

Thandi Carros

From: Susan Phipps <susanhippsanchorage@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2014 10:38 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Susan Phipps
5800 Montana Ck. Rd.
Juneau, AK 99803

March 12, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Please fully fund Substance use related programs that exist. Please be aware of the need to assist communities with funding to start up reentry programs for Alaskans exiting jail and prisons.

Sincerely,
Susan Phipps

Thandi Carros

From: John Cannon <john.cannon@mssca.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 6:41 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Complex Behavioral Collaborative

Representative Austerman,

I heard earlier today that the house finance committee approved a \$525,000 amendment to the House budget for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative. Your support of the CBC will be long remembered by the Alaskan disabilities community. Thank you so much.

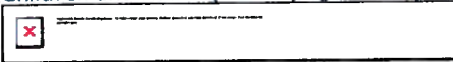
Gratefully,

John Cannon

376-6063 home

315-3760 cell

THANK YOU to everyone who generously gave to MSSCA through the Pick Click Give program. Please consider donating to Mat Su Services for Children and Adults (MSSCA) again this year when filing your 2014 PFD application.



Please support MSSCA at:



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Thandi Carros

From: George Baker <George.Baker@usw.salvationarmy.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 4:53 PM
Cc: Ivy Spohnholz
Subject: Letter regarding State Behavioral Health Cuts on TSA Clitheroe Center
Attachments: Letter regarding State Behavioral Health Cuts on Clitheroe.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

The Salvation Army
Alaska Division
Office of the Divisional Commander

George L. Baker, Major
Divisional Commander
Alaska Division
(907) 339-3443 - Office
(907) 278-6323 - FAX
(310) 357-9308 - Cell



'Jesus said to Simon, "There is nothing to fear. From now on you'll be fishing for men and women." They pulled their boats up on the beach, left them, nets and all, and followed Him'. (Luke 5:10b-11, MSG)

May we be compelled by His Spirit to do the same!

Thandi Carros

From: Angie Gorn <agorn@nshcorp.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 4:44 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Angie Gorn
Norton Sound Health Corporation
Nome, AK 99762

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Dear Senators:

Please reconsider your proposed cuts to Behavioral Health Services funding.

The Norton Sound Health Corporation's service area has been among the top three regions with the highest rates of suicide in the State of Alaska since 1993. In turn Alaska's suicide rate is double that of the Nation. Suicide attempts are the leading cause of injury hospitalizations and are the fourth leading cause of death in the region. One Behavioral Health Aide does not adequately cover all prevention and counseling needs in most of our fifteen villages, particularly those with high suicide rates

Alcohol and substance abuse is also a health disparity in the Bering Strait Region. Substance abuse is directly linked to suicide, domestic abuse, and sexual assault in the region.

Too much funding is spent to sustain and maintain the prison system; funding would be more productive in support of mental health treatment facilities. Behavioral Health Programs that will keep people out of prison save the state money right away because they cost much less than the state spends to lock people up.

Please reconsider your proposed cuts to behavioral health. There is already a need for more treatment facilities within the State of Alaska. The waiting list for treatment averages 6 to 9 months and there is often no other place to refer people. Currently, patients are held on the inpatient unit of our 18-bed critical access hospital waiting for placement. This exceeds the recommended length of stay per the Critical Access Hospital guidelines. Our facility does not have many options to keep patients safe.

Please do not cut funding and find alternatives to strengthen the systems we already have.

Sincerely,

Angie Gorn, President/CEO Norton Sound Health Corporation

Sincerely,
Angie Gorn

Thandi Carros

From: Teri Hansen <thansen@voaak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 4:34 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Teri Hansen
9130 Chipwood Circle
Anchorage, AK 99507-3994

