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February 5, 2023

Sen Scott Kawasaki
Alaska Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for Alaska Commission on Aging Reauthorization SB189

Dear Sen Kawasaki:

Thank you for introducing legislation to reauthorize the *Alaska Commission on Aging*. Without passage of this legislation, the *Alaska Commission on Aging* will end in June 2025.

Since 1981 the *Alaska Commission on Aging* (ACoA) has advocated for the needs and concerns of older Alaskans to the Governor, Legislature, Congressional delegation, and the public. They also advised the Governor, Legislature, Congressional delegation and the public on current and potential programs and services for older Alaskans and their caregivers. They work closely with and make recommendations to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority on programs and services to improve the lives of senior Trust beneficiaries.

The Commission has been a strong partner to AARP Alaska in our advocacy work to make Alaska a better place to be able to choose how we live as we age. Their annual Senior Snapshot and comprehensive State Plan for Senior Services reflect the data and the stories they've gathered through surveys and listening sessions with older Alaskans and senior providers across our vast state. These products are invaluable to AARP Alaska and other organizations serving seniors. The ACoA uses the information they gather to create the federally required State Plan for Alaska as required under the Older Americans Act. They create a four-year comprehensive plan for senior services including meals, transportation, family caregiver, adult day services, senior housing, vocational training, legal assistance, and more.

AARP Alaska supports the reauthorization for the *Alaska Commission on Aging* older Alaskans without reservation. On behalf of the fastest growing senior population per capita in the nation and our 77,000 AARP Alaska members, and for the benefit of all Alaskans, we thank you for your leadership on this important issue for older Alaskans.

Respectfully, Marge Stoneking
Advocacy Director, AARP Alaska