Community Residential Centers, Electronic Monitoring & Probation and Parole: http://www.ahfc.us/iceimages/homeless/102211_ach_doc_discharge_stats.pdf. Note: Intensive Case Management estimated costs are based on the most intensive case management with a high level of education and supervision for workers. Actual costs, depending on the case mix, may be lower.

the cause of justice for a vulnerable population, it represents a better investment of our state's resources.

Additionally, the state's movement toward "Smart Justice" aims to promote reduced public costs, fewer crimes, and a greater rehabilitative effect on offenders. While some offenders are clearly dangerous enough and need long-term incarceration, the research behind "Smart Justice" suggests that for certain non-violent offenders, treatment programs inside the prison, combined with adequate transition and case management services, will result in lower costs, less recidivism, and a safer general public.

Thank you for the time and effort you have put into supporting this important effort.

Sincerely,



Monica Charles-Leinberger, Chair
Alaska FASD Partnership

Partnership members include: *Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Alaska Behavioral Health Association, Alaska Center for Children & Adults, Alaska Children's Services, Alaska Mental Health Board, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alaska Peer Support Consortium, Alaska Youth & Family Network, Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, All-Alaska Pediatric Partnership, Anchorage Coordinated Resources Project, Anchorage School District (Anchorage), Anchorage Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Arctic FASD Regional Training Center, Assets Inc., Association for the Education of Young Children-SEAK, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska, Boys & Girls Home of Alaska, Camp Fire USA Alaska Council, Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, Christian Health Associates, Copper Basin Neurodevelopmental Center, Deltana Community Services Partnership, Dena A Coy/Southcentral Foundation, Diocese of Juneau, Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center, Family Centered Services of Alaska, Frontier Community Services, Gastineau Human Services, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Hoonah Indian Association, Hope Community Resources, Independent Living Center, Kenai Peninsula FASD Program, Ketchikan Indian Community, Kinetictions, Kobuk Valley Consulting, Kodiak Area Native Association, Juneau Family Health and Birth Center, Juneau FASD Diagnostic Clinic, Juneau Partnerships for Families and Children, Lower Kuskokwim School District, Lynn Canal Counseling Services, Nenana City School District, Ninilchik Traditional Council, Nome Youth Facility, Nondalton Tribe, Regional Wellness Forum, Set Free Alaska, Inc. (Wasilla), Southcentral Foundation FAS Diagnostic Team, Southeast Regional Health Consortium, Southeast Regional Resource Center, Southern Kenai Peninsula Communities Project, Sprout Family Services, Stone Soup Group, Tongass Substance Screening, UAA Department of Health Sciences, UAA Center for Human Development, Volunteers of America-Alaska ...and many individuals.*