

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Cobban <cobban@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2013 8:39 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Fw: school

Dear sir: I think the Farm to School program should be continued. It teaches the kids to eat healthier!

Sincerely, Delores Cobban

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Judy Kepes <judkep41@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2013 5:09 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Representative.Bill.Stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Representative.Tammie.Wilson@ak.leg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker; Sean.Parnell@alaska.gov
Subject: School Funding

We moved to Alaska four years ago leaving behind the under funded, demoralized schools of rural Northern New York. My children have thrived at Trailside Elementary, Hanshew Middle School and Service High School in Anchorage. I've seen first hand in New York the detrimental affects of cut backs year after year. Teachers and parents become discouraged and this in turn is passed on to the students. Alaska has some good stuff happening at their schools. The students are our future. Fund the schools.

Judy Kepes

8810 Rendon Drive, Anchorage AK

P.S. The education my children have received in Alaska has taught them to be good citizens. They participate in government and vote.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Paul Horton <pfhorton2000@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 2:12 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear sir: We urge the retention of the present funding for behavioral health which is becoming more important in our society for all! Paul and Roberta Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jenkins, Jerry <JJenkins@acmhs.com>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 12:54 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Request to Reconsider Behavioral Health Cuts

Co-Chair Austerman, Co-Chair Stoltze, Vice-Chair Neuman and distinguished members of the House Finance Committee, I am writing to respectfully request you reconsider cuts to the Division of Behavioral Health budget.

As I currently understand the proposal, the reduction is not specified and will result in a base funding reduction primarily impacting community providers as Anchorage Community Mental Health Services (ACMHS). ACMHS is a span of life provider currently serving 2-98 years of age. Services target children with severe emotional disturbance and adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders.

I will summarize in two manners.

First, community based recovery oriented services are the least expensive of those funded by the State of Alaska. Results are tangible. ACMHS is a critical factor in the reduction of census at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute. We have tracked preadmission to ACMHS use of API to post admission and find a 80+% reduction in API days. There are similar results for the Department of Corrections. Children's Services focus on family preservation and improvement in life domains (home, community and school). We get results. We get results not with the easy cases but with those experience complex adverse life events/trauma. OCS is a primary referral source for trauma focused services.

Second, reductions in community based grants impacts the ability to utilize Medicaid. The short version is the current Alaska rates for behavioral health do not cover the actual cost of providing services. More information is available should anyone desire it.

In closing, I urge you not to decrease grant funding for behavioral health care that effects the base services.

Thank you for your reconsideration.

Regards,

j2

Jerry A. Jenkins, M.Ed., MAC
Chief Executive Officer
Anchorage Community Mental Health Services
4020 Folker Street
Anchorage, AK 99508

907-261-5310- Office

jjenkins@acmhs.com

Our Vision is "wellness for everyone."

Our Mission is to promote recovery and wellness by providing consumer-driven behavioral healthcare services.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Ferguson, Ashley <Ashley.Ferguson@providence.org>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 9:19 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Steve Thompson
Cc: Fong, Joseph; Rivard, Bethany; 'Rabeau, Julie A (HSS)'
Subject: Regarding State Trauma Program
Attachments: img-311081509-0001.pdf

All—

Please see the attached document from Dr Robert Reeg in regards to the proposed cuts to the State Trauma Fund.

Thank you,

Ashley Ferguson

Project Coordinator
Providence Seward Medical and Care Center
417 1st Ave
PO Box 365
Seward, AK 99664
(907) 224-2836
Fax: (907) 224-8826

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mike Satre (CAP) <msatre@alaskaproducers.org>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 8:36 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; =?iso-8859-1?Q?'Representative.Cathy.Mu=F1oz=40akleg.gov'?=@mxjnu01.legis.state.ak.us; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: HB65: Request to Add UAS Director of Mine Training
Attachments: HB65_CAP_Comments.pdf

Co-Chair Austerman, Co-Chair Stoltze and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Please find the attached letter requesting the addition of funding in the operating budget for the Director of Mine Training position at the University of Alaska Southeast's Center for Mine Training.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at your convenience.

Thank you,

Mike Satre

Executive Director

Council of Alaska Producers

PO Box 33499 Juneau, AK 99803

Phone: +907.957.2149

E-Mail: msatre@alaskaproducers.org

www.alaskaproducers.org

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Melissa Kemberling <mkemberling@healthymatsu.org>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2013 7:15 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: recapitalization of the Trauma Care Fund

Representative Austerman,

I urge you to authorize recapitalization of the Trauma Care Fund for state Fiscal Year 2014. The data collected through this program is crucial for public health programs that work on preventing injury and injury death in the State. Specifically, the Mat-Su has a significantly higher injury death rate than the rest of the country 50 deaths per 100,000 for Mat-Su vs. 40 for the US. We need to continue to develop initiatives to address this high rate of injury mortality and morbidity. The Mat-Su Health Foundation is using this data for our Community Health Assessment in an attempt to improve the health in the Valley.

Sincerely,

Dr. Melissa Kemberling

Melissa Kemberling, PhD, MPH
Director of Program Planning and Evaluation
Mat-Su Health Foundation
950 E. Bogard Road, Ste. 218
Wasilla, AK 99654
(907) 352-2894
(907) 232-7036 cell
(907) 352-2865 fax
[*mkemberling@healthymatsu.org*](mailto:mkemberling@healthymatsu.org)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: LaMarr Anderson <lamarra05@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2013 10:11 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Behavioral Health Svcs \$8.3M Reduction Recommendation

Honorable Austerman, House Finance Committee Member

You're very busy....have massive amounts of reading material coming at you from all sides. So, I'll be brief and to the point:

As a sitting board member (and it's Finance Committee Chairman) for Mat-Su Health Services, the primary community behavioral and integrated primary care health provider in the Mat-Su valley, I can outline from personal knowledge the devastating destruction that a \$8.4million reduction in state support for behavioral health grants will cause: We simply will be unable to maintain the barely sustainable medical and psychiatric crisis intervention, and the associated on-going stabilizing outpatient therapy and community support, that we currently diligently strive to provide.

Currently, we are not really able to fully meet the growing community need for behavioral health services but through careful stewardship and prioritization of resources and patient needs, we continue to be able to meet most crisis intervention needs and provide continuity in follow-up outpatient therapy and interventions. We are only able to continue providing such as long as current federal, state, and local funding sources remain constant, at a minimum, let alone if handed a thirty-one percent (31%) reduction of state support (which the \$8.3million proposed reduction represents).

Please consider the actual savings to our state and communities in long term costs by ensuring Alaskan experiencing serious mental illness/behavioral health issues (manifested by severe emotional disturbances, domestic violence and sexual assault, mental health treatment and substance abuse (to name a few), are treated through preventive/early intervention and continuing supportive therapy and support programs that are possible now because of current state Behavioral Health Services funding levels. We can't fully meet the growing mental/behavioral health needs of our communities now with the limited resources and funding we have....let alone with cuts!

We can pay now, even though painful.....or pay 2-5 times more down the road.... when it will be greatly more painful and devastating. Let's not be short-sighted.

LaMarr Anderson

PO Box 3808

Palmer, Alaska

907 232-5082

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mike and Andi Story <andimike@ak.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2013 9:03 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Representative.Bill.Stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker
Cc: 'School Board'; Gelbrich, Glenn; Sean.Parnell@alaska.gov; Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; dorothy.knuth@alaska.gov
Subject: FW: HB65 Support for Education Funding
Attachments: 3 4 13 JSD letter to Austerman.pdf; Testimony HF 2014.docx

Dear Honorable House Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in House Finance this past week. I ran out of time to share my last paragraph that I had prepared for testimony, which is about the importance of early learning for children. I share it below for your consideration:

The state of Maryland's public education system was ranked No. 1 in education for the fifth year in a row by the nonprofit Editorial Projects in Education which publishes Education Week (NY Times article on Jan. 10, 2013). Maryland received high marks for its investment in early childhood education and policies related to college and workforce readiness. The Juneau School Board urges full support for funding all of the requested amount of Governor Parnell's investments in early childhood programs in the operating budget: Pre-Kindergarten pilot programs; Best Beginnings, and Parents as Teachers. When kids enter kindergarten ready to learn it is a huge savings to the state and a guarantee in increasing the graduation rate.

My full testimony is attached for reference. In addition, the letter from Board President, Sally Saddler, and myself, on behalf of the Juneau School Board, regarding HB65. Thank you for your service to Alaskans!

Sincerely,

Andi Story

12069 Cross Street

Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 789 - 4292

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: michael stanton <wmichaelstanton@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2013 3:44 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: CUTS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH GRANTS

TO MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

AS A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL AND AS A CONSUMER OF COMMUNITY BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, I AM OPPOSED TO ANY -CUTS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH GRANTS. OVER TWENTY PLUS YEARS AS A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL HAS EXPOSED ME TO THE BENEFITS AND NEEDS OF THESE CRUCIAL GRANTS AND THE POSITIVE COMMUNITY IMPACT OF SUCH GRANTS.

AS A MEDICALLY RETIRED COMBAT VETERAN, I SERIOUSLY DOUBT I WOULD BE HERE, ALIVE, AND A FUNCTIONING MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT SUCH SERVICES. THESE SERVICES SAVED MY LIFE AND I AM INDEBTED AND GRATEFUL.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE GRAVE CONSEQUENCES ALASKAN COMMUNITIES WILL SUFFER IF SUCH FUNDING IS DRASTICALLY CUT.

SINCERELY YOURS,

W MICHAEL STANTON, MSc.
PO BOX 2067
PALMER, AK 99645

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Rebecca Traylor <wbusters@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 09, 2013 11:03 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: FW: BUDGET:State -wide Independent LIVING Council

From: wbusters@hotmail.com
To: representative.mike.chenault@akleg.gov
Subject: BUDGET:State -wide Independent LIVING Council
Date: Sat, 9 Mar 2013 23:57:53 -0800

Hello!.....,

Over the last two days, you have listened to hours of public comment.
I know, I have listened with you.
First of all, *Thank You* for your service and commitment to Alaska!
It is obvious how much need is out there!

I am writing in support of restoring the \$ 100k increment for Independent Living that the GOVERNOR has included in his Operating Budget.
This (rather small) INCREMENT has far-reaching effects.
The cost to the State of housing and providing for just ONE Alaskan in a long-term care facility such as Denali Center in Fairbanks, *averages*, and *can exceed*, \$100,000 per year. Our Centers for Independent Living are asking for that same amount;.....which would allow C.enters for I.ndependent L.iving to provide services to approximately *33* Alaskans.
To me; it seems simple.....a "no-brainer".

Centers for Independent Living provide a unique set of services...which are NOT duplicated anywhere, in any platform or budget.
It would BE EASY to dismiss ..as services are frequently using the term "Independent Living" to describe what they do.
I urge you to look in to the differences in programs, in depth.

Representative Tammie Wilson has previously asked for a copy of our "Study" (i.e. Agnew::Beck report) regarding our Independent Living Rural inclusion and expansion plan. Instead of burdening you each with said 20 - page document; you can easily access it on our SILC website.....www.silcalaska.org

Thank you.....each of YOU; for your consideration!!
Please feel free to ask questions, or require further documents.
=> Sincerely,
Rebecca Traylor
(907)490-2898

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Shana Crondahl <akedupdate@gci.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 09, 2013 5:32 PM
To: Shana Crondahl
Subject: HFin budget testimony given after 4pm, Wednesday, March 6
Attachments: Saturday, March 9, 2013 AKEDUPDATE.pdf

Hello,

Attached is a report containing testimony given to the House Finance Committee after 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9.

There was a lot of testimony in the two days of hearings on Tuesday and Wednesday in support of education funding, including testimony in support of early education funding, library programs, the Dept. of Education & Early Development budget, university funding, and the level of overall funding for K-12 education.

