

House Finance Committee

Public Testimony HB 69 – Operating Budget FY22

Emails received to
HouseFinance@akleg.gov

April 9, 2021
PART 1

From: Afcan, Angelica D <adafcan@anthc.org>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:34 AM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB69, HB71 public testimony

Dear Representatives Neal Foster and Kelly Merrick, and to the rest of the House Finance committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Angelica Afcan and I am a TWC board member.

Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut by **34%** starting in FY2022. This will have devastating impacts across Alaska. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

I'm here to stand for the domestic violence victims and their children who have no place to go, who feel stuck, and who need somewhere to heal and grow.

Without the proper funding, shelters like TWC, Emmonak Women's Shelter, and others will not be able to be there for our communities.

We are reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. I see firsthand the importance these life-saving supports offered to victims. Please help us in community by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Sincerely,

Angelica Afcan

[REDACTED]

907-[REDACTED]

From: Louis Imbriani <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:33 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB-69

Co-Chair Foster, Co-Chair Merrick, and Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Louis Imbriani, and I am an Eagle River Resident. I am writing to you regarding HB-69. I am writing on behalf of myself and I am not representing any special interest groups or organizations.

I had the opportunity to speak with Representative Merrick at the Eagle River Community Council Meeting on 4/8/2021. She had mentioned that the Permanent Fund may be in a separate bill. I do see it in the budget. I wanted to speak briefly about the PFD for this year. This year more than ever people need money in their hands.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has disproportionately impacted Alaskans. By paying the full PFD based on the original formula and paying Alaskans back for the PFD fund that were capped in previous years is needed. It is needed because there are those who need the money to pay bills and for those that don't need to pay bills, they will have more money to spend here in the community and supporting the struggling businesses.

Most businesses haven't recovered from last year's lack of tourists and this season is not looking much better. This is a year where recovery is needed, and the people of Alaska need the support. This is an excellent opportunity to give this much needed support. I know that you can find a way to fund the PFD while keeping the fund strong for future gains.

The previous year's cap on the PFD needs to go away. The cap on the PFD is a tax, and it is a disproportionate tax. Every PFD is taxed at the same rate with the cap. This means that a 6-year-old living in Bethel is getting taxed at the same rate as a Doctor in Anchorage.

The other issue that I wanted to bring up is pay for state employees. I know that each bargaining unit negotiates its contract there has been a deprotonate willingness to negotiate. This disparity is setting up Alaska for failure. The State relies on certain positions more than others to best serve the state. Two of the most neglected areas are the ones that Alaska heavily relies on.

These two areas are "middle management" and Judicial Services. The group of state workers that make up "Middle Management" are the ones that help implement any policy that comes from upper/executive management. Without these state employees the vision that these departments have cannot be properly executed. Anyone who has served in the Military can tell you that the Sergeants carry the largest load. These groups of workers are our Sergeants.

Judicial Services and their Court Service Officers are the driver behind the courts. They transport people awaiting trial or court hearings too and from the jails and courthouses. While they are a part of the Department of Public Safety their compensation is out of sync with their counterparts. There has been a premium put on recruiting, training, and paying Alaska State Troopers a Competitive wage. While judicial services have been put on the back burner.

These officers go through the same training as the troopers and they generally have the same abilities yet are compensated at significantly lower rates. The court systems are already overwhelmed. The Courts rely on these officers to bring people waiting trial to them. Without them being fully staffed the court can't operate at its capacity causing a further back up in an already overwhelmed system. This puts an individual's right to a speedy trial in already further jeopardy. Things were tough before the pandemic and are going to be even harder while we recover from the pandemic.

However, if we do not take care of these two groups then we will just be digging a deeper hole. The Governor pitched creating a new department by splitting DHSS in two. This would have created more executive or exempt positions. The idea to do this wouldn't have been there if there wasn't funding available.

I would suggest that we use the money that was intended for those positions in the split of DHSS to fund those sections of state government workers. I would also suggest reallocating some funds that can be used from the American Recovery Act to fund a full PFD and make Alaskans "whole" from previous years.

Thank you

Louis Imbriani

From: Brennan Cain <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:26 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Chris La Forest <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:51 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject:

Dear Co-Chairs Foster , Merrick, and all members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to you about a cut to a federal funding stream that has a dire consequence for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA)

receives federal funding from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Victim service agencies were just informed that they would be facing 30% cuts because of cuts to VOCA which will slash funding for core services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

I support Abused Women's Aid In Crisis (AWAIC) in Anchorage. AWAIC is the only emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence in our community. Due to COVID they have already had to reduce services to victims in the community. This cut will drastically reduce the funding they receive to maintain basic services for those they serve who are among the most vulnerable in our community.

