

March 6, 2024

Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair
Sen. Donald Olson, Co-Chair
Sen. Bert Stedman, Co-Chair
Finance Committee
Alaska State Senate
Sent via email

Re: Support for SB189 – Extend Alaska Commission on Aging

Dear Senate Finance Committee Co-Chairs,

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (Trust) supports SB189, which extends the Alaska Commission on Aging through 2032.

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA) is a statutory advisor to the Trust. We work closely with the commission on advocacy, data collection, and initiatives aimed at improving the lives of Trust beneficiaries: Alaskans who experience mental illness, substance misuse, Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries. While all Alaskans with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia are Trust beneficiaries, aging populations exist within every Trust beneficiary group.

The commission recently completed its State Plan for Senior Services, which is the roadmap that guides the provision of senior services in Alaska. ACOA's work on that plan, as well as in policy, advocacy, and interagency collaboration and partnerships, is essential in ensuring Alaska's seniors live with dignity and respect and have an opportunity to receive services to promote their health and well-being. Further, it is through the existence of ACOA that the state can receive federal funding associated with the Older Americans Act.

In order to help ensure that our collective system caring for Alaska's senior population, one of the fastest growing in the nation, has the data, coordination, and guidance necessary for Alaskans to age successfully, we urge your support for SB 189. Thank you for your consideration and your leadership in this important matter.

Sincerely,



Steve Williams,
Chief Executive Officer

Cc Members, Senate Finance Committee
Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner, Department of Health