Thanks,

Shana Crondahl

Alaska Education Update

4100 Blackerby St.

Juneau, AK 99801-9535

(907) 500-7069

Email: akedupdate@gci.net

Website: www.alaskaeducationupdate.com

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/AKEDUPDATE>

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Michael and Sheila Horton <sehorton@cvalaska.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 09, 2013 2:39 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: My House Finance Testimony

Representative Austerman;

Thank you for sitting on the Finance Committee meeting and taking public testimony regarding the impending cuts to Behavioral Health Services. Sheila and I are still homeowners in Kodiak and I was thinking about our counseling experiences from Kodiak when I wrote out what I wanted to say for my opinion. (In fact, I was contacted and counseled one of my former clients from one of Kodiak villages last night. She was experiencing trauma from the loss of a family member.) I was present for the verbal testimony from Glennallen on Wednesday night from our LIO. Of course, with so many people in line to add their voices to the opposition, I was hurried along and was unable to share all of my written statement. I tried to keep it brief, but still had trouble getting 600+ words out in two minutes. So, I vowed that I would come home and send legislators the written text. And, since I write the weekly column, "Counselor's Corner" and tend to be a bit conservative in my efforts, I will be reprinting the text there this next Thursday and will be beseeching our readership to contact their elected officials. Having voted for you several times in the past, I wanted you to hear what I have to say in its entirety.

Here is the text that I wrote:

Hello. My name is Michael Horton. I am the Director for Behavioral Health Services in the Copper River Valley. I am also the VPSO Coordinator for our area. Often times in small rural communities, we have to wear multiple hats to cover the needs and in order for our programs to survive.

I am here to address the proposed cut to Behavioral Health services by \$8.3 million or roughly one-third of our statewide budget for behavioral health grant.

I understand that the Legislature wants to be fiscally responsible (we value this trait) and it values successes. When I first arrived in Alaska thirty years ago, the average consumption of alcohol by Alaskans was *three times* the national rate and the suicide statistics showed an incidence rate many times that in the Lower 48. In the last thirty years, due in large part to rural counseling services, Alaskans now drink only twice that of the other states and our suicide rates, once indisputably the highest in the country are down, and we now run neck-and-neck with Montana and Nevada for this sad, sad distinction.

These have been our measured successes, now we must consider the continued challenges. Some are where we have also made the greatest gains. We are still number one for completed suicides, we double the Lower 48 in alcohol and tobacco consumption, have three times the lifetime incidents of domestic violence, and nine times the rate of FASD. Those \$8.3 million dollars make a difference in who can be reached.

But these mind-numbing statistics and dollar amounts can be overwhelming. This needs to be put in terms that we all can relate to. I am first and foremost a provider- I counsel people of all ages, run groups, and have had the 24/7 Crisis Line with me for over 9,000 hours in the past 3 ½ years. As a provider, I have lost too many real people to suicide and I have been one of those people on my hands and knees cleaning up the blood, the last traces of lost lives.

I have also had many successes- our soldiers returning home who choose not to kill themselves, Alaskan marriages and families kept intact due to counseling, and many, many people clean and sober from our services. These successes and saved lives cannot be heralded in the press for obvious reasons. Those clients that have been helped also do not come forward to testify for equally obvious reasons. They were helped at the nadir of their lives, their lowest and most shame-filled point.

The services that we provide- how much are they worth? Or perhaps it should be asked, ‘What services does the State provide that are more valuable than preventing suicides among our kids and combat personnel returning to Alaska?’ How much is it worth to promote sobriety and to bring Alaskan families back together? How much is it worth to a parent who has lost a child to addictions to have a counselor available to the children still left in the home?

With the support of the Department of Health and Social Services, we are turning the corner on our greatest problems, and our communities *are* getting better. We have thrown the lifelines out to those in trouble and our counselors are out there in the water with those needing help guiding anguished Alaskans back to safety. Why would we ever cut the lifelines now when they are in sight of recovery? In such a case, we lose those in need of help and the counselors who have had real experience aiding others. And why in the world would we ever consider cutting the funding to those people who are already hurting, our most vulnerable people in Alaska?

Michael Horton, LPC, CDC II

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Thomas Leigh <akleigh@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 10:51 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Alaska State PMP and State Trauma System

Dear Representative,

As an Emergency Medicine Physician practicing at Alaska Regional Hospital, Providence Alaska Medical Center, and as an owner of Capstone Urgent Care in Wasilla I am extremely concerned that two valuable programs funded by the state may not be funded. I have been made aware that the prescription monitoring program (PMP) is potentially on the chopping block. This is unbelievable. The amount of prescription drug abuse in this state is astronomical. In the last 18 years I have not worked a single shift in any of the four Emergency Departments in which I have worked (Mat-Su, Fairbanks, PAMC or ARH) where I have not had to confront a malingering drug seeker. The number of people who make a living in this state by doctor shopping for prescription opiates is astonishing. As you may be aware, the number of deaths in this country due to prescription drug abuse is at an all time high, and rose, again, last year. The prescription monitoring program gives health care providers important information about a patient's use of narcotic pain medications and helps us provide appropriate safe care. Alaska's PMP is a fairly new program so we don't have a long track record or a lot of data yet, but experience from other states has shown significant savings to the Medicaid system and improved patient safety. There are two critical programs that serve Alaskan's being cared ofrin our State's emergency departments that are not funded in the proposed 2014 budget that I would like to ask you to support. First is the State's trauma system and second is the prescription monitoring program. Both of these programs are critical for the patients we serve, on a daily basis.

The trauma system provides resources and coordination of care to our most seriously injured patients, which improves their outcomes and simply saves lives.

The prescription monitoring program gives health care providers important information about a patient's use of narcotic pain medications and helps us provide appropriate safe care. Alaska's PMP is a fairly new program so we don't have a long track record or a lot of data yet, but experience from other states has shown significant savings to the Medicaid system and improved patient safety.

Please support adding funding for these two important programs back into the budget. If you have any further questions about importance of these programs please feel free to contact me.

Thank You

--

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kevin Munson <KMunson@matsuhealthservices.org>
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 2:56 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: The Operating Budget
Attachments: Budget Advocacy Letter-Austerman.pdf

Please see the attached

Kevin Munson, MS MAPA LPC

Chief Executive Officer

Mat-Su Health Services, Inc.

(907) 352-3210 (voice)

(907) 352-3363 (fax)

kmunson@matsuhealth.org

www.mshsak.org

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kimberly Burrows <kimmerleigh@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 12:35 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: A Concerned Citizen

To the State of Alaska Finance Committee Members:

My name is Kim Burrows and I live in Homer, Alaska. Let me begin by thanking our legislative body for opening HB65 up for public testimony prior to your voting on it. I was at the Homer Legislative Office on Wednesday, March 6th, and I appreciated your allowing me to speak.

However, as a voting citizen of Alaska, I have something I think each of you needs to hear. I want you to know I am speaking as a private citizen and am sending this email from my personal computer at my home and am NOT speaking for any other person or entity.

Many of my fellow concerned citizens arrived early in order to hear and/or speak at this public testimony. When it came time to begin our session, the committee chair called for a five minute recess, which was understandable. Ours was the last slot of a two-day work session and a short recess was probably much needed by each of you. However, and herein lies my frustration, after the short recess, only three of the esteemed committee members returned to their seats. There was some hustle and bustle, but it appeared to me it was because aides and assistants were clearing papers, etc. from the desks of those who failed to return.

There are eleven of you on this committee, but only three thought it important to return to listen to this, the final, meeting? I am asking you as respectfully as I can, how dare you? I realize you were tired after a long day at work, but it was also the end of a long day for those of us who took the time to get involved in the democratic process in which this country professes to partake.

This admonishment can be taken two ways. One, you can disregard it because you don't know me and I am only one person. Or, two, this could be an edifying occasion for each of you reminding you that you are there not only for us, the people, but by us, the people.

Thank you for your time.

Kimberly Burrows
kimmerleigh@hotmail.com
POB 2444
Homer, AK 99603
907-235-4045

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: CVCLA <cvcla@cvinternet.net>
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 11:41 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep.Bill.Stoltz@akleg.gov; Rep. Eric Feige; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: OWL Funding

My name is Bonnie McLeod, I am a resident of the Copper River Valley and a member of the Board of Directors of the Copper Valley Library. I am writing in support of the Owl Project and Live Homework Help both of which contribute to the educational advancement of youth (and adults) in rural communities. The Copper Valley Library has devoted many hours in implementation and promotion of the Owl program. This project is of great importance to youth in rural areas who need to be competitive with youth from urban Alaskan communities and also youth from other states of the U.S. No one can say what direction a young persons life will take or what discipline or interest will catch their imagination as they mature....whether they will remain in Alaska or move outside. What ever the direction they must NOT be educationally disadvantaged by virtue of where they live. The OWL program is an important tool in providing exposure and knowledge. I believe in time its use will grow and be vital in other institutions of human well being.

I ask that you support this program, that Live Homework Help be funded in full, that OWL be funded in full and that the governors recommendation of permanent addition to the Operating Budget with periodic reviews be implemented.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted, Bonnie McLeod

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: joe short <jshort@gci.net>
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2013 10:25 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: FW: Bill HB 65

From: joe short [<mailto:jshort@gci.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:02 PM
To: Alan Austerman (alanausterman@akleg.gov)
Subject: FW: Bill HB 65

From: joe short [<mailto:jshort@gci.net>]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 1:58 PM
To: Alan Austerman (alan.austerman@akleg.gov)
Subject: Bill HB 65

Dear Mr. Austerman'

I attempted to testify but was unable as testifying ran over its schedule time frame.

My name is Joe Short. I have lived in Petersburg since 1980, and am a lifelong resident. I have commercial fished all my life and have a general store in Kake.

My concern is H.B. 65. Please reinstate the \$550,000.00 to the Fish and Game budget. This is vital to the management of our fisheries from Shell fish and Fin fish. We also need an increase of \$165,000.00 for aerial surveys for the management of Herring and Salmon, it is a necessity.

Without this funding these fisheries can't be properly managed. This will have a negative effect on the S.E. economy. Commercial fishing is our state and communities largest source of revenue and largest employer.

Thank you,

Joe Short

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: william mcleod <dogs7707@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 10:13 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep.Bill.Stoltz@akleg.gov; Rep. Eric Feige; Sen. Click Bishop
Subject: OWL Funding

My name is Bonnie McLeod, I am a resident of the Copper River Valley and a member of the Board of Directors of the Copper Valley Library. I am writing in support of the Owl Project and Live Homework Help both of which contribute to the educational advancement of youth (and adults) in rural communities. The Copper Valley Library has devoted many hours in implementation and promotion of the Owl program. This project is of great importance to youth in rural areas who need to be competitive with youth from urban Alaskan communities and also youth from other states of the U.S. No one can say what direction a young persons life will take or what discipline or interest will catch their imagination as they mature....whether they will remain in Alaska or move outside. What ever the direction they must NOT be educationally disadvantaged by virtue of where they live. The OWL program is an important tool in providing exposure and knowledge. I believe in time its use will grow and be vital in other institutions of human well being.

I ask that you support this program, that Live Homework Help be funded in full, that OWL be funded in full and that the governors recommendation of permanent addition to the Operating Budget with periodic reviews be implemented.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted, Bonnie McLeod

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: william mcleod <dogs7707@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 4:10 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Rep.Bill.Stoltz@akleg.gov; Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Eric Feige
Subject: OWL Funding

My name is Bonnie McLeod, I am a resident of the Copper River Valley and a member of the Copper Valley Community Library, Board of Directors. I am writing in support of the OWL project & Live Homework Help both of which contribute to the educational advancement of youth (and adults) in rural Alaska. The Copper Valley Library has devoted many hours to implementation and promotion of the OWL project. This project is of great importance to youth in rural areas who need to be competitive with youth in urban Alaska and other states in the U.S. No one can say what direction a youths life will take. What ever the direction they must NOT be educationally disadvantaged by virtue of the area in which they live. The OWL program is an important tool in providing exposure and knowledge.

I ask that you support this program by funding OWL and Live Hoomework Help in full and that the governors recommendation of permanent addition to the Operating Budget with periodic reviews be implemented.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted, Bonnie McLeod

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sumner, Christy <csumner@SouthcentralFoundation.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:19 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Mental Heath funding cuts

Dear Gentlemen and Ladies.