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Please do not support the reduced funding to residential substance treatment programs here in Alaska. At the current level we at least can make it work. With a cut to this program the court systems will be even more backed up, and the communities, families, and our youth of Alaska will pay a price of an even higher death, criminal, and sexual assault rate. I would invite you to visit our Treatment Center it is called ARCH a place that not only holds youth accountable and teaches them life skills, it also aids in the teaching to these youth that they are worth something and that something is not substance's. To spend an hour at ARCH you would change your mind about cutting the budget. The employees that work there do it for more than a pay check, as you may already know it is not a profession that you get financially rich in, you do get enrich in seeing the good in people and the happiness that a clean life brings to these young people. I ask you to please see this through the eyes of those in need. Addiction has no income levels and affects anyone at any age, what the ARCH treatment center has done in the past 32 years would amaze most and bring the best of them to tears. To listen and really hear what we do, I believe you must hear it from the voices of the youth and their families that have experienced ARCH. During their treatment and the months and years after it is quite humbling and so moving to hear what they say. The one occurring statement that really sticks out to me is what I have heard from several of the youth and parents is "If it were not for ARCH and the help I received there I would be in prison or dead" My first year I worked for Volunteers of America Alaska I received a letter at Christmas that said here is \$250.00 for a donation. I was at ARCH 10 years ago and because of the treatment I received I am a productive and substance free citizen with a very promising life ahead of me.

Representatives; please don't reduce the funding, please don't close your eyes to the needs of this State and of our youth, and please educate yourself and others for the need to continue to fund these programs, for the good of our State. We Volunteers of America Alaska (ARCH) are held accountable for every penny we receive and take great pride in our stewardship, and in our ability to do so much to assist in the recovery to a better cleaner successful life for the youth and the communities we serve.

Thank you, we are counting on your support to not cut the funds that assist our youth, their families, and communities, so we all may look forward to live in a better Alaska. Since that first letter I received I have several, and the words that were written will forever be in my mind, and heart.

Thank you, we are counting on your support to not cut the funds that assist our youth, their families, and communities, so we all may look forward to live in a better Alaska.

We do what we do, so please do what you do and help us help keep Alaskans healthy!

Sincerely,

Teri L. Hansen

Sincerely,
Teri Hansen

Thandi Carros

From: Nicki Shinnors <ak2fish@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 4:14 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Nicki Shinnors
1009 L street
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Exposure to the community as both a volunteer and as someone that works in the nonprofit sector, I have seen firsthand what substance abuse can do to a person, a family and the community we live in. Seeking treatment can save a life time of other problems, DUI, domestic violence, jail. No access to treatment or long waiting lists can deter a person seeking treatment.

The U.S. Department of Justice found that 61% of domestic violence offenders also have substance abuse problems. Alaska continues to have a suicide rate twice the national average. People in both the mental health and substance abuse fields have likely had experiences that would demonstrate the connection, but I think that probably few appreciate the magnitude of the relationship between substance abuse and suicide.

Please we need more access to treatment not less.

Sincerely,
Nicki Shinnors

Thandi Carros

From: Eula Crippen <eula@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 12:25 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Pam Watts; Cathy.Munoz@akleg.gov
Subject: Reinstatement of SHARP-II Loan Repayment

Representatives Austerman and Stoltze, Chair, and Members of the House Finance Committee of the Alaska State Legislature:

I was recently awarded the SHARP II Loan Repayment. It was an amazing, life-changing experience. I have hundreds of thousands of dollars of student loan debt. It was an arduous journey to my PhD in Clinical Psychology as I was raising children and maintaining employment while I worked toward my degree. Along the way I encountered health problems that affected the pace at which I could work. I was accruing significant student loan debt and had to make a decision about whether or not to continue. I recall having a discussion with my husband about the pros and cons of pushing through and whether in the end the PhD was worth the debt. My teenage daughter interrupted to say: "Mom, I don't understand why you have to borrow so much money and pay the government back for your education. You've spent your whole life taking care of people – the poorest, most troubled, most broken people. It's not like you're making a bunch of money. Why doesn't the government pay YOU to go to school to learn how to take better care of these people? Doesn't it help society?" I was touched by her innocent perspective but also appreciated the wisdom.

With the SHARP II award it seemed as though Alaska understood the vital importance of supporting health professionals in their pursuit to help society's neediest people. Please help reinstate the \$1.2 million dollars to Alaska's Share II Loan Repayment Program. At 45 years of age, I have spent my life supporting people. I have also accrued an amount of student loan debt that is crippling. I don't make a great deal of money. I struggle to pay my rent, buy my groceries, support my kids and repay my debt. The loan repayment program allows me to continue my mission of providing psychological support for the mentally ill citizens of Alaska without the burden of the student loan weighing on me at every turn.

I know from a very personal perspective that the Sharp II program is vitally important to the recruitment and retention of medical providers for high need and underserved people of Alaska. Thank you for considering my request to continue funding the SHARP II Loan Repayment Program.