I am asking that the legislature use general funds to make up for the loss of this federal funding. It is critical that we maintain our services for the safety of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Sincerely,
Chris La Forest

From: Dayle Sherba <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:03 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Alice Rooney <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 7:57 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Wrangell DFYS position

TO: Co-chairs Foster and Merrick and members of the House Finance Committee:

I missed the time set for Wrangell testimony on April 8 so am submitting this email.

I was the state social worker serving Wrangell in a full-time position from 1982 to 1990. I continue to live in Wrangell and am now retired.

I was called at times to travel to Petersburg, Kake, and remote areas to provide services there in addition to my Wrangell caseload. In my experience, it is very difficult to investigate, evaluate, and monitor child abuse and neglect complaints when you are not a resident of the

community. In these situations, you may rely on only 2 or 3 sources of information rather than the larger body of information you would have from better knowledge of the community. This leads to less nuanced judgements and actions, some of which have dramatic outcomes for children. Do you remove the child to foster care or set up a network of support to maintain the child in the home? Do you understand the family dynamics and how other relatives can step in with support? If a community has no local social worker, interventions tend to be delayed until a situation escalates and requires more severe remediation.

I strongly support the request to fund Wrangell having a resident social work position. The families of Wrangell will be much better served. It's cost-effective as well. The availability of a resident social worker can result in less expensive and disruptive services (such as though the juvenile justice system) in subsequent years.

Thank you.

Alice H. Rooney, MSW

[REDACTED]

Wrangell, Alaska 99929

From: Jacob Powell <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:55 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Jacob Powell

From: Leanne Peace <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:22 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Leanne Peace

From: Jennifer Hampton <Jennifer_Hampton@ykhc.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 11:30 PM
To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>
Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: TWC Victims of Crime Support

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Jennifer Hampton and I am representing myself today as a member of the Bethel community and a supporter of Tundra Women's Coalition.

Thank you to Representative Merrick and the Department of Public Safety subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. I recently learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts for Tundra Women's Coalition and for survivors of domestic violence across Alaska. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

I work as a pediatrician at the local regional hospital, and see firsthand the importance of their services to those in our community who have been victim to domestic violence. They serve a great purpose in helping them by providing a safe place to stay, encouraging healthy home habits, support during a time of transition, amongst many other services. They have provided help for many of my patients' mothers when they had no other options.

Please help us in Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session. Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. During the stress caused by COVID, the incidence has likely increased as I have seen more children in my practice who have fallen victim to abuse. Now is not the time to cut these services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jennifer Hampton, MD
Pediatrician
Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation
Post Office Box 287, Bethel, AK 99559
www.ykhc.org

From: Kristi Ellsworth <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 11:11 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Alice Hisamoto <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 10:26 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Please find an effective way to continue to provide essential funding to AWAIC and the other victim service agencies across AK. so these services can continue to save lives and provide the essential resources, including safe shelter and transitional services to Alaska's most vulnerable members of the community.

Thank you very much!

Most sincerely,

Alice Hisamoto

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Alice Hisamoto, M.Ed., CPCC

From: Holly Herring <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 10:18 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Think about the women in your life. If they needed a place to go, I would hope it would be available.

Holly Herring

[REDACTED]

Chugiak, AK

From: Jeri Cunningham <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 9:25 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Jeri Cunningham

From: Jessica Jule <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 9:05 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding. This is a travesty to the state of Alaska and the victims of abuse.

Jessica Jule

From: Donovan Russoniello <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:58 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

Dear AK House Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Sincerely,
Donovan Russoniello

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:53 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

Hello!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Reduction in funding and access to services could be life threatening in many situations. As you consider funding decisions, both with the current state budget and the massive rescue funds coming to the state I urge the legislature to prioritize funding to address domestic violence in our state. Our budget and allocations reflect our values, and we have been at the top of the leader board for violence to women and children statistic too long. Let's find a way to collaborate and allocate funds more intentionally to change that.

Thank you!

Michele Girault

Anchorage

From: J D <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:16 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you. - Julia Dewey MD

From: Princesskay Muzic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:13 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Karen Ruud <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:08 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Many of our fellow citizens of AK know someone , or we are one ourselves, who is a victim of domestic violence, including any of you who are our representatives. Vote for our vulnerable fellow citizens!

Karen Ruud, Anchorage

From: Vickie Scuderi <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:05 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: cheryl konter <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 8:03 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Travis King Weaver <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 7:56 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

As a physician in Alaska, I am acutely aware of the high levels of domestic violence in our state and its impacts on my patients. I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Travis King Weaver, MD

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Travis King Weaver, MD

[REDACTED]

From: Barbara Johnson <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 7:56 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Funding for DV Shelters

Dear Representatives Foster and Merrick and members of the House finance committee,

I wanted to share my concerns about the proposed cuts to DV shelters across the state. Alaska has the highest rate of DV and sexual assault in the nations, and the DV shelters offer a lifeline to many people in our state.