I work with a population of people who experience severe mental illness. Many of them are on Social Security Disability and as such have very meager incomes. These individuals may be dually diagnosed with mental illness and substance abuse/dependence. The admiration and respect I have for people I serve knows no bounds, they struggle and yet persevere under very difficult circumstances. Everything about having these issues is hard: finding appropriate low income housing, being able to be clothed and fed, the basic living that all people are entitled to have.

I am a clinical associate at a day treatment program, Quyana Clubhouse, that serves this population. We serve all individuals who experience a severe and persistent mental illness. We provide services in order to help them maintain independent living, which includes, but not limited to: psychiatric, clinical, and intensive case management. We do a total wrap around service for the members here. We provide stability and consistency in the care that we provide.

Alaska has some of the highest rates of suicide and alcoholism nationwide and cutting any mental health funding would mean that Alaskan providers would be less able to serve a population of people most likely to commit or have these problems. People with mental illness are already very vulnerable in our communities because of the stigma and stereotyping that exists.

Many of the programs in Anchorage and rural communities will be severely impacted and will not be able to serve as many people. We deinstitutionalized people in the seventies and there is not enough long term care in psychiatric institutions. Because of this many mentally ill people end up on the streets and in jail. Many people in our jails all over the nation have mental illness. People who go off their medications and commit crimes end up in jail with limited psychiatric services. Jail is not the solution to the housing problem that people with mental illness have.

I feel very strongly about this and hope that you our representatives feel that way too. Please work to keep our funding, we not only need what they want to cut we could use more to serve this underserved population.

Christy Sumner CAII

Southcentral Foundation

Quyana Clubhouse

907-729-6328

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sue Cotter
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:06 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: FW: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

From: Sue Cotter
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:03 PM
To: alan.austerman@akleg.gov
Subject: FW: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

Rep. Austerman, FYI, this is in reponse to an email I received from Rep. Kreiss-Tompkins last night. This woman was very angry and vented on my staff several times last night.

My 'irratating' remark was not a reflection on you, if I had to interrupt a meeting i would expect some irratation. Thanks, Sue

From: Sue Cotter
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 1:49 PM
To: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tompkins
Cc: Sue Cotter
Subject: RE: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

Thanks for the email. We had several conversations with Lexi yesterday. I appreciate her frustration but I don't think anyone is to blame. There may have been some miscues though. I will try to lay it out below but if it's not clear please call me at 209-8575. I am taking this afternoon off.

As is their pratice, the house finance committee geographically divides up the state when scheduling public testimony on the budget. This is done so that all those wishing to testify don't have to sit through the testimony of the whole state to get their turn. If you look at the hearing schedule in BASIS, testimony from Sitka was scheduled for one hour between 3 and 4 yesterday. Offnets (those calling from places with no LIO or other extenuating circumstances) were scheduled and heard from on Tuesday. You will see why this becomes important in a minute.

From what I understand, Lexi called the day before (not sure who she called) asking when was Sitka's turn to testify, she was told the correct time FOR SITKA. But she called in at three as an offnet as she happened to be in Juneau. The chair said from the outset that they were going to try to get the testimony in from all those attending at the LIO's during the previously mentioned schedule and IF they had time would take testimony from the offnets even though their opportunity was the day before. They didn't have time to hear from everyone even though they stuck to the schedule, two minute limit and extended the hearing by 2 hours. As a matter of fact by the time chair Austerman got to his own district only one of the nine folks at the Kodiak LIO got a chance to testify. The rest were going to submit written testimony.

My staff did everything they could to work the situation given the circumstances. Other than asking (and I'm sure irratating) the chair to recess the meeting so that we could make a case for taking this particular offnet i don't know what else we could have done.

I think Helen Phillips of the house finance staff was going to call Lexi with an explanation. They know each other.

I am copying the staff in my office who worked on this yesterday. Juneau LIO-if I missed something or misstated please call me on my cell.

Thanks, Sue

From: Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:00 PM
To: Sue Cotter
Subject: Fwd: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

Sue,

This seems unacceptable. How did it happen? What should I tell Lexi?

I'm sure you have a lot on your plate with operating budget testimony. Thanks for your time and attention to this matter.

Jonathan

Sent from the iJonathan; please excuse brevity.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Alexandra Fish <fish.lexi@gmail.com>
Date: March 6, 2013, 8:07:18 PM AKST
To: <Representative_Bill_Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us>, <peter_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us>, <joe_michel@legis.state.ak.us>, <joe.michel@akleg.gov>, <daniel.george@akleg.gov>, <darrell.breese@akleg.gov>, <ryan.mckee@akleg.gov>, <Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov>, <Representative.Alan.Austerman@akleg.gov>
Subject: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

Hello,

My name is Lexi Fish. I am a lifelong resident of Sitka, Alaska where I have always been actively involved in community events, volunteer activities and civic engagement.

I helped create the Fish-Schools in Sitka which you heard so much about today, and now am a Fish-Schools volunteer in Sitka and Juneau. I decided to volunteer my time to testify at today's House Finance Committee Hearing in favor of maintaining the Farm to School funding, which is considered being cut completely.

I got on the phone at 3 pm and waited for THREE HOURS to testify. At 6 pm I was finally notified that my testimony would not be taken. For the record, I tried to testify yesterday as well, but was told that I

had to wait until today, Wednesday to do so. So I did. Except that I didn't get the opportunity to. Instead, I got out of work to listen to everyone else testify for THREE hours without ever getting the chance to give my own testimony. I wasted three hours of work time that I will have to make up late tonight, and I didn't even get to give my testimony. I listened to a dozen people from Sitka get to testify without ever being called on. I was in continual contact with the teleconference staff and they kept telling me to wait for my turn. This "democratic" system needs to be fixed. I understand many other people were in the same position as me, which is simply not fair and is completely unacceptable. Do you want your constituents to be involved in the political process or not? I am surely discouraged after all the time your offices wasted of mine today. I apologize for the negative tone of the email, but I am extremely disappointed and frustrated, and my experience with the legislature today completely turned my day sour. Not many of you know me, but I am actually a patient and upbeat person, however, that was beaten out of me today after three hours of being on hold!

Even though I wanted to give an in person testimony and not an email testimony, it looks like I have no choice since I was not allowed to testify today even after waiting for three hours. If you can't tell, I don't really have three spare hours to waste at this time. FYI, I was careful to make an extremely short testimony since I know you have to listen to a lot of them. I am extremely disappointed I wasn't able to give my testimony today and will be even more so disappointed in our leadership if this valuable program is cut. I understand the budget needs to be trimmed. There is a LOT of wasted government spending, but the Farm to School program is not an example of that waste. Hear me out, and please respond. I feel it's the least you can do after I spent my whole afternoon on hold for no reason.

--

My name is Lexi Fish, I am a lifelong resident of Sitka. I am a volunteer with the Fish to Schools Program in Sitka and Juneau. I am also a commercial fisherman and a Graduate Student of Nutrition and Dietetics. Needless to say, the Farm to School Program is very close to my heart.

I urge you to keep the Farm to School funding in the budget. Farm to School provides a boost to local Alaskan economies and provides much needed incentives for increased production of Alaskan products. Encouraging fish and farm production in Alaska provides economic diversity in a sustainable manner.

The Farm to School funding is a TINY investment in the overall budget that yields a great value to Alaskan kids and food producers and industries. Farm to School has been involved with so many successful programs, like Sitka's Fish to Schools, and it deserves more time to come to full fruition.

The health of our kids is NOTHING to put on the back burner. Childhood obesity is rising at a scary rate, and Type 2 Diabetes is being diagnosed in High School children. This is a serious threat to mental and physical health, not to mention to the productivity of our future!

Farm to School encourages local food products that are much healthier. Investing in our future generation is something we will never regret. I, myself grew up in the Sitka School District - the school lunches were repulsive and completely unhealthy! I rarely ate them. If a local option featuring Alaskan fish, produce and grains were ever an option, the schools would have surely seen more of my lunch money. Now is NOT the time to move backwards! Please retain full funding for the Alaska Farm to School Program.

Thank you,

Lexi Fish
228 Lakeview Drive
Sitka, AK 99835
907-738-5684
fish.lexi@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Veronica Dalton <daltonv@hoonahschools.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 2:00 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman
Cc: Rep. Cathy Munoz; Representative.Bryce.Edgemon@akleg.gov; Rep. Lindsey Holmes;
Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep.
Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Parents as Teachers Funding

March 08, 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

As a mother of two, I see the value of having an organization in our school provide necessary and appropriate support to all parents. This education is vital to help me prepare my young children for the outside world where problems are getting harder and more frightening. Please consider Hoonah's young children and the need for this vital organization. I strongly encourage full and adequate funding for the Parents as Teachers program and I speak specifically for Hoonah youth and tomorrow's leaders.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts.

Signed,
Anne Marie White
Mother of 2
Hoonah

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Veronica Dalton <daltonv@hoonahschools.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 1:52 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Rep. Mia Costello; Representative.Bryce.Edgemon@akleg.gov; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Parents as Teachers Funding

To the Representatives on the House Finance Committee,

Please continue to support the Parents As Teachers program (PAT); I am a parent of Alaska's first PAT program that began 18 years ago in Hoonah. My youngest son and I were fortunate to participate; he was two years old and was identified with a speech delay. With the support of PAT, Infant Learning Program (ILP), and the Hoonah School District my son and I received the support to help him with his speech delay. By the time he was ready to enter the school system he was ready to learn without any delays.

His journey through school was exciting to watch he loved to read and enjoyed challenges and was not afraid to ask for help. Through middle school and high school he made the honor roll. After graduating he knew what he wanted to do with his life and went on to attend Wyoming Technical Institute-WyoTech in Laramie Wyoming, and graduated as a Diesel mechanic.

The PAT program supports families from prenatal to five in many ways, identifying any delays and able to help the families overcome the delay, so that their child may enter school ready to learn. It also supports families to support their child's needs and most of all I believe that it helps breaks the cycles of abuse and neglect. The support families receive makes it more comfortable for the parent to come to the school where they themselves may have not had a successful experience.

With this program the parents are given the tools to help their child be successful in school: language, social emotional, intellectual and fine-gross motor development, and the parents are given the tools to make better choices for themselves and their family.

I wish that this program were in place with my older children I believe if it had been then their experience in school may have been less challenging.

I do see the difference that this program has done for Hoonah: more dad involvement and more children excited to learn, and the cycle of alcoholism is down I believe. Lots of parent involvement with community activities, a past parent is currently sitting on the School Board.

Please continue to fully fund the Parents as Teachers because it truly makes a difference with a child's/family life.

Sincerely,

Veronica Dalton

P.O. Box 407

Hoonah, Ak 99829

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Veronica Dalton <daltonv@hoonahschools.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 1:42 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze
Cc: Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgemon@akleg.gov; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Parents As Teachers funding



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Please continue to fully fund the Parents as Teachers because it truly makes a difference with a child's/family life.

Sincerely,

Veronica Dalton

P.O. Box 407

Hoonah, Ak 99829

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kim Burrows <reception@peninsulailc.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 12:56 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB65

A letter from two of our consumers:

March 5, 2013

Dear Alaska Legislators,

I apologize for being unable to present our comments in person and thank you for accepting my written comments.

As the wife of a man who is permanently disabled due to a spinal cord injury, I feel compelled to speak to you on behalf of disabled persons throughout Alaska on the proposed budget cuts to funding for Independent Living Centers in Alaska.

Because my husband's injury was work related and occurred in another state, we are luckier than most in that we have received most of the essential care necessary for his health and survival.

Still, even in view of that, my husband's physician sought the services of the Independent Living Center in Homer when home modifications became necessary for my husband's well being and safety. Before this, we had never heard of them before.

Although we ended up needing only minimal assistance from our local ILC, we did benefit from their several visits to our home to help us access those who could help.

During these visits, we were struck by the kindness, professionalism, and compassion displayed by workers there. In the world of being disabled, or the family of someone who is disabled, this kind of caring is often missing. We were also struck by the fact that many of the workers are volunteers—a small army of dedicated souls who function under the direction of Executive Director Joyanna Geissler and the operating Board of Directors.

Although our story is not outstanding, the stories of others less fortunate than us are.