Sincerely,

Eula M. Crippen, PhD, Psychologist

Residential Clinician

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

3406 Glacier Highway

Juneau, AK 99801

907-463-3303

eula@jamhi.org

"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"



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Thandi Carros

From: Lucy Apatiki <lapatiki@nshcorp.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 11:41 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Lucy Apatiki
111 Blue House on Corner
Gambell, AK 99742

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Please consider very carefully the decision that you are about to make about decreasing Behavioral Health Substance Abuse funding. I am sure you are aware of the great need for these types of services, especially among Alaska Natives. Until we can find other solutions for this endemic, I urge you to reconsider and continue to fully fund programs that support these efforts.

Thank you,

Lucy Apatiki

Sincerely,
Lucy Apatiki

Thandi Carros

From: Miriam A. Jensen <mjensen@bartlethospital.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 10:55 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Please keep or increased substance abuse treatment center funding.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative:

Please! Maintain or increase existing funding for residential substance abuse treatment within the State of Alaska!

Here is why:

1. Cutting funding for residential substance abuse treatment when Alaska continues to have high rates of alcoholism and substance abuse disorders is not appropriate.
2. Residential substance abuse treatment helps cut the costs of incarceration/corrections budgets. Do you want to spend more on prisons?
3. Substance abuse is a public safety matter – substance abuse is a major contributing factor in the State’s high rate of DUIs, domestic violence and other crimes. Increased access to residential treatment is needed, not less.
4. By serving people early or when they are ready, the State of Alaska SAVES spending for more costly services down the road (or immediately!!!!) in corrections, Juvenile Justice, Office of Children’s Services and emergency room care.
5. Residential substance abuse treatment I designed not only to treat or resolve a person’s addiction, but also to address the underlying conditions and circumstances that contribute to addiction.
6. Entire families, communities benefit from their members receiving substance abuse treatment.

I can attest that when I served six villages in “the bush” alcoholism and drug dependence, ran rampant. It took a lot of funds in law enforcement, and local treatment to address these problems. I attended 8 – count them 8! (alcohol related deaths) funerals in 6 weeks. That was 10 years ago. Treatment was not available to those

begging for it, and it is worse now. You want to vote to cut funding for already underfunded substance abuse? Please call me for more information, comments.

Miriam A. Jensen

907-957-6345

Thandi Carros

From: Sara Godinez <saramgodinez@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 9:10 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Sara Godinez
P.O. Box 211395
Auke Bay, AK 99821

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

To my elected officials,

Most people in our state are keenly aware of our high rates of substance abuse and the need for substance abuse treatment. Cutting funds toward these services would be acutely detrimental to our state and to the people who you serve. Substance abuse treatment gives those struggling with substance abuse the opportunity to save and better their lives, free from their addictions. I understand, of course, that the budgets are tight and that it is your job to "start somewhere" in regards to finding a way to balance said budget. However, removing funds from substance abuse treatment and/or mental health treatment seems counter productive given our current political climate regarding both.

Also, as stated above, a large number of your constituents will most likely need substance abuse treatment at some point in their lives. Why remove the opportunity to obtain that treatment when it is so desperately needed? The short answer is that you shouldn't, and I hope you don't. Millions are depending on these treatments to move forward with their lives.

Thank you,
Sara Godinez

Thandi Carros

From: Constance Markis <conniem@anhc.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 9:10 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Constance Markis
7661 E. 17th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99504-2712

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Please maintain existing funding for substance abuse treatment in Alaska! It would be fiscally irresponsible to do otherwise. If you want to improve DUI, DV & recidivism rates, you must invest in the people that need the help. If you don't, costs will increase down the line. It plays out that you either pay now, or pay more later. Alaskans who have extraordinarily high rates of alcohol & drug use need help & education about their addictions. One example I just learned about in Florida charges 5 cents per drink in every bar that raised millions of dollars to offset needed treatment there. Treatment does cost money, but it also has positive returns that decrease costs (including personal costs) in the long run. Cutting funding is not a helpful or fiscally smart move. As a nurse who has worked in Healthcare for the Homeless care for over 25 years, I have seen the value of treatment such as the Pathways program, outreach workers, available detox and supportive counseling. Let's not go backward. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Constance Markis

Thandi Carros

From: Thomas G. Wekenman <twekenman@bartletthospital.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 8:44 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: substance abuse funding

