

NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH

DEPARTMENT HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

ARCTIC WOMEN IN CRISIS

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Rosemarie Habeich, RN, BSNS, Director

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Dear Members of the House State Affairs Committee,

I am the program coordinator at Arctic Women in Crisis in Utqiagvik and a member of the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDSVA). We urge your support of this resolution because trauma-informed practices across sectors and with the leadership of the State of Alaska are necessary in order to diminish adverse childhood experiences as well as build resilience

Arctic Women in Crisis offers core services to provide emergency shelter and safety as well as individual advocacy and crisis intervention. In FY 2017 we provided 3,945 safe shelter nights up from 3,741 in FY 16. Further, our members often see multiple generations of the same families coming in to access our services

With the increase of demand for services, as well as the complexity of victims' needs, services are strained and attention to stopping violence before it starts is crucial.

We know the critical need to invest in violence prevention now – and especially focusing on children exposed to or experiencing abuse and neglect- we are providing more services to families involved with OCS and with our tribal protection agency. We need to focus on these children **now** rather than later when they are older and even more of them need to access strained victim services, because they did not receive adequate wraparound support to help them escape the cycle of abuse and/or behavioral health challenges

Prevention only works if there are multiple coordinated efforts at primary, secondary and tertiary prevention to stop violence before it starts. This requires well-planned and thoughtfully implemented collaboration among various actors – from the state, to nonprofits, to the corporate sector, to schools and communities. We find it helpful to work in close collaboration with our Utqiagvik Child Advocacy Center, the North Slope Borough Health Department and Prevention Team, Ilisagvik College, the North Slope Borough School District, and Arctic Slope Native Association. The state can do its part by officially sharing in the commitment to end ACEs and build resilience.

Again, please support House Concurrent Resolution 2.

Sincerely,


Virginia Walsh,
Arctic Women in Crisis, Program Coordinator