In the limited time we have known our Homer group, it has been easy to observe the cohesive spirit of giving that means so much to so many—especially in rural areas that are already underserved.

The offices of the ILC are not fancy and the equipment is obviously dated, but the attitude and the sheer volume of work done there are state of the art.

Cutting funding to this deserving non-profit organization would be cutting essential and quality of life services for those it serves. It would be removing the small modicum of independence from those who have already lost

so much quality of life through their disabilities—be it a disability with sight, hearing, mobility, or whatever the cause.

When my husband was injured, attitudes towards the disabled were horrendous. They were to be hospitalized and shut away from society. They could not own homes or hope for an independent lifestyle. Thank God that has changed. Thank God for places like our Independent Living Centers. Hopefully you or your families will never need them, but if they should, they would be well served. Please do not further disable the disabled by removing this important and vital funding for the Independent Living Centers of Alaska.

My husband would also like to add, “They were there for me when there was nowhere else to turn and it was much appreciated.”

Sincerely,

Marianne and William D. Schlegelmilch

PO Box 2086

4470 Kachemak Way

Homer, Alaska 99603

Kim Burrows

Independent Living Center

P.O. Box 2474

Homer, AK 99603

Phone: 907-235-7911

Fax: 907-235-6236

Life is an attitude!

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Pat Wendt <patw@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 12:35 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Cuts

Does America or Alaska take care of it's people? Is it sane to cut what little treatment we have for what is quickly becoming the most fearful problem on this planet.

In an emergency, the first response is to treat the victim. To do otherwise is grossly negligence.

I assume that you folks representing Alaskans have enough healthy mental capacity to support the already underfunded efforts to effect recovery and healing among our afflicted.

Pat Wendt
3201 east 15th
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
907-952-5598

Sent from my iPad

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jessica Holden <jessholden@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 11:56 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: House Finance Committee: Please restore Independent Living increment

Dear Representative Austerman,

I serve as an Advocate on the Statewide Independent Living Council, and I have had the privilege of working with and learning about Independent Living Services in Alaska for nearly two years. My day job is with Information Insights, an Alaskan firm specializing in Public Policy Research and Management consulting, and I am a lifelong Alaskan.

I'm writing to ask that you work with your colleagues to restore the \$100,000 increment in the Governor's Department of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

Alaska CILs provide people with disabilities individualized services that are consumer-responsive, cost-effective, and community-based, and these characteristics of CILs are some of the most impressive things about them, I think. Not only do CILs provide Alaskans with valuable services, they do so efficiently, and in a manner that builds and enhances community.

Last fiscal year, Alaska CILs served over 4000 Alaskans with disabilities. CILs provided itinerant services to over 45 rural communities last year, but enormous areas of Alaska remain underserved. CILs need more money, not less.

Without the support of a CIL, many Alaskans are forced into expensive long-term care away from family or live dependent and isolated lives.

Of increasing importance to our state, CILs fill a unique niche in Alaska's long-term care crisis by providing a wide array of cost-effective non-residential services that increase the potential for Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

We are often asked why our budget is in the Department of Labor rather than Health and Social Services. CILs are located in the Dept. of Labor budget because the federal government requires CILs to be in the same Dept. as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Again, I urge you to work with your colleagues restore the Governor's \$100K increment for Independent Living in the Dept. of Labor budget. Please feel free to contact myself or our Executive Director, Heidi Frost, for more information.

Thank you,

Jessica

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: arcticaccess@gci.net on behalf of Audrey Aanes <arcticaccess@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 11:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Independent Living funding

House Finance Committee members: Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony to the value and importance of increased funding to Centers for Independent Living (CILs) provided through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Labor. My name is Audrey Aanes and I'm currently the Executive Director of Arctic Access, a Center for Independent Living, which was founded by a group of five men with severe disabilities living in rural Alaska in the early 1990's. Our current board and staff are also comprised of a majority of people who experience disabilities providing local knowledge and control.

For 20 years, on a very limited budget, Arctic Access has been providing outreach, community awareness and education, independent living skills training, peer counseling, individual and systems advocacy, and information and referral, in a region that spans 61,000 square miles and includes 28 remote communities, with a total population of 16,866. With the exception of Nome, the communities we serve are primarily populated by Alaska Natives of Inupiaq descent. Many families live a traditional subsistence lifestyle, and due to a lack of jobs, unemployment rates are as high as 68% – including adults looking for work and those no longer seeking employment. Poverty levels, which average around 18%, are as high as 42% in some villages.

Thanks to the legislature for increased funding for FY13, Arctic Access has this year provided services to 136 people of all ages and all types of disabilities in 23 communities. With the increasing number of elders in Alaska's remote communities, the ever-increasing voice is the desire to remain in their own homes and communities on through death and dying issues. Caring for elders within the extended family setting is a core cultural value, and elders are of primary importance in maintaining the social fabric and cultural resilience of Inupiaq communities. In-home care costs less than one-third of the cost of a private room in an assisted living facility and less than one-tenth the cost of nursing home care.

Our emphasis on identifying and developing community capacity while simultaneously delivering individual services has proved to be a very effective strategy. Arctic Access has formed working partnerships with Maniilaq and Norton Sound Health Corporations, Nome Community Center and the XYZ Senior Center, Alzheimer's Association, ResCare In Home Services, village Clinics, local IRAs and their housing programs, RurAL CAP Weatherization program, regional housing authorities, NANA Resource Techs, Norton Sound Patient Benefits Counselors, Kawerak and Maniilaq elders programs, developmental disabilities and vocational rehabilitation services, and the State Independent Living Council. We have worked cooperatively on developing needs assessments and transportation surveys, obtained funding for an accessible taxi for Nome and a pool lift for their one pool, collaborated with RurAL CAP and other housing programs in providing better home access, partnered with the attendant care and Waiver programs to address identified unmet needs, and partnered in gardening projects to include elders and people with disabilities to grow their own food.

Please restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment or an additional amount for Independent Living in the Dept. of Labor budget to provide greater outreach to this increasing population who deserve the right to live safe and quality lives in their own rural communities. Thank you for your time and your support.

Audrey

Audrey P. Aanes

Executive Director / IL Program Director

Arctic Access, Inc.

website: **www.arcticaccesscil.org**

phone/fax: 907/345-0715

toll free: 1-877-442-2393

e-mail: arcticaccess@gci.net

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dick LaFever <cli@ak.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 11:23 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgmon@akeg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Behavioral Health Budget

Greetings: I am writing to ask that proposed cuts to the Division of Behavioral Health not be made. I am in complete agreement with the comments made by Rosalie Nadeau, Akeela CEO (see below). I am a board member of Akeela, Inc. and I am personally and professionally aware of the benefits of programs such as those offered by Akeela and other organizations providing treatment programs throughout Alaska, including the prison population.

Consider:

- The cost of not providing treatment. If support, care, and treatment is not offered, or reduced, the need does not go away. The costs increase for public safety, emergency room treatment, and other emergency mental health care intervention.
- The programs provided by Akeela work and return people to productive lives.
- Builds stronger and more functional individuals, families, and communities.

I'm asking you to consider both the short and long range implications of these proposed budget reductions.

Sincerely,

Dick La Fever

Crossroads Leadership Institute (CLI)

Catalysts for Positive Change

815 W 19th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99503

Cell 907.727.6187

e-mail: cli@ak.net

www.consultcli.com

27th Anniversary (1986-2013)

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On Mar 5, 2013, at 10:43 AM, Rosalie Nadeau wrote:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Health and Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million cut to the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). The impact is devastating because it is approximately 15% of the Governor's recommended Division of Behavioral Health's budget, and it is slightly more if one measures it against the current year's budget. I have heard stories of the steep escalation in the budget, but those escalating budgets

have not happened in Akeela's programs, and we are one of the largest programs in the State. For instance, in FY-1992 our Akeela House grant budget was \$682,239, and this fiscal year it is \$681,225. Our other large program, a women and children's residential and outpatient program has only increased \$40,477, from the FY-2007 budget of \$856,478, or \$6,746 per fiscal year. Additionally, the mandatory match each program must contribute in order to qualify for the grant has increased from ten to 25 percent.

We also agreed to take over the management of a small Southeast Behavioral Health Program that had struggled to stay afloat under the City of Ketchikan's management. It has a grant of \$981,098. The City notified DBH that it would close the program effective July 1, 2010, if no one could be found to take over the service. We stepped into that hole, and have inch by inch brought the program back to life. However, it is still a daily struggle to maintain operations in an area of the State that has few services. Any significant cut would likely result in the complete closure of that program that provides mental health and substance abuse services to over 1,000 children and families.

We also have been told that the committee wants to limit indirect to 15% of the budget. Our company has a 26% indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Federal government that is established by reviewing who spends funds in our company and how and where funds are spent. Administrative costs have grown dramatically in the last several years driven in large part by what we providers call unfunded mandates. For instance, the new Behavioral Health regulations require all of us to be accredited by one of three National Accreditation organizations. We have recently completed that process at a cost of approximately \$75,000 with an annual membership cost of a little over \$5,000. The accreditation is for three years, so the process must be repeated in 2015. We also are required to move to an Electronic Medical Records system. We now have \$300,000 invested in that effort, and we anticipate that we will spend an additional \$200,000 before all of our programs will be operational on the system. It takes personnel to maintain these systems and they are administrative in nature. When I began working for Akeela none of the more sophisticated management systems were required by the State. I believe that in part these required functions have been the State's way of shifting management costs from the Division to the provider. However, to meet these unfunded mandates, we must have personnel that do not neatly fit into the direct service category.

Finally, treatment works and costs less than failure to provide treatment. The best example can be found with our prison programs. Prisoners who have been in substance use treatment show a recidivism rate that is 12% to 16% lower than is the rate of prisoners who have not experienced treatment. The current recidivism rate for prisoners is approximately 67%. If one applies that rate to 100 prisoners at a daily rate of \$115 per prisoner, 67 individuals going back to prison cost \$7,705 per day, while 51 going back to prison cost \$5,865 or a savings per day of \$1,840 based on a 16% difference. The savings over the year at the daily rate savings of \$1,840 translates to \$671,600 for prisoners not returning to prison because they received treatment.

Rosalie Nadeau,

Akeela CEO

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Bonnie Low <bonniel@AccessAlaska.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 10:44 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg
Subject: Complex Behavior Collaborative

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I would like to encourage you to fund the Complex Behavior Collaborative.

I have a 27 year old son with special needs who has some very difficult and complex behaviors. He lives at home with his father and I. He is destructive to property and has been physically assaultive to others as well. We have tried to find help for him but help is not available in Alaska. His world has become very limited due to his behavior. He is not able to ride in a car due to the possibility of him jumping out of the moving car or striking the driver. As a result of this, we are unable to take him out into the community. His world consists of his home only.

Our dream for him is to get his behavior under control so he can ride in a car, take part in community events and even live in supported living. With his current behaviors, all these goals are impossible. Daily living with him is very stressful.

My son was accepted into the Complex Behavior Collaborative. We are thrilled that at last we are receiving help. We feel that there is hope for him now!!! We have just started to receive training for both my husband and I and the providers that work with our son. We are learning techniques for communication and as a team have developed a behavior intervention plan. We have seen behaviors decrease and as a result, our son's quality of life has improved.

The on-going support of the team has been invaluable. Having someone come into the home and work directly with our son and providers has been crucial. Please don't pull the rug out from under us!!

Please continue to support the Complex Behavior Collaborative!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Bonnie Low

142 Frog Pond Circle

Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

alaskanbonnie@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Dan Masoni-1 <akunak@ci.unalaska.ak.us>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 10:43 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB 65 - Operating Budget - Testimony of Dan Masoni, Unalaska

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Unfortunately a snow storm cut off communications with the Unalaska LIO yesterday.

One phone line was working well enough to send a fax of my comments, but it took over 45 minutes to make the connection and deliver the document. I'm not sure that my comments ever made it to the Committee.

I'm attaching my comments below this note in order to deliver my testimony.

The Governor's Digital Initiative is well planned and very well vetted by staff. It builds on the basics constructed by the Alaska State Library, Gates Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation and University of Alaska to create a "community commons" in each Alaska City and Village. Once created, strong Broadband delivery in rural Alaska will be scalable to include schools as well as public libraries.