I want to register my disagreement with the proposed cuts to substance abuse treatment funding. Abuse of alcohol and drugs is an unfortunate common theme in Alaska, and contributes to many expensive problems, such as safety, health and domestic violence. These problems can be viewed as just the tip of the iceberg, with the issue of addiction under the surface, but always there. Please consider maintaining or increasing the level of funding in order to work on the underlying issue of addiction. Thanks, Dr. Thomas Wekenman

Thandi Carros

From: Douglas Harris <dough@jamhi.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 8:40 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Douglas Harris
3406 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

As a former teacher across the spectrum of grades, school counselor, children's mental health specialist and now provider of adult behavioral health services, I have seen the need for funding of mental health and chemical dependency treatment from a variety of perspectives. I implore you continue funding these critical services AT LEAST at the level it has been at.

In addition to the continuation of funding these services, it is critical as well to continue the SHARP II Loan repayment program in order to recruit and maintain quality providers in a difficult field.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Douglas Harris

Thandi Carros

From: Barbara Franks <gfeld4@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 7:59 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Barbara Franks
6025 More Lane
Anchorage, AK 99504

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

First of all, thank you for the work you do. I am asking that you maintain existing funding for substance abuse treatment in Alaska!

I work with suicide prevention in Alaska, we've come a long way, even in the last five years from being afraid to say the word to having a national record-breaker of 1,130,192 calls answered with our National Suicide Prevention Lifeline partners.

Why is this so important? Because people are looking under the issues that might cause a person to die by suicide. The "mental illness" name in itself has been over-powered by the stigma and taboo as suicide. It might take a while for this to peel away all that lies in such hurt and turmoil but I believe if we keep our funding, we can see there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

For so long, people walked around with a nametag like outcasts, when others are no different, because they can handle it better. I humbly ask for your consideration to keep the funding.

Respectfully submitted, from a mother of a child who died by suicide.
Barbara Franks

Thandi Carros

From: David Kuiper <dave@crosspointcommunity.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 7:49 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

David Kuiper
4920 Car Lynn Circle
Anchorage, AK 99507-6545

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

The House Finance Committee has recommended that Behavioral Health Grants, which fund substance abuse treatment services, be reduced by \$2,043,000 – \$1,043,000 from residential substance abuse treatment grants and \$1,000,000 from total substance abuse treatment grants.

Please, AT THE VERY LEAST, maintain existing funding for substance abuse treatment in Alaska!

Sincerely,
David Kuiper

Thandi Carros

From: Meg Loomis <meg@agnewbeck.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 6:48 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Meg Loomis
500 W. 88th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99515-1766

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

The State of Alaska can't afford to reduce treatment options for adults, youth and families when the issue is barely addressed by existing funding. Please do not reduce the budget for behavioral health grants.

Sincerely,
Meg Loomis

Thandi Carros

From: Sherri Harvey <sherri.harvey@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 11:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Sherri Harvey
934 Vide Way
Fairbanks, AK 99512

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Greetings to all members of the House Finance Committee:

What do you think when you read a statistic like this found on State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services web page: "Alaska has one of the highest per capita alcohol consumption rates in the nation and the prevalence of alcohol dependence and alcohol abuse, at 14%, [and] is twice the national average of 7% (Gallup Corp. Telephone survey for DHSS, ADA).

Hmmm... do you think well, that's because Alaska's population is comprised of a higher percentage of indigenous peoples and, as they are being acculturated into the dominant culture their risk of developing a substance abuse problem increases due to their grief and identity loss issues. Sound like a liberal thing to say?

Well then, consider that a large percentage of Alaska's population are service veterans, active military, military dependents or have served or are serving in the National Guard and a great deal of them have seen a lot of combat in the last 10-12 years—and a certain percentage of these warriors may develop unhealthy coping methods to try to deal with their combat stress by using alcohol or other substances.

And finally, consider the statement that children who are raised in families of alcoholics have a greater chance of becoming an alcoholic as an adult. I haven't even raised the issues of increased rates of domestic violence and suicide in Alaska and how alcohol is often a factor in these tragic events.

Substance Abuse Prevention Programs in our schools and communities can help our children, and by increasing our focus on promoting activities that support wellness and sobriety. Those measures can reduce our numbers, too. But, what do we do for the person who is addicted to alcohol and/or other drugs?