The proposed funding cuts would force shelters to:

1. Discontinue Sexual Assault Response to exams
2. Outsource 24hr helpline
3. Reduced advocacy staff
4. Reduce the number of victims shelters are able to provide services to
5. Reduce the amount of services shelters can provide to victims

Shelters in Alaska are already underfunded and do a superhuman job with very limited resources. The cuts would be a death sentence for some of their clients.

I know from my personal experience how important these services are. When I was assaulted, an advocate from AWAIC met me at the hospital, asked me if I needed a hug and gave me one on the day of my life I needed it the most. AWAIC advocates helped me navigate the VCCB process, filing a report with the troopers, dispute hospital billing mistakes and connected me with a therapist when I had no health insurance. I could not have faced these challenges alone.

To stop the awful DV/SA cycle, we need more services, not less. It is imperative that the State of Alaska find funds to, at a minimum, cover the federal funding cuts.

Thank you,

Barbara Johnson

From: Nava <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 7:59 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Action required

To Whom it May Concern

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Take care
Nava Sarracino
Anchorage

From: Sue May <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 7:27 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

I have worked with both male and female victims of domestic violence and know that sometimes their and their children's safety and very lives hang on the slenderest of threads. Cutting funding for AWAIC is tantamount to endangering those threads. The pandemic has made responding to domestic violence even more critical, as victims may be forced to remain in the presence of their abusers and have more limited options when they are in danger. It is also fair to say that every element of families in crisis is even more fraught, with the social and economic constraints relating to the pandemic. AWAIC has done amazing work over the years, and cutting their already slim staffing level is the wrong move.

Respectfully,
Sue Ellen May
Eagle River

From: Sue May <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 7:21 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Operating and Mental Health Budgets

Legislators on the Finance Committee:

While these two issues seem to be very different, they have many similarities and are highly deserving of robust funding. My grandpa used to say, "If you care about something, you take care of it." That is certainly the case with an Operating Budget. Whatever entities are funded and put into place, they will need funds for successful operation.

In a similar way, full funding of Mental Health resources is taking care of Alaskans, the folks who pay the taxes and who sent you to do the business of the people. The pandemic has overlaid a crisis on top of an already dire mental health picture in our state. Our citizens are in pain. I have worked in mental health in the past, as a therapist, a victim advocate and suicide prevention officer. It is not news to anyone that our state has unacceptably high rates of abuse and suicide, and trauma that reaches into the past for some of us. We need all of the stakeholders on board, and the State must take the lead in establishing, continuing and improving mental health resources.

Respectfully,
Sue Ellen May
Eagle River

From: Jean Tanaka <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:58 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

With great concern,
Jean Tanaka

From: Peggy McGarry <[REDACTED].com>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:55 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies

who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Susan Schapira <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:49 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

Hello,

I am writing to ask that you help fill the anticipated gap in FY22 funding for services providing care for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Alaska is unfortunately #1 in such reported abuse. We cannot afford to NOT fund programs like AWAIC. Surely some of the money Alaska is receiving from President Biden's stimulus package can be directed to these essential programs!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.
Susan Schapira
Anchorage resident since 1976
Zip: 99517

From: Anne Schaefer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:45 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>
Subject: House Finance Committee Hearings Testimony

Dear Co-chairs Foster and Merrick and House Finance Committee,

I have worked and lived in Cordova, Alaska for 7 years and have served on the city council for 3 years now. My comments are my own.

First, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on the State's FY22 Operating and Capital Budgets.

I am writing to urge you to fully fund the Cordova Family Resource Center (CFRC). Currently, the CFRC is facing a 30-34% reduction to their FY22 budget (which is included under the Public Safety Budget,

Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault). CFRC is an important asset to the Cordova community. They provide direct services and emergency shelter to victims of violence and sexual assault, as well as provide programming for youth of all ages. If this funding cut is implemented, they will be forced to cut staff, services, and programming at a time when these services have been increasingly needed.

I would also ask that you fully fund School Bond Debt reimbursement. Reduction in those funds over the past couple years has placed a huge burden on our municipal budget. I was heartened to see this item funded in the Governor's budget, and would like to see it fully funded by the legislature.

