

From: [Young, Hilary](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Funding Cuts to DV/SA Prevention Programs
Date: Wednesday, April 01, 2015 11:58:47 AM

Good Morning State Senators,

I am writing today to urge you to restore the 1.5 million cuts to domestic violence / sexual assault (DV/SA) prevention funding. I was born and raised in Juneau, Alaska. I left Juneau for college and earned both my bachelors and masters in social work. I came back to Juneau and acquire my clinical degree as a social worker. Today I am writing on behalf of the Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition (JSPC) and Juneau Violence Prevention Coalition (JVPC) as I am a member of both.

The JSPC recently completed a needs assessment that indicates trauma - including DV/SA - is a major contributing factor to suicide. As most of us know, Alaska ranks towards the top of the list for a lot of bad things - alcohol and drug abuse, depression, suicide. DV/SA are also part of this list. Among the 50 states, Alaska ranks #1 for child sexual abuse.

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study was completed between 1995 - 1997 and published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It measure the ACE among 17,000 people and found a link between ACE and chronic health conditions such as: alcoholism, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, risk for intimate partner violence, smoking, liver disease etc. The study has proven that the more ACE you have, the more likely you are to develop these negative health outcomes. However, having ACE does not guarantee the development of these. It does put someone at a much higher risk. Resiliency has been shown to lower this risk. Programs like Lead-On, Girls on the Run, Sources of Strength help to develop the resiliency needed to off set the ACE often experienced in Alaska.

I *know* that the state needs to make funding cuts. But, I also *know* that cutting these types of funds will lead to additional costs later as the effects of the ACE manifest through addiction, suicide, and chronic diseases. I do not envy the position you are in as I understand that everyone is asking you to keep their programs. Therefore I am asking you to restore funding to this program but also offering you an alternative to help offset the costs. I suggest that the state looks at ways to increase revenue instead of just looking at making cuts. We are in such a deficit that we need to find additional ways to increase revenue. Just as restoring these funds is probably 1/10th of the budget deficit, adding some sort of income tax might help cover some of those costs. It wont fix the budget, but its a start and might prevent us from cutting programs that will have both negative and lasting impacts.

De-funding prevention efforts will cost the state more money in the long run. As a society, we tend to be reactionary. I am asking you to make a shift to be proactive. A colleague once told me that prevention wont happen if we do not carve out time and money (I added the money part). If we want to prevent domestic violence, sexual assault, and suicide for Alaskans, which I think *everyone* does - we *need* to carve out *time and money*. As an Alaskan I agree to carve out the time, if you will help with carving out money.

Sincerely,
Hilary Young, LCSW
Juneau Suicide Prevention Coalition

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