We could just take their kids away and invest more in foster care allotments, or we could ignore them until they break the law and place them in jail and increase our correctional budget spending again.

Or, we could do the right thing by investing in someone's future by really listening to them talk about their lives and listen when they talk about their substance use was used as a way to either numb themselves or escape from life. We can offer hope for a future through proactive residential and outpatient treatment programs. We can invest in their future by educating them when they are motivated to stop using substances and provide comprehensive and supportive services to start them on their road to recovery, and not their current road of destruction.

In conclusion, I would like to ask all of the esteemed members of the finance committee to reconsider your decision to radically cut the Behavioral Health Grants that support residential and outpatient treatment programs. Please look at the statistics again, please consider the children of the families whose parent or parents must successfully complete a treatment program in order to meet their safety plan requirements to begin a healthy lifestyle change and be a family again. Consider the first time offender who can't seem to quit on their own without a comprehensive support system in place. There are so many scenarios when substance abuse is the subject—a lack of treatment resources for all of our people should not be one of them.

Respectfully yours,
Sherri Harvey

Thandi Carros

From: Cynthia Bolivar <bolivar@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 9:07 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Cynthia Bolivar
1741 Hamilton Dr.
Anchorage, AK 99515-4012

March 11, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Honorable Senators and Representatives:

I urge you to fully fund Substance Abuse Treatment programs in Alaska. As you are well aware, there is a burgeoning heroin addiction problem across the state, in addition to the already colossal problems Alaska has with all other substances. Alaska ranks near the top in the U.S. in "bad" statistics, for rates of addiction, child abuse, domestic violence, rape, fetal alcohol syndrome, etc., and the majority of crimes committed in Alaska are associated with substance abuse. Almost all treatment programs employ some form of 12-step facilitation, which has been shown to be highly effective, in addition to best practices recommended by SAMHSA; in spite of which many clients will need more than one course of treatment in order to maintain sobriety/abstinence. That is the nature of addiction. Too many of us have lost friends and family to this terrible disease. It is a health problem that must be addressed! Rather than cutting funding, these programs should have their funding increased. I have witnessed many people turning their lives around through obtaining treatment for their addictions. Please consider your fellow Alaskans and their families when you make your budget decisions.

Thank you for your service to our communities.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Bolivar

Thandi Carros

From: Patricia Cooley <pccooley@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 7:57 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Patricia Cooley
8688 W Phalarope Dr
Wasilla, AK 99623-9805

March 10, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

As the parent of a son with a severe TBI i plead with you to maintain the substance abuse treatment funds. My son is not an abuser bu with out the love of his family and support of programs he could be. I have seen several others with this situation, not nearly as bad as my sons, with this severe problem. if the funds were to be cut the problem could be get out of control for these citizens. the mental health of these citizens is also at stake should these programs be eliminated. What will happen to what help is available to these patience. Please consider the impact on society should these citizens not have the available help . Thank you Patricia C Cooley

Sincerely,
Patricia Cooley

Thandi Carros

From: Karen Henriksen <woodringrd@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 7:57 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Karen Henriksen
HC60 Box 3419
Haines, AK 99827-9605

March 10, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Please consider the revolving psycho-social impacts to the community when people plagued by uncontrollable substance misuse inflicts.

Theft, abuse, prostitution-some forced into it under age by addicted parents, assault etc. The more addiction the more crime.

Many people did not go out and choose to become addicts. Circumstances in life which shouldn't exist in the first place like child molestions, 1 in 4, start the addiction cycle . They start to numb the pain emotional and physical imposed upon them, by the same users or not . Drugs are easy to get. Treatment facilities offer alternatives once they peel back the layers of etiology.

Please see the revolving , increase in our psycho-social issues , and the costs in lives of these very needful human beings. They need support to find their way thru many of them endured in the first place.

Secondly support mental health services for after care and for those who misuse drugs and alcohol as they search for inappropriate ways to medicate their severe mental illnesses.