Broadband, as represented by the Online With Libraries Project in the Initiative, is essential to the future growth of ideas, commerce, and culture in Rural Alaska.

As a school board member, I have seen the positive results of Live Homework Help on students in our community. Over 50% of the students in our school have English as their second language. The availability of trained tutors to guide students to productive understanding of school materials is an essential tool that is heavily used in our community. Employing Live Homework Help as a delivery system creates economies of scale that no single school district can duplicate.

Please read my comments.

Thank you,

Dan Masoni

Thank You.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kristi Krueger <myfireweed@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 10:41 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Farm to School program funding support

Kristi Krueger

11751 E Loretta Cir

Palmer, AK 99645

March 7, 2013

Representative Alan Austerman

House Finance Committee Co-Chair

Alaska State Legislature

Rep.Alan.Austerman@akleg.gov

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am writing to ask you to support Alaska Farm to School. For the past three years, this program has been working very hard to connect local farmers with schools. Not just to introduce local foods onto children's lunch trays, but to teach kids about the food system, how plants grow and that what they eat doesn't just come from a grocery store.

The success of farm to school programs nationwide is dependent on the flexibility of the program to meet the diverse needs of the geography, community, and culture within a given state. Places with such extreme climatic and geographic conditions like Alaska need to be especially creative and resourceful while promoting Alaska's unique agricultural bounty. The success of the Alaska program depends on funding. It depends on your vote.

I have seen first hand the joy and enthusiasm children have when they get to care for a tiny seed in a cup of soil in the classroom, or are able to be unleashed on a farm to pick potatoes in the dirt and to grow their own carrots

in a school garden then harvest and have them as snacks in school. The comments I've heard from their sweet mouths would bring a tear to any mother's eye, "My kindergarten mouth didn't like broccoli, but my first grade mouth does!"

I think that this is an important program. It benefits children across the entire state of Alaska and without funding for this program; much of the hard work and efforts made in the last three years of the program will be lost. The FTS program is more than just helping children; it's helping farmers, which in turn, helps the local economy. Farm Safety workshops are held to teach farmers what steps are necessary for tracking and accountability for schools to accept the food they produce. Educational binders, food availability charts, local food hero posters and food maps have all been developed by this program. Taste tests at schools, grants for schools to create school gardens and FTS challenges have engaged thousands of students in the program. To stop funding of this program now would be devastating!

Please vote in favor of funding the Farm to School program. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Kristi Krueger

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Brandi Simington <brandis@fcbhc.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 10:29 AM
To: Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Alan Austerman; 'Rep.Bil.Stoltze@akleg.gov'; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson
Subject: Behavioral Health Services

I am writing to you regarding the proposed reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. I represent not only an interest in the field through my employment but also as the parent of an individual that is seriously mentally ill.

Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders – including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders – at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care – such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives – at the same time we are saving money.

Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a healthy workforce and promote a strong economy. For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

Behavioral Health Services are invaluable in our community. Costs of providing care continue to rise and there are static and dwindling resources available to pay for these services.

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Thank you,

Brandi Simington, PHR, MBA

Chief Financial Officer

Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center

3830 S Cushman St

Fairbanks, AK 99701

907-455-5279

brandis@fcbhc.org

The mission of the Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center is to provide quality behavioral health services that support consumer choice, cultural diversity, and clinical excellence.

Our Core Values are effective:

Stewardship

Collaboration

Leadership

Compassion

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kniaziowski, Rick <RKniaziowski@horizonlines.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:55 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: HB65 (Operating Budget)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman

Re: HB65 (Operating Budget)

I apologize for not being able to stay at the LIO last night long enough to testify on the operating budget. It is nice that we have the opportunity to do so telephonically but day care closes at 5:30 and I couldn't stay any later. So here are the comments I was going to give last night.

For four years the governor and legislature have flat funded education. The governor calls it full funding, to which I must object. A \$2 million shortfall in the local KIBSD budget does not feel or look like full funding.

This operating budget not only flat funds education it peels away some crucial funding for programs that we use in Kodiak and around the state to try and bridge the gap between expenses and revenue and still be innovative in providing education to children. The Digital Learning Initiative, Pre-K, Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers and Jobs for Alaska's Grads all face cuts or a switch to one time funding.

For four years we have been told to do more with less. We've met that challenge but things are starting to crack at the seams. We're scrambling to retool for the new standards and assessments coming down the pike. Our local graduation rate is at 86.8% and climbing. Our Learning Café helps those kids not making it in traditional classrooms and allows even more kids graduate. If we could use those numbers we would be above the 90% threshold the governor has asked for. But we need the resources to meet the mandates given us.

Now we have a report out by the Alaska Policy Forum that cherry picks data to claim that we are failing our kids in education and spending a lot do it. They compare education funding now with the level we were at the end of the Sheffield administration and programs and infrastructure had been gutted. Those same folks call for vouchers and more school choice. While that effort may not pass the house and senate this session, it takes everyone's attention away from the underfunding of education.

Please consider increasing the funding of public education in this state.

Regards,

Rick Kniaziowski

Kodiak Island Board of Education

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: sheila kelly <smbkelly@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:45 AM
To: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: University of Alaska Press is unique state resource

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

Alaska is rightfully proud of its rich resources. **The University of Alaska Press is a unique state resource that deserves a sustaining stewardship.** My family were Alaska pioneers, settling in Treadwell on Douglas Island in 1899. I wrote a book on the Treadwell story and University of Alaska Press published it, recognizing that this little known town played a big role in Alaska history, American history and gold mining history. Although few publishers took an interest in this book, it ended up receiving a special recognition award from the Mining History Association (U.S.). University of Alaska Press serves and preserves Alaska culture and history in so many ways that enrich the state. It deserves sustaining funding from the state budget.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sheila Kelly, Author

Treadwell Gold, An Alaska Saga of Riches and Ruin

University of Alaska Press, 2010

www.TreadwellGold.com

smbkelly@gmail.com

1444 NW Woodbine Way

Seattle WA 98177

[206-365-7892](tel:206-365-7892)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: KELLY MCBRIDE <Kelly.McBride@matsuk12.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:05 PM
To: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman
Cc: Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Wes Keller
Subject: State PreK Program in Mat Su: letter from parent
Attachments: letter about state PreK mat su.pdf

I have attached a letter from a parent of a student who is currently attending our state preK program: Widening the Net.

Kelly McBride

Resource Specialist

Mat-Su Borough School District

Kelly.McBride@matsuk12.us

(907) 746-9202

*The **MORE** things that you **READ**,*

*the more **THINGS** you will **KNOW**.*

*The **MORE** you **LEARN**,*

*the more **PLACES** you'll **GO**!*

~Dr. Seuss

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If you believe you have received this information in error, please notify the sender immediately by reply email and immediately delete this message from your system.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Toby Sullivan <toby@kodiakmaritimemuseum.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:34 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Alaska State Museums Funding
Attachments: Representative Austerman 3-7-2013.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Representative Austerman:

Attached is a letter in support of the Alaska State Museum budget line item request for a funding increase for the Alaska State Museum Grant-in-Aid program. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about my support for this request.

Regards-

Toby

--

Toby Sullivan
Executive Director
Kodiak Maritime Museum
toby@kodiakmaritimemuseum.org

P.O. Box 1876, Kodiak, Alaska 99615
907-486-0383 www.kodiakmaritimemuseum.org



[Pick, Click, Give](#)

Last year 37 Alaskans donated more than \$2,600 to Kodiak Maritime Museum through Pick, Click, Give, to help preserve the maritime history of Alaska. This year, please consider a Pick, Click, Give donation to KMM to continue preserving Alaska's maritime heritage, and help us reach our goal of 100 donors and \$7,100 through the Pick, Click, Give, program.

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lynne Stevens <lstevens@focusoutreach.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 9:30 AM
To: Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program

Hi, my name is Lynne Stevens and I am asking that you to support and FULLY fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program.

I have been working with children and adults with developmental disabilities for 12 yrs. and some have had TBI's or other acquired brain injuries.

My husband had a TBI in 1975 when he was 17 as a result of a vehicle accident. They didn't expect him to live but with the right supports and therapies he learned how to speak again. He still has a physical disability but has been able to go to college and graduated a few years ago at the age of 48. Voc Rehab played a major role in his recovery. He has worked in the Human Services Field ever since.

Can you imagine what it would be like to be locked in a body that didn't work but your brain did? Can you imagine what it would be like if you had a functioning body but the brain was damaged and you really didn't know what you were doing or saying wasn't the "norm" and people would look at you like you were crazy? Well it's the services that are offered to individuals who experience TBI's and the case managers who are advocates that help promote the individual to be a productive member of society. These services are sometimes needed for the rest of their lives depending on the severity of the injury. It's not a quick fix, it's a slow and laborious process and it's never ending.

If case managers, agencies who support and work with these individuals, and the training wasn't provided my husband wouldn't be where he is today. They help link the individuals to services that will help in their recovery. The supports to the families are undeniably the saving grace to some. It helps them understand and how to help their loved one and provides information for what behaviors might follow. There are no institutions here in Alaska and group homes are sometimes available. This may be an option for some but not everyone.

I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to read my letter and hope that you will fully support the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program.

Sincerely,

Lynne Stevens

Lynne Stevens, BS, MEd, RN

Nurse Consultant

FOCUS, Inc.

11901 Business Blvd., Suite 209

Eagle River, AK 99577

Ph: 907-694-6002

Fx: 907-689-7205

[website](#) | [facebook](#) | [twitter](#)

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Karen Glenn <KGlenn@SEAVIEWSEWARD.ORG>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 8:56 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Complex Behavior Collaborative

Please support funding for continuation of the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative.

People with disabilities are at a higher risk for experiencing complex and difficult-to-manage behaviors. People with disabilities include those with developmental and intellectual disabilities, behavioral health disorders, Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia, autism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc.)

Alaskan service providers report they lack adequate intensive support and intervention services for clients with complex behaviors.

Caregivers and providers who are not equipped with specialized behavior management skills struggle because they are not always able to handle those in their care with challenging behaviors.

When caregivers are given tools through consultation and training the individuals they serve are more likely to stabilize and avoid being sent to more costly institutional care—such as Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), incarceration, nursing homes, or out-of-state residential treatment.

In FY12, funding was allocated to set up the Collaborative and develop the provider agreements. In FY13, the Collaborative began serving clients and continues to expand its consultant and client base. In FY14, we are seeking annualized funding to ensure that the consultation and training services of the Complex Behavior Collaborative continue to be available for caregivers and providers, and the individuals they serve.

3.1.13 / 2 of 2

Research shows that when individuals with complex behaviors have on-going supports they are more likely to remain stable, productive, and functioning successfully in the community.

Without supports, people with difficult-to-manage behaviors can more easily escalate into crisis, requiring more acute and costly care at API (Alaska Psychiatric Institute), emergency room care, incarceration in Alaska's correctional facilities, or out-of-state institutionalization.

The Complex Behavior Collaborative helps providers avoid crises and acute care situations by: 1) building community-based service capacity to deal with difficult behaviors; 2) building expertise related to maladaptive behaviors within Alaska; 3) providing services in the community to prevent or reduce the need for hospitalization and acute institutional care.

