

**Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc.**  
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January 11, 2016

Senator Bill Stoltze  
 Alaska Capitol, Room 125  
 Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Stoltze:

I am writing this letter on behalf of recommending Legislation on reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging for eight more years, and support of SB124.

The Alaska Commission on Aging satisfied a requirement of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA). States receiving OAA funding are required to have an advisory council that

- ✓ Must be comprised of older individuals eligible to participate in OAA-funded programs;
- ✓ Advises the "state unit on aging" regarding matters of aging issues. In Alaska, The Department of Health & Social Services is the state unit on aging as designated by the Governor. The Alaska Commission on Aging serves as the advisory council to DHSS and satisfies this federal requirement.

Alaska is receiving almost \$11 million dollars in Federal OAA funding in FY2016 thanks to its compliance with the Older Americans Act.

The Alaska Commission on Aging develops the comprehensive Alaska State Plan on Senior Services, makes recommendations on legislation and appropriations beneficial for older Alaskans, and provides education/outreach regarding matters related to aging.

The Alaska Commission on Aging also serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and advises the AMHTA on needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related Dementias. The Commission, in partnership with the AMHTA and other agencies published Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015). The Commission also makes recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs for Senior Trust Beneficiaries (older people

with dementia and other cognitive impairments) and the use of funds that benefit this vulnerable population.

The Alaska Commission on Aging services as an advocate and educator regarding the needs of Alaska's older people to help ensure the dignity, health, safety, and independence of Alaska's seniors and to assist them in leading useful and meaningful lives.

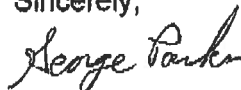
Legislative Audit conducted a sunset audit of the Commission in 2015, concluding that the Commission is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent and useful lives, and that the Commission meets the federal requirement or each state to establish an advisory council to advise the state on matters related to aging.

The Commission's FY2016 budget is \$542,700 (\$45.9 GF; \$348.1 Interagency Receipts that include federal pass-through funds; \$29.6 GF/MH; and \$119.1 MHTAAR). The Commission consists of eleven seats and has a staff of four full-time employees.

The Alaska Commission on Aging was established in 1981 under AS47.45.200-.290, and is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2016 under AS 44.66.010(a)(4). The proposed legislation would amend AS.66.010(a)(4) to extend the Commission's sunset date by eight years to June 30, 2024.

The Alaska Commission Aging is a vital partner of Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc., in its mission in providing year-round, well-designed, programs and services that help support the health, well-being and independence of Alaska seniors. We would highly recommend that Legislation for the Alaska Commission on Aging be a top priority to extend its sunset date through June 20, 2024.

Sincerely,



George Parks  
President