Thankyou for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Karen Henriksen

Thandi Carros

From: Cathy Kincaid <ckincaid47@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 7:17 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Cathy Kincaid
980 W 70th Ave
Anchorage, AK 99518-2108

March 10, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Dear Legislators: The House Finance Committee has recommended that Behavioral Health Grants, which fund substance abuse treatment services, be reduced by \$2,043,000 – \$1,043,000 from residential substance abuse treatment grants and \$1,000,000 from total substance abuse treatment grants. I believe that this is a huge mistake. Substance abuse is the number one band aid used by the mentally and physically ill who are too poor to afford proper treatment and are uninsured. Please keep this from happening,

Sincerely,
Cathy Kincaid

Thandi Carros

From: Joan O'Keefe <jokeefe@sailinc.org>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2014 5:56 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Substance Abuse Treatment

Joan O'Keefe
3225 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

March 10, 2014

Dear Representative Alan Austerman,

Dear Legislator,

Please maintain existing funding for substance abuse treatment in Alaska.

My agency, Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL) serve some 1200 seniors and people with disabilities residing in 19 communities scattered throughout the SE region of the state. Many of these individuals have in the past or currently struggle with substance abuse. Residential treatment costs less than prison and saves money down the road. We also know that substance abuse is a major contributing factor in Alaska's high rates of DUI, domestic violence, and other crimes. If anything, access to residential substance treatment should be increased~ not decreased.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,
Joan O'Keefe

Hilcorp Alaska, LLC

Post Office Box 244027
Anchorage, AK 99524-4027

3800 Centerpoint Drive
Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99503

Phone: 907/777-8300
Fax: 907/777-8301

March 11, 2014



Representative Alan Austerman
Representative Bill Stoltze
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission Budget

Dear Representatives Austerman and Stoltze,

I am writing to confirm my support of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC) and the important role it plays in Alaska's resource development. Without question, the AOGCC's role is critical in a state that relies on the revenue generated from oil and gas production.

Over the last two years, Hilcorp's investments in Alaska have resulted in increased production in the Cook Inlet Basin. The increased activity reflected by these investments not only creates new jobs, but also a greater regulatory and oversight requirement for the AOGCC. Hilcorp's success relies heavily on the guidance and permissions provided solely by the AOGCC. The Commission oversees oil and gas drilling, development and production, reservoir depletion and metering operations on all lands subject to the state's police powers. All are key elements in our day-to-day operations.

On behalf of Hilcorp, I am asking for you to support the AOGCC and approve its budget as submitted for fiscal year 2015, including the full amount for contract services. The fees that our company and others pay to AOGCC for its services certainly minimize the financial impact to the State. The quality and timeliness of AOGCC's oversight is critical to ensure the long-term success of the oil and gas industry in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John A. Barnes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John A. Barnes
Senior Vice President



March 5, 2014

Hon. Alan Austerman
Co-Chair, House Finance Committee
Room 505
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Dear Sir,

I'm shocked and saddened to hear that the General Funds for the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (KBNERR) have been completely removed from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's most recent budget. As I understand, these cuts will lead to closure of KBNERR, resulting in the catastrophic loss of jobs and critical research and education programs.

I appreciate the difficult choices that all in government finance must make. However, this decision makes little sense to me, even from a financial standpoint. These funds aren't just state outlays, they're state investments that attract additional funds, not only the matching federal funds that come on an annual basis, but also the additional federal funds that researchers like my colleagues and I are able to leverage using the vast physical and intellectual infrastructure of KBNERR. These leveraged resources help us to provide direct economic benefits to the state – those funds largely come to and stay in Alaska – and direct intellectual benefits to the state – in my case, better enabling the state to manage their world-class salmon resources.

In writing this letter, I'm hopeful that you and your colleagues can revisit this matter and find a way to restore the General Funds for the KBNERR. Please endeavor to find a way to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Rains", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Rains
Associate Professor and Long-Time Researcher and Occasional Resident in Alaska



February 28, 2014

The Honorable Alan Austerman
House Finance Committee Co-Chair
State Capitol
Room 505
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Austerman,

On behalf of people in Alaska living with cystic fibrosis (CF), we urge you to protect Medicaid, Children with Special Health Care Needs programs, and other state health care programs as your state continues budget negotiations. These programs promote access to the high quality, specialized care and treatments that people with cystic fibrosis rely on for optimal health. We also offer the expertise and support of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation as you undertake the challenge of developing the state's priorities for health care funding and operations in the upcoming term.

Cystic fibrosis is a life-threatening genetic disease that affects 30,000 children and adults in the United States. CF causes the body to produce thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and digestive system, which can lead to serious, life-threatening infections. Cystic fibrosis is both serious and progressive; lung damage caused by infection is irreversible and can have a lasting impact on length and quality of life. For this reason, it is vitally important that all people with CF are able to access appropriate CF treatments and care by cystic fibrosis experts at accredited care centers.