Respectfully,

Karen L Glenn

Admin Manager

SeaView Community Services

P.O. Box 1045

Seward, AK 99664

907-224-5257 main

907-422-1002 direct

907-224-7081 fax

kglenn@seaviewseward.org



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Karen Glenn <KGlenn@SEAVIEWSEWARD.ORG>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 8:49 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Proposed \$8.3 million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- * **mental health treatment**
- * **substance abuse treatment**
- * **detox services**
- * **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
- * **supported housing**
- * **peer support services**
- * **suicide prevention**
- * **tribal behavioral health services**
- * **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
- * **parent and peer navigation**
- * **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
- * **prevention and early intervention**
- * **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**

WE WOULD ASK THAT YOU RECONSIDER THIS RECOMMENDTION! BECAUSE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. SeaView Community Services has scheduled 21 new Behavioral Health assessments for mental health related issues in the last 4 weeks alone. If funding were to be reduced we would be unable to provide all of these assessments within this timeframe.
2. SeaView Community Services has a wait list of 29 individuals that need substance abuse assessments scheduled but there are no available appointment times for several seeks. If funding were to be reduced we would be unable to provide services to these 29 individuals.
3. SeaView Community Services has on average over 2,000 contacts per year. If funding were to be reduced what would these individuals do?
4. Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
5. Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
6. Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
7. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
8. Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
9. Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
10. For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

The SeaView Community Services Program Directors along with the agencies below support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

The Alaska Mental Health Board, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Governor’s Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Alaska Commission on Aging, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and Alaska Brain Injury Network support maintaining or increasing current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Respectfully,

Craig Williamson, Ed.D., Behavioral Health Clinical Director

Chris Sheehan, IT Clinical Director

Dyan Ferren, HR Clinical Director

Karen L Glenn, Admin Manager

SeaView Community Services

P.O. Box 1045

Seward, AK 99664

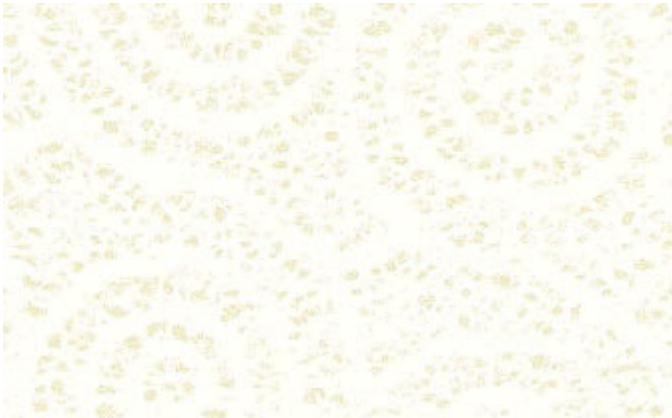
907-224-5257 main

907-224-7081 fax



Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Lori Salyers <lsalyers@pchsak.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 8:22 AM
To: Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Kathleen Wales
Subject: HB 65



Dear Maam and Sirs,

I am writing this email against HB65. As a direct service professional in the field of mental health and behavioral health, I feel reducing the funding for behavioral and mental health programs will be a great detriment to the state of Alaska. Our program covers a very large part of the Kenai Peninsula: Soldotna, Kenai, Nikiski, Kasilof, Sterling and a mobile clinic in Cooper Landing.

As it stands, we scrape by with low funding and use a lot of grants to run our program. In a field of such high importance, we are treated as the ugly red-headed step-children of the government. The population that we provide services to are the ones that generally fall through the cracks due to lack of income and resources.

We are EFFECTIVE at keeping the mental health population out of jails, API and excessive ER visits. A major portion of our consumers have stated that without our program, they would more than likely have committed suicide or a crime which would have them institutionalized or in prison. Our prison system does NOT give mental health consumers their proper medications, if they are given any medications at all.

I ask you to please continue our funding, we are doing a very important job for the constituents and residents of the state of Alaska and specifically the Kenai Peninsula.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lori A. Salyers

Recovery Assistant

Birchwood Center

260-3695

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: JERRY AND STACEY DAHL <dahlcrew@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 8:17 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Fwd: Re: House finance testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

----- Original Message -----

From:
"JERRY AND STACEY DAHL" <dahlcrew@gci.net>

To:
"Brian Lynch -PVOA-" <pvoa@gci.net>
Sent:
Wed, 06 Mar 2013 08:42:13 -0900
Subject:
Re: House finance testimony

To Mr Austerman and the house finance committee
I was sined to testify on the teleconference but there was not enough time for me to speak so i would like to submit my testimony in writing.
my name is Jerry Dahl i live in petersburg born here in 1967 commercial fishing since i was 12
I would like to call attention to HB 65
please reinstate the 550,000 to the fish and game budget
this is vital to the region to conduct management of fisherys
also increase the there budget with 165,000 for the aireo surveys
for salmon management this is a very important tool for the salmon biologist to manage on abundance basis which has been effective type of management...

If these budget items remain UN funded it will have a negative effect on the SE economy. the the vessels will not get the openings the crews will not make income and the towns will not sell supplies and the state will not receive the raw fish tax.... this is the main resource of this area
thank you Jerry Dahl

----- Original Message -----

From:
"Brian Lynch -PVOA-" <pvoa@gci.net>

To:

"Jerry Dahl" <dahlcrew@gci.net>

Cc:

Sent:

Tue, 05 Mar 2013 15:03:20 -0900

Subject:

House finance testimony

WordSection1">

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">Here's mine, such as it is.

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">Brian Lynch

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">Petersburg Vessel Owners Association

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">PO Box 232

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">Petersburg, AK 99833

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">907.772.9323

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">pvoa@gci.net>pvoa@gci.net

font-size:12.0pt;font-family:"Arial","sans-serif">www.pvoaonline.org/>www.pvoaonline.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kate Graber <kateinak@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2013 7:34 AM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Cuts to behavioral services?

The quality of our life is determined by the quality of life of those in our community, especially those living on the edge. With all of the addiction, domestic violence, and mental illness in Alaska, the first thing that needs to be done is to put more funding towards assisting those caught up in the cycle of addiction, the cycle of violence and the sadness of mental illness. To delete money from these services would be a travesty and would invite unimaginable loss for all. I don't know of any family in Alaska that has not had at least one family member affected by at least one of these nightmares and the destructive effects affect the other family members and those who know them. These are community problems, not just personal problems.

Kathleen G. Graber
47146 Lexington Ct.
Kenai, AK 99611

Sent from my iPhone

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kathy Blanc <kathyblanc@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:15 PM
To: Rep. Cathy Munoz
Cc: Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers

Dear Representative Munoz,

Please restore funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels -- Best Beginnings at \$937,500 and Parents as Teachers at \$1,042,500.

We know that having children come to school ready to learn is critical to their future success. This investment in young families and early education will go further than any other legislative appropriation.

Best Beginnings resources, in combination with community volunteers and private matching funds, are used to support parents. The programs supported by Best Beginnings are simple, inexpensive, family-based, and they work.

One important program that is partially funded through Best Beginnings state funding is the Imagination Library. The Imagination Library mails a brand new, age appropriate book each month to every child from birth to age 5 who signs up for the program in their community, regardless of family income.

More than 20,000 Alaska children already participate in the program through 29 local Imagination Libraries serving 102 communities.

The Southeast Imagination Library, housed in Juneau, just reached a major milestone: after six years of steady growth, 2,000 of our children in Juneau, Haines, Yakutat, Kake, Angoon, Craig, Klawock, Sitka, Petersburg, Skagway, Gustavus, Tenakee and Wrangell are now receiving a free Imagination Library book in the mail EVERY MONTH--and we are on track to deliver our 100,000th book in November!

We know that having children come to school ready to read is critical, and educators have emphasized that reading with your preschool child is the single most important activity to prepare a child for school. Proficient reading and comprehension skills are an important key to success in school and beyond.

The Imagination Library directly addresses the three areas of greatest need as measured by the Alaska Education and Early Development's school readiness developmental profile: phonological awareness, awareness of print concepts, and knowledge of letters and symbols.

But it's more than a book delivery program; it's a Get-the-Whole-Community-Involved-in-Reading-to-Kids Program. Here in Juneau, we also are at the forefront of using the Imagination Library as a way to reach young families.

The Imagination Library contact list allows us to inform young families of other enrichment activities that promote early literacy. For example, family nights at the library often now have more than 100 participants! AEYC-Southeast's "Born Learning" newsletter publicizes events for families, and attendance at family programs in Juneau has grown exponentially.

So thank you, Representative Munoz and all Alaska legislators, for making these funds available through Best Beginnings. **There are no administration costs to the Southeast Imagination Library program as the support work is done by volunteers.** This effort is simple, community-based, and powerful.

We already know the path to success in school starts at birth. Those first five years of life are critical for establishing how a child will fare in school and ultimately in life. Please make a small investment in our community's future by restoring funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels.

Thank you,

Kathy Blanc
3003 Foster Avenue
Juneau

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Alexandra Fish <fish.lexi@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:07 PM
To: Representative_Bill_Stoltze@legis.state.ak.us; peter_ecklund@legis.state.ak.us; joe_michel@legis.state.ak.us; Joe Michel; Daniel George; Darrell Breese; Ryan McKee; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING- FINANCE

Hello,

My name is Lexi Fish. I am a lifelong resident of Sitka, Alaska where I have always been actively involved in community events, volunteer activities and civic engagement.

I helped create the Fish-Schools in Sitka which you heard so much about today, and now am a Fish-Schools volunteer in Sitka and Juneau.

I decided to volunteer my time to testify at today's House Finance Committee Hearing in favor of maintaining the Farm to School funding, which is considered being cut completely.

I got on the phone at 3 pm and waited for THREE HOURS to testify. At 6 pm I was finally notified that my testimony would not be taken. For the record, I tried to testify yesterday as well, but was told that I had to wait until today, Wednesday to do so. So I did. Except that I didn't get the opportunity to. Instead, I got out of work to listen to everyone else testify for THREE hours without ever getting the chance to give my own testimony. I wasted three hours of work time that I will have to make up late tonight, and I didn't even get to give my testimony. I listened to a dozen people from Sitka get to testify without ever being called on. I was in continual contact with the teleconference staff and they kept telling me to wait for my turn.

This "democratic" system needs to be fixed. I understand many other people were in the same position as me, which is simply not fair and is completely unacceptable. Do you want your constituents to be involved in the political process or not? I am surely discouraged after all the time your offices wasted of mine today. I apologize for the negative tone of the email, but I am extremely disappointed and frustrated, and my experience with the legislature today completely turned my day sour. Not many of you know me, but I am actually a patient and upbeat person, however, that was beaten out of me today after three hours of being on hold!

Even though I wanted to give an in person testimony and not an email testimony, it looks like I have no choice since I was not allowed to testify today even after waiting for three hours. If you can't tell, I don't really have three spare hours to waste at this time. FYI, I was careful to make an extremely short testimony since I know you have to listen to a lot of them. I am extremely disappointed I wasn't able to give my testimony today and will be even more so disappointed in our leadership if this valuable program is cut. I understand the budget needs to be trimmed. There is a LOT of wasted government spending, but the Farm to School program is not an example of that waste. Hear me out, and please respond. I feel it's the least you can do after I spent my whole afternoon on hold for no reason.

--

My name is Lexi Fish, I am a lifelong resident of Sitka. I am a volunteer with the Fish to Schools Program in Sitka and Juneau. I am also a commercial fisherman and a Graduate Student of Nutrition and Dietetics. Needless to say, the Farm to School Program is very close to my heart.

I urge you to keep the Farm to School funding in the budget. Farm to School provides a boost to local Alaskan economies and provides much needed incentives for increased production of Alaskan products. Encouraging fish and farm production in Alaska provides economic diversity in a sustainable manner.

The Farm to School funding is a TINY investment in the overall budget that yields a great value to Alaskan kids and food producers and industries. Farm to School has been involved with so many successful programs, like Sitka's Fish to Schools, and it deserves more time to come to full fruition.

The health of our kids is NOTHING to put on the back burner. Childhood obesity is rising at a scary rate, and Type 2 Diabetes is being diagnosed in High School children. This is a serious threat to mental and physical health, not to mention to the productivity of our future!

Farm to School encourages local food products that are much healthier.

Investing in our future generation is something we will never regret.

I, myself grew up in the Sitka School District - the school lunches were repulsive and completely unhealthy! I rarely ate them. If a local option featuring Alaskan fish, produce and grains were ever an option, the schools would have surely seen more of my lunch money. Now is NOT the time to move backwards! Please retain full funding for the Alaska Farm to School Program.

Thank you,

Lexi Fish
228 Lakeview Drive
Sitka, AK 99835
907-738-5684
fish.lexi@gmail.com

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: LAURENE MADSEN <geotech@alaska.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:54 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: feedback on budget for libraries and education

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Alan,

I was unable to tune into the LIO call-in today, but wanted to speak out against the proposed elimination of funding for the Homework Help and cuts to the OWL state library budget, as well as education budgets. These programs serve all students in our state, leveling the playing field for our students in remote places, like Karluk or Akhiok as well as Bethel or Barrow, to have the same access to services and online resources as the "in town" kids. Because these services have been available, our rural students are better prepared for post-secondary education or training, and have a higher skill level than in many other states.

