



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Health & Social Services

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES  
& SPECIAL EDUCATION  
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February 27, 2013

Senator Anna Fairclough  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol Building, Room 514  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: SB 37 Extending the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council

Dear Senator Fairclough,

Thank you for sponsoring SB 37, which would extend the termination date of the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council (SSPC) until 2019.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the Council) advocates for change that improves the lives of individuals with disabilities. One of the roles of the Council is to serve as Alaska's State Council on Developmental Disabilities to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities receive the supports and services they need.

The Council recognizes that suicide has been a tragic issue for Alaskans for many years and supports SB 37, which will extend the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council. The SSPC works with the state to find ways to improve Alaskan's health and wellness, educate the public about suicide and its risk factors in an effort to reduce the number of suicides in our state. The SSPC hosted a suicide prevention summit, established regional suicide prevention teams, works with the Department of Education and Early Development to assist school districts in providing evidenced based prevention programs in local schools.

The Council commends this effort to prevent suicide in Alaska. The Council recognizes that the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council is a valuable part of Alaska's efforts to reduce and prevent suicide. The Council strongly supports SB 37 extending the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Gebhart".

Eric Gebhart  
Council Chair

*Creating Change That Improves the Lives of People with Disabilities*