In order to help people with the disease retain access to the care and coverage needed to live longer, healthier lives, the CF Foundation urges you to consider the following policies in the coming year.

Protect Vital CF Care Programs in the FY 2015 Budget

Although real progress has been made, the lives of young people with cystic fibrosis are still cut far too short; half of young adults with this disease still die before age 26. Nationwide statistics show that while 98% of people with CF have some type of health insurance coverage, nearly a quarter of CF patients delay necessary medical care or skip prescribed treatments due to cost concerns. This number rises to one in three patients among low-income households.

For people with cystic fibrosis, adequate coverage is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Without access to expert CF care and treatments, the risk of lung exacerbations, costly hospitalizations, irreversible lung damage, and decreased quality of life increases dramatically. Medicaid, Children with Special Health Needs and other state health care programs help people living with cystic fibrosis better afford increasing out-of-pocket costs for lifesaving treatments and care. Often, these programs serve to bridge coverage gaps left by other types of health care insurance. We strongly urge that you provide the same level of funding, or better, for these crucial health care programs.

National Office

6931 Arlington Road, Suite 200, Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301.951.4422 800.FIGHT.CF Fax: 301.951.6378
www.cff.org email: info@cff.org

Ensure Access to High Quality, Specialized Care

Maintaining lung function and nutritional status as well as preventing lung infections and treating them when such prevention fails requires access to a number of different therapies delivered according to evidence-based standards of care. Availability of FDA-approved treatments and high quality CF care is critical to management of this disease and the achievement of the best possible health status.

It is vital that people with CF are able to access all FDA-approved treatments and receive care from providers at an accredited cystic fibrosis care center. The clinicians at CF care centers are experts in the evidence-based, peer-reviewed clinical practice guidelines that form the standard of care for people with this rare disease. The state should take all necessary steps to ensure that people with CF have the ability to receive the high quality, specialized care available in at accredited CF care centers.

The specialized medications that form the core of cystic fibrosis treatment must remain accessible to CF patients. Barriers to these orphan drugs, such as high co-payments, excessive co-insurance rates and exceedingly burdensome prior authorization requirements, should not hinder a patient's ability to receive a treatment given a clear medical need.

The CF Foundation stands ready to assist you as you prepare for the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you for considering the needs of people with cystic fibrosis, we look forward to working with you to continue to *add tomorrows* for all people living with this disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary B. Dwight', written in a cursive style.

Mary B. Dwight
Vice President for Government Affairs



KODIAK COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER

1911 East Rezanof Dr
Kodiak, AK 99615
Phone: (907) 481-5000
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March 6, 2014

Representative Alan Austerman
State Capitol Room 505
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Austerman:

RE: Letter of Support for the Governor's Budget – Supporting Health Care Access through Loan Repayment and Direct Incentive Program (SHARP)

This letter is written to you on behalf of the members of the SHARP Advisory Council in support of full funding of the SHARP Programs and specifically to ask that you rescind the \$1.2 million decrement to the SHARP – II Program Budget.

Impact of Budget Reduction in FY2015

- Vulnerable Alaskans currently receiving health care may lose their provider/s
- 39 recently selected and recommended provider service agreements by the SHARP Advisory Council cannot be made.
- Some or all of the 62 providers with current service agreements may lose funding on the entire or a portion of the support for their service agreements. This may also impact provider employers and their organizations.

Program Accomplishments

The SHARP Program provides healthcare provider loan repayment and direct incentives to ensure an adequate supply of healthcare providers will be available to meet the healthcare needs of Alaskans who have other substantial barriers to healthcare access (e.g. remote location in Rural Alaska), receive Medicaid, Medicare, or other federal health benefits or are uninsured.

Since 2010, 136 SHARP clinicians have provided healthcare to 156,190 Alaskans and have been provided 305,522 patient visits in over 38 communities, spread across all 6 regions of Alaska. In the last reported quarter, October-December 2013, 89 clinicians served 25,972 patients with 61,819 visits.

We respectfully ask that you support the SHARP II program, and that you **do not** cut the funding of this vitally important program!

Thank you for your time and attention to this key component of safe guarding the health of Alaskans.

Sincerely,


Judy C. Rathje, RN, MA, MBA
Executive Director/CEO