



February 11, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 73 AND SENATE BILL 76 ON COMPLEX CARE
RESIDENTIAL HOMES

Members of the Alaska State Legislature,

On behalf of The Alaska Commission on Aging, we are writing in support of HB 73 and SB 76, which will establish a new license type for Complex Care Residential Homes (CCRHs). These bills address a critical gap in Alaska's system of care by creating a long-term, residential care option tailored for individuals with complex behavioral, medical, and disability-related needs.

Currently, Alaska lacks the appropriate residential license type to serve this population, often resulting in placements that are either overly restrictive or fail to provide the necessary level of care. This gap forces many Alaskans into settings such as hospitals, psychiatric facilities, or even out-of-state placements—options that are not only costly but also fail to support long-term stability and positive health outcomes.

CCRHs will provide specialized 24-hour care in a smaller, home-like setting for fewer than 15 residents. These homes will be designed to meet the needs of specific populations, such as individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, dementia with disruptive behaviors, or youth with complex behavioral health challenges. The multidisciplinary care model will help stabilize individuals, improve their quality of life, and reduce costly and preventable hospitalizations and institutional stays.

The Alaska Commission on Aging strongly believes in the goals to HB 73 and SB 76 to enhance Alaska's system of care for those with complex needs. By creating CCRHs, these bills will:

- Prevent unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency psychiatric care.
- Reduce reliance on out-of-state placements, keeping Alaskans closer to their families and support systems.
- Provide families and caregivers with more stable and sustainable care options.

Alaska's seniors and elders living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias who exhibit extreme or disruptive behaviors face unique care challenges. These individuals often require specialized environments and trained staff to address their complex behavioral and medical needs in a way that ensures their safety, dignity, and quality of life. Without appropriate care options, many are placed in settings that are ill-equipped to manage their conditions, leading to unnecessary hospitalizations and frequent crises. The lack of complex care in Alaska also places



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undue stress on families and caregivers. Establishing Complex Care Residential Homes will fill this critical gap, providing a compassionate, setting where seniors with complex care needs can receive the specialized help they need.

We urge your full support of HB 73 and SB 76. Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Bob Sivertsen – Chair
Alaska Commission on Aging

Martin Lange – Executive Director
Alaska Commission on Aging