I am currently in California, caring for my 97-year old mother, and working at the Univ. of Cal Merced, and am astounded how far behind this state is in adoption of technology tools and access to resources. This is because the poorer districts and communities have suffered from a lack of funding and support from the state education budget. It's no wonder they rank down near the bottom of achievement levels. Only the richer districts, with more affluent parental support, are faring fairly well, but not by much.

Alaska has long been a leader in innovation of technology in education, perhaps out of need due to our remote locations, but also because of the dedication of those who work and fund educational programs. Please do not let this important program suffer from the short-sighted Governor's proposals. We have the money, and it's just a matter of how it is allocated.

Please take this into consideration when you sit down with the fellow members of the Finance Committee.

Alaska needs to keep up and fully fund education and the resources we have available.

Thank you,
Laurie Madsen

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sallye Werner <sallyewerner@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:26 PM
To: Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Cathy Munoz
Subject: HB65

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear members of the House Finance Committee:

I wish to encourage you and the other members of the House Finance Committee to restore the \$8.3 million funding for Behavioral Health programs that were in the Governor's proposed budget and cut by Subcommittee. These include such programs as Strengthening Families and Best Beginnings, programs proven to achieve positive results. As an Alaska teacher from 1977-1998 and a CASA volunteer since 1999, I have personally seen the positive results these programs have produced.

I encourage restoring this funding for two basic reasons:

First, it is the right thing to do. If we as a civilized community do not ensure the safety and well-being of ALL of our children, we are morally and ethically wrong. Programs that help parents get or stay sober and become better parents benefit their children. With so little effort we can take steps toward ensuring that our children and families get the education and support they need. These programs are a step in the right direction.

Secondly, if we do not fund these programs, we condemn our children and grandchildren (who do become healthy contributing citizens) to paying for the results of not having these programs. Today, too much of our money goes to deal with the many homeless, addicted, and incarcerated in our communities. We know that many of them suffered abuse and neglect while growing up and we know that contributed to their situations today. We know that programs like Best Beginnings and Strengthening Families have improved the lot of those they serve, both in Alaska and elsewhere. Do we want to ensure the next generation will be paying higher taxes because we were unwilling to do the right thing now?

Please vote to restore the Behavioral Health funding.

Thank you for your time,

Sallye Werner
16844 Kenai Terrace Road
Anchorage AK 99516
House District 27

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Anna Troxel <akjelani@ymail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 6:56 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Public Testimony for HB 66

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello,

My name is Anna Campbell and I'm a patient at Center For Drug Problems. I am a single mom of a 10 year old child. I live in Anchorage, AK. I've lived here for 31 years. I have been in the program at CDP for 10 months now and it has really changed my life in the short time I've been there. If y'all take all that money away (\$8.3 Million) from programs like this one it's going to cost you more money from other places. Like more of us will end up in Jail, or are Kids ending up in State Custody, Court costs, Hospital costs. Because this program really helped me and others change are paths in life. I have become a better person in society, started working and paying taxes, but most of all I became a better mother for my child. I waited 15 months on the wait list for this program. It is so hard to admit you have a problem, even harder to ask for help. The worst part is being told they can't help you right now because they don't have room available or the funding for the program to help you. Then you give up and go back to what you know. And that's sad when you want to get better but there is no programs available or money for them, to get help you need. And that's how it is now , it will only get worst if you cut all that money (\$ 8.3 million) from the few programs we have now. So I am asking you to please consider not cutting the funding of these programs I really need them and so do all the other people waiting on the wait list or in the programs. Having that place to help you get a chance for help really saved life's and gives us a chance for a good sober future for ourselves and are family's. I am so thankful I got the chance to be in the program at Center For Drug Problems it saved my life and I am so thankful everyday for that . Also the counseling sessions one on one, the group counseling sessions and the weekly groups I have attened like Relapse Prevention, Cognitive Problem Solving (which teaches us to not think like criminals anymore and how to prevent thinking errors in everyday situations, and how to act in everyday situations in life without going back to are old habits and thinking ways.) also Beyond Trauma has helped me work through traumatic events that I've been in. These are just the ones i've taken so far and there are many more. These groups are so helpful with learning ways to continue a better sober life, teaching us tools and skills to be able to stay sober. Without this help I would not have made it this far in my recovery process. I am so thankful for this oppertunity for a second chance for a better life. So please consider not cutting this money from these programs, I and many other people need and count on these services. Without them I would be in a very bad place in life instead of doing so good like now.

Thank you for your time,
Anna Campbell

907-440-1931

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Anthony J. Cravalho <anthony.cravalho@maniilaq.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 6:20 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Cc: Rep. Benjamin Nageak
Subject: Proposed Cuts to BHS - \$8.3 million

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Good Afternoon,

My name is Anthony Cravalho and I am a single father of a 14 year old autistic son living in Kotzebue.

I am reaching out to you today to address how the proposed budget cuts will affect my community and Maniilaq Association.

1. Community based services can mean the difference between providing a child with autism the needed supports within his own home and community among his own family and friends, or sending him to a facility in Texas for expensive residential treatment provided by strangers. It can mean the difference between seeing a mental health therapist in your own village or involuntary acute care in Alaska Psychiatric institute. One way or another these people will end up in services but Community based services can mean the difference between inclusion or exile for the people of the Northwest Arctic.

Every one of those \$8,368,800 proposed dollars cut will directly affect a man, woman or child potentially in crisis. I urge you to maintain the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health and Social Services budget as the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

2. Maniilaq Behavioral Health Services is located in the Northwest Arctic Region in remote Alaska. The main hub is in Kotzebue with residence of about 3000. We provide services to 11 outlying smaller villages whose occupants can range from 120 up to about 900 people. I am sure you are aware and have hopefully acknowledged the statistics provided by the epidemiology department that show how our region has some of the highest rates of substance abuse, Traumatic Brain Injury, domestic violence, suicide, and mental health concerns. The Maniilaq Behavioral Health program is the sole provider in the region with no road system and is tasked with providing support to all of the individuals in the northwest arctic region. To date we service about

200-350 clients each year, this includes substance abuse/dependence, mental health, medication management, wellness to include issues dealing with suicide and providing support to families and the communities.

If these cuts are made Maniilaq BHS will be affected and forced to send people out for services. The closest acute behavioral health facilities are located in Anchorage Alaska. So you see, by cutting cost in one area you are actually raising costs in another. I again urge you to maintain the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health and Social Services budget as the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

3. **Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative**

In FY14, we are seeking annualized funding to ensure that the consultation and training services of the Complex Behavior Collaborative continue to be available for caregivers and providers, and the individuals they serve. People with disabilities are at a higher risk for experiencing complex and difficult-to-manage behaviors. People with disabilities include those with developmental and intellectual disabilities, behavioral health disorders, Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia, autism, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc.) Alaskan service providers report they lack adequate intensive support and intervention services for clients with complex behaviors. Caregivers and providers who are not equipped with specialized behavior management skills struggle because they are not always able to handle those in their care with challenging behaviors. When caregivers are given tools through consultation and training the individuals they serve are more likely to stabilize and avoid being sent to more costly institutional care—such as Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API), incarceration, nursing homes, or out-of-state residential treatment.

I please ask you to found the Complex Behavior Collaborative for FY 14 as they are working with the hardest cases in Alaska and helping people like a 14 year old girl stay in her home community instead of being sent out of state.

4. The House labor subcommittee on finance eliminated the \$100,000 that was put in by the Governor for Centers for Independent Living. Independent Living Services are very important to helping people with disabilities and elders remain independent and stay in their homes and in their communities. I please ask you to put back the \$100,000 for Centers for Independent Living.

Thank You

Anthony J. Cravalho

Maniilaq Association | Assistant Director of Planning & Development

Address P.O. Box 256 Kotzebue, Alaska 99752 | **PH** 907-442-7636

TOLL FREE 1-800-478-3321 | **Email** anthony.cravalho@maniilaq.org | **Website** www.maniilaq.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Susan Bouterse <smason@bouterse.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 6:18 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: House H&SS Budget Subcommittee proposed funding cuts for behavioral health services

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

March 6, 2013

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposed \$8.3 million reduction to behavioral health services. While I understand and appreciate the legislature's need to ensure a balanced budget and to ensure the state's fiscal viability, I am dismayed at the idea of doing so by cutting vital services to some of our most vulnerable community members. Just a few of the services that would be impacted include:

- Mental health and substance abuse treatment
- Services for children with severe emotional disturbance
- Suicide prevention
- Services for people experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault
- Supported housing programs
- Programs focusing on prevention and early intervention

I have worked in the health care field for 30 years and 16 of those years have been in Alaska. Much of my work has been with vulnerable populations such as the mentally ill. I've seen the irreparable damage that institutionalization does to people, and I've witnessed the impact of mental illness on family members. I've also seen way too often how the lack of adequate community mental health services results in the criminalization of mentally ill individuals. And it's a foregone conclusion that, if services are not available for individuals in crisis, they and their families are going to seek emergency room treatment, the most expensive and definitely less effective option than ongoing, consistent care.

I would urge the legislature to work with the State, funders and community partners to identify solutions to the growing mental health crisis in this state and in this nation. These proposed funding cuts will have devastating impacts on our communities, on these vulnerable populations and on their families.

I appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Susan Mason-Bouterse

9891 Puffin Drive

Palmer, AK 99645

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Philip Licht <philip@setfreealaska.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 6:05 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Behavioral Health Budget Cut

Dear State Representative,

I have recently been made aware of your intention to reduce the Behavioral Health budget. Unfortunately, I was unable to participate in public comment this afternoon, however, I am compelled to urge you to reconsider this cut. As an individual in recovery myself, I know first-hand the damage that drugs and alcohol can cause. Without services to help the individuals in our state whose lives are being destroyed, their chances of long-term recovery are very slim. In addition to being in recovery myself, I am also a leader in the health & social services field. I am the Executive Director of Set Free Alaska, an agency who provides substance abuse treatment to over 320 individuals in the Mat-Su every year. I also serve our community on the Health & Social Services Board, the Substance Abuse Coalition Steering Committee, and am the Vice-Chair of the Mat-Su Agency Partnership. I have witnessed the turnaround in countless individual's lives that leads them to become a healthy and productive member of society once again. Drug and alcohol addiction is an epidemic in our state that we cannot ignore, it is destroying our families and the next generation to come. A 2008 survey that the Substance Abuse Coalition conducted discovered that over 25% of high school juniors reported misusing prescription pain medication. With opioid abuse on the rise, cutting funding is not a decision that will lead to long-term health and productivity of those you represent.

Although our people must remain the primary motivation as they are our most precious resource, I would like to also remind you of the economic benefits of treatment. A McDowell Group report estimated that drug and alcohol abuse cost our state \$1.2 billion in 2010. According to a 2011 SAMHSA report, for every \$1 spent on treatment, we save the tax payer \$7.46. In addition, a recent Senate bill (56) introduced by Fred Dyson states that our prison rates have risen over 94% since 2005 with the average cost being over \$50,000 per inmate. With the majority of our prisoners being non-violent drug and alcohol offenders, it is clear that substance abuse is costing our state a lot of money. According to our current per inmate prison cost, treatment in our state would only need to successfully keep 166 individuals out of prison over a one-year period to pay for the \$8.3 million in suggested cuts. This does not take into consideration all the other expenses our state is incurring due to loss of productivity, welfare services for family members of those incarcerated, etc.

I realize that the Health & Social Services budget is huge, however, it also is saving our state money through the services provided. Cutting \$8.3 million would provide for a short-term reduction in our budget which would lead to a greater long-term expense incurred. In 1996 I was on felony probation for breaking & entering, a crime which was related to drug and alcohol addiction. My life was heading towards long-term problems both

personally and with the criminal justice system. I am very certain that had I not entered recovery, I would be in jail today. Based on our current prison cost, my hypothetical 17 years of prison could have cost the state \$850,000. This is only a fraction of the total cost when you factor in all the productive activities and engagement I have had in our state during that period of time. Our Health & Social Services are making a difference in the lives of our people. Please reconsider this budget cut of \$8.3 million. Our residents who are struggling, their families, our communities, and our state economics will suffer if this cut is made.

