

**From:** Jennifer Marschke  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Operating and Mental Health Budgets  
**Date:** Monday, March 26, 2018 11:36:49 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Jennifer Marschke, IL Advocate at Southeast AK Independent Living in Haines, AK.

The implementation of the proposed budget increases in operating and mental health is crucial to the health of our seniors and those that experience a mental health diagnosis.

Most seniors survive in Alaska on a fixed budget of social security or retirement, and savings from their lifetime. A great deal of older Alaskans also care for younger family members. The senior benefit enables the elderly in our community to buy enough food to last the full month, pay a bill of heat, or supplement the cost of raising grandchildren or family members. A great deal of seniors that receive this benefit would not survive without it.

It would also be helpful to fund additional employees at the guardianship and public assistance offices. These employees work very hard every day to ensure that the elderly, abused, or low income have a form of support and the work load cannot be supported by the number of individuals employed.

I hope that you will consider these bills and approve them for the future of our elderly and low income Alaskans.

Thank you.

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