Sincerely,

Philip Licht

Executive Director

Set Free Alaska

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Alan Batten <alanbatten@acsalaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 5:51 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mia Costello; Representative Bryce Egmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Mark Neuman; Representative Bill Stoltze; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Education budget, Behavioral Health Services budget

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Representatives:

I hope it is not too late to contact you before these bills leave your committee.

I urge you to reinstate the proposed cuts of \$5.7 million from the Governor's education budget and the \$8.3 million from the Behavioral Health Services budget. Education is of primary importance to the future of our state. If we don't care enough about our state to optimize educational opportunities for our children it will not bode well for us down the road. I am proud of the teachers we have in our state who put in long hours with little recognition and sometimes pay for classroom supplies out of their own pockets. We should give them all the resources they need to do the job well. I would argue that the Governor's education budget should be enlarged, not cut. It has been basically flat for 3-5 years now, while the price of heating fuel and other infrastructure costs have risen dramatically. The pre-K pilot program that is being cut has received good reviews and needs to be expanded, not cut. The "Best Beginnings" and other programs marked for cuts have also received high marks from parents and educators and need to be retained.

I understand that the funds cut from the Behavioral Health Services budget would have gone to support community-based social service programs directed toward a wide variety of social problems, including substance abuse and suicide (two issues that account for huge costs in grief, pain and money in our state). There are many more such issues. Establishing preemptive programs in our communities are much more effective and economical than ignoring problems until the people involved wind up in jails or hospitals. Social workers are another component of our State infrastructure that work very hard under extremely difficult and stressful circumstances. We need to at least provide them with adequate resources.

Thank you.

Alan Batten
946 Smallwood Trail
Fairbanks, AK 99712-3122

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Mikayla Spiers <Mikayla2@ayfn.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 5:49 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: Budget Reduction

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Mikayla Spiers

601 E 16th Ave Apt A5

Anchorage, AK 99501

3/6/13

Dear Rep. ,

It has come to my attention that there is an \$8.3 million reduction being planned for Behavioral Health Services. I would strongly like to urge you to reconsider this cut. While we do need to start spending money more frugally, I honestly do not think this is the area that should be under revision. I am by no means an expert in funding, or running a government, nor am I an expert in behavioral health; however I do have experience with the behavioral health system.

My mother has benefitted greatly from peer support, peer navigation, substance abuse and mental health treatment. She has lived a difficult life, both due to circumstances and because of choices she made. Many would have said that she was unfit to be a mother when she had me, many DID say that. I can tell you without a doubt that she is a fantastic mother to this day, but the people that said otherwise would have been very right if she hadn't had access to the services she did. There are countless other cases with similar results. The services you are thinking of reducing funds for are things that can help make society all the more productive. It is these services that are giving those that thought they didn't have a chance the will to live.

It is these services and supports that allow people that have been dealt a bad hand in life to shuffle the cards and try again. They keep youth off the streets, mothers of eight sane, addicts clean and suicidal people ALIVE for their friends and families to appreciate all those extra years. They help keep people out of jails, and out of state-funded institutionalized care. These services are what are keeping society, as a whole, functioning on an acceptable level of balance. Without them, the balance will fall, and there will be chaos. Please reconsider reducing the budget for Behavioral Health Services; I fear what society will become without them.

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

Mikayla Spiers

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Elizabeth Ripley <eripley@healthymatsu.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 5:47 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: RE: House Finance Committee: Budget
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear House Finance Members:

The Mat-Su Health Foundation is a 501c3 that owns part of the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center. We invest revenues from our local hospital into grants to make measurable improvements in the health status of Mat-Su residents.

The Foundation invests in local and state level coalitions working on health-related issues, including three working on substance abuse prevention: Mat-Su THRIVE (the Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition) working at the borough level; Recover Alaska, funded by Rasmuson, AMHTA and MSHF to significantly increase the effectiveness of our efforts to address substance abuse at the state level; and the Alaska Wellness Coalition, whose members comprise substance abuse prevention coalitions across the state, from Mat-Su and Anchorage to Kenai, Valdez, Prince of Wales, Seward, Homer, Yakutat, Tanana and many other communities. The AK Wellness Coalition holds that substance abuse needs to be addressed in both the community and state arenas through environmental strategies, concrete efforts to change the actual environment or culture of our community so that it supports healthy children, adults and families. Sound public policy on alcohol is an environmental strategy. The State DBH and mental health budgets are part of this policy.

Mat-Su THRIVE has documented through the 2008 Alaska Healthy Kids Survey (AHKS) that by the time Mat-Su students are in 11th grade, 68% of them have used alcohol. This is the highest use rate of any substance by Mat-Su youth. The 2011 YRBS shows that 15% of Mat-Su high schoolers have been binge on alcohol in the last 30 days compared to 22% of high schoolers statewide, so we're doing considerably better in Mat-Su. Alcohol use has become a rite of passage for our children—it is becoming the way we usher them into adulthood. We have to change the model and make investments upstream in prevention and early intervention, treatment and family supports.

The AK Wellness Coalition aims to change the way we talk about this issue statewide. We're designing a statewide positive community norms campaign to combat substance abuse. The Recover Alaska plan and

several state funded plans support this statewide media strategy, including the *AK Statewide Plan to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking*. Research conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on tobacco messaging has demonstrated how effective and critical public awareness campaigns are to reducing substance abuse. Through the AK Wellness Coalition, the substance abuse coalitions across the state are collaborating, instead of working separately. We're conserving resources and maximizing our reach with messaging that goes from the macro state level to the micro community level.

A recent report found that the impact of alcohol and drug abuse in AK in 2010 was approximately 1.2B. In the FY13 budget, the legislature made a special appropriation of \$9M over three years to tackle substance abuse with evidence-based strategies. The AK Wellness Coalition was awarded \$600K over the next three years to conduct this campaign. We understand that even these appropriated funds are in jeopardy at this point—even the few like ours that has been awarded. The Mat-Su Health Foundation has invested \$50K this year and plans additional investments, but we did so with the understanding that the State was a critical funder of this work. Other prominent funders are considering investing in the project as well.

An investment in the state mental health budget is just that—an investment. This is an intelligent investment that reduces demand over time. We urge you to look closely at what you cut and ensure that it does not create more costs and harm more lives. And we urge you to support efforts like this statewide campaign where communities have come together to collaborate, use dollars efficiently, and improve the chances that kids across Alaska are not harmed by alcohol. **We ask for your support in preserving DHSS/DBH funding in the budget to be allocated towards innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention projects.**

Elizabeth Ripley, Executive Director

Mat-Su Health Foundation

950 E. Bogard Road, Ste. 218

Wasilla, AK 99654

(907) 352-2863

(907) 352-2865 fax

eripley@healthymatsu.org

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Sarah Walters <Sarah2@ayfn.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 5:36 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman
Cc: Amber Hampton
Subject: Budget Cuts

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Sarah Walters

1034 E. 27th Ave.

Anchorage, AK 99508

Dear Rep. Alan Austerman,

I recently recieved notice of an \$8.3 million budget cut. I could sit here and ramble on and on about how many behavioral health services are less expensive than traditional methods of psychiatric treatment and therapy, and are typically more effective, but, honestly, I don't think that will be very effective. Some of the services being cut include peer-to-peer support for children as well as parents, suicide prevention and intervention services, substance abuse treatment and detox services, physical and verbal abuse treatment, detection and prevention as well as sexual assault prevention, detection and treatment, intervention services, family unificaton services, and mental health services for general issues, trauma, abuse, treatment for dual-diagnosis, and even behavioral treatment. AS you can easily see, there are a lot of services that will be effected by this budget cut.

For the past year and a half I have recieved peer-to-peer support services for my depression and daily life struggles. I am currtently in recovery, yet I still have constant relapses. I have purposefully kept myself out of as many systems as I could and only allowed myself to enter into one service willingly, and that has been the greatest decision of my life. I use these services on a nearly day-to-day basis and am now employed by an agency that I whole-heartedly support for it's role in serving the community by providing peer-to-peer support services as well as intervention and prevention services and early detection of many issues that the client-base faces throughout their lives.

If it wasn't for these services, I can't confidently say that I would be here to be e-mailing you today. Every person in my life has either needed these services directly or has been deeply affected (in a good way) by someone who has been changed for the better due to these services. Maybe my single message won't make a difference and what I have to say won't necessarily change your mind or influence your decision... yet I humbly

ask that these budget cuts are reconsidered and thought through at least one more time. The livelihood of tomorrow's leaders depends on you.

Sincerely,

Sarah Walters

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Kristen R. Smith <kristen.smith@maniilaq.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 5:10 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: Re: Proposed Cuts to BHS

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

In response to the State Fiscal Year 2014 Operating Budget: House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services recommendation of cutting over \$8.3 million dollars in general funds for BHS.

Northwest Alaska has a lot of on-going problems, especially regarding mental health and alcohol/ substance abuse. This region has the highest rates of suicide in the nation, as well as extremely high rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault and criminal activity related to alcohol. Cutting programs for mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, suicide prevention, tribal behavioral health services, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault and prevention and early intervention will have a devastating effect on the people who live in the Northwest Alaska region. It will have a devastating effect on the culture, employment rates will drop dramatically and the standard of living will decrease considerably as well.

Please do not cut the funding stream for these types of programs for people who live in such a remote and isolated location! There are no other options for people who live up here, and if you do cut these programs then they will have to fly more than 500 miles away for treatment; and the cost of traveling is extremely high in this area. The people do not have money for this type of thing, so they will either be left untreated and cause distressing community problems or the State will end up picking up the cost for traveling out and that is extremely expensive...a lot more expensive than funding these programs in the long run.

Kristen Smith

Lead Planner/Grant Writer

Planning & Development

Maniilaq Association

P. O. Box 256

Kotzebue, AK 99752

Phone: (907) 442-7634

Fax: (907) 442-7678

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Al and Barb Home <alanbarb@acsalaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 4:51 PM
To: Sen. Gary Stevens; Rep. Alan Austerman
Subject: tv movie office

Good afternoon

The other day I saw one of your members saying he was entering a bill to remove funding for TV and movie productions. He probably thinks that it is a waste of money unless you live in Anchorage. But I think that is short-sighted, there are many TV productions all over the State. Here in Kodiak I know of several that taped last Summer and there is currently 3 working this Winter. Who knows if their efforts will ever make it to broadcast but for now they are renting rooms, buying gas and groceries. I am not sure whether they would be here without that extra incentive. Please think this over if that bill comes across your desks .

Thank you for your time

Barbara Large

Rep. Alan Austerman

From: drendatigner@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 4:50 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman

Dear Rep. Austerman,

The House Finance Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services did not add funding for continuation of the Complex Behavior Collaborative, as requested by the Trust and partner advisory boards. The Key Coalition of Alaska is requesting the Alaska Legislature include \$450,000 funding to continue necessary services provided by the CBC in the Fiscal Year 14 budget.

In addition, please continue to work to restore the funding for services to the most fragile Alaskans, children, seniors and the mentally ill.

Thank you for your dedication and Hard work. I appreciate all you and your staff do for us.

Drenda Tigner

Chief Executive Officer

Presbyterian Hospitality House

209 Forty Mile Avenue

Fairbanks, Ak 99701

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Rep. Alan Austerman

From: Jerry Cleworth <jcleworth@ci.fairbanks.ak.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2013 4:27 PM
To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Bob Herron; Rep. Doug Isaacson; Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep.Dan.Saddler@ak.leg.gov; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Pete Higgins; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Lora Reinbold; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Tammie Wilson
Subject: House Operating Budget
Attachments: DOC001.PDF

Honorable House Members:

Please see the attached letter regarding the House Operating Budget.

Sincerely,

Mayor Jerry Cleworth
City of Fairbanks
907.459.6784