Finally, I urge you to fund the Harbor Matching Grant Program for the Cordova harbor project. Upgrading the Cordova Harbor is the top priority for the City of Cordova and has been the #1 project on the Harbor Matching Grant program's list for several years. Unfortunately, funding has never been included in the final and approved Capital Budget. Our harbor is the backbone of our economy here in Cordova, providing jobs and revenue to the City as well as to the State of Alaska. This project will fund essential repairs to a year-round, heavily-used harbor.

Thank you for all your efforts!

Anne Schaefer

[REDACTED]

Cordova, AK 99574

From: deborah corso <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:34 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

Greetings,

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Many communities in rural/bush Alaska already lack infrastructure, police or troopers. Alaska's Native women are significantly more vulnerable to domestic violence, sexual assault and death than anywhere else in the county.

Furthermore, it is no secret that the population of the state, while comparatively small to most of the rest of the US, still maintains the vestiges of "Last Frontierism" as evidenced by the excessive exploitation of our natural resources along with a blatant disregard for our most valuable resource - the people that live here and care about each other.

Please reevaluate the blind and senseless push to cut funding that is critical to protect and sustain our women, children, elders, and other members of our communities. All the bloated corporations and private entities that come here and skim the fat off of our state are somehow permitted generous tax

cuts that enrich them... yet the folks who just exist here are left in constant trauma, debt and struggles resulting from the cruelty and greed of outside interests.

Perhaps it is time for the governmental power-brokers to do the right thing and reconfigure priorities. You can't just allow outside interests to come here and exploit the perceived pristine beauty as they cut/kill/dig/drill - and not be held even marginally accountable for the deep and often multi-generational trauma that this agenda has resulted in for Alaskans.

REFUND VOCA. PRIORITIZE VAWA. HUMANIZE ALL PEOPLE - ESPECIALLY ALASKA NATIVE AND INDIGENOUS WOMEN.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Very truly yours,

Deborah Corso

From: Kira Bradford <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:14 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: alicia aho <a[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 6:00 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Alicia Aho

From: Kimberly Frensley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:55 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: sam tocchini <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:49 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

THANK YOU,
Samantha Tocchini

From: William Sedlac <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:39 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result

in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Michael D Wilson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:26 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you,
Michael Wilson

From: Michelle DeWitt <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:23 PM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>
Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69: DV/SA services in Alaska

Representative Foster, Representative Merrick and members of the HFIN committee:

I am reaching out to ensure you are aware of the sudden crisis facing Alaska's domestic violence and sexual assault programs. A decrease in the upcoming distribution of Alaska's federal VOCA funding, combined with recent historical VOCA decreases, led to an announcement last week that Alaska's DV/SA programs are facing a reduction in CDVSA grant funding by more than a third. The true extent of the fiscal damage is unknown while CDVSA conducts an additional review.

I want to thank Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. This latest information about the federal dollars, however, will have devastating impacts across Alaska.

I ask that you **consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.**

This is a big ask given the state's fiscal situation and the challenges we all face, but it is my belief that crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Thank you for your consideration of this crisis facing our already-thin safety net of shelters and advocacy programs across our state.

-Michelle DeWitt

Bethel, AK 99559

From: spring.joshua.a <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:18 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Cc: Sid McCausland <hracanchorage@gmail.com>; Ptery Lieght <yangshenmen@gmail.com>; suzi_p@awaic.org

Subject: Please Do Not Cut FundingTo AWAIC

Greetings,

Earlier today, through the Houseless Resources Advocacy Council, I was informed that AWAIC may be facing a FY22 loss of roughly half a million dollars. I have volunteered for and addressed public policy with AWAIC in the past and have seen their important work first-hand. Having seen the deeds that they perform for this community, I must implore you to fight these budget cuts:

- An investment in AWAIC is an investment in the future of our community. The residents are among the most at-risk families in the entire State. By using our governmental resources to ensure that they do not fall through the cracks, we save ourselves, collectively, from the expense of further familiar collapse down the road.
- I live down the road from this shelter. These streets are no place for families. Because families have specific needs, we need a specific place for them, especially those in distress from previous violence. AWAIC provides such specific and delicate services. We cannot solve the overall homelessness related issues without getting specific about certain groups having certain needs, and AWAIC has this specific need in their sights.
- We here in Anchorage have had so much debate over the buying of new property to house the houseless, yet AWAIC is already here and well-established in this neighborhood. They live quietly and harmoniously with Fairview and have earned every right to remain here.
- I understand that some, or much, of this may be decided on a Federal level. Be that as it may, you in Juneau still have voices that matter and must be heard on this subject. Please do raise a fuss, for your people need you right now.

Thank you for taking a moment to read my letter. If you have the power to help this institution that rescues Alaskan families from the brink, then please put your all into it. I will raise my voice with yours.

All of the very best,

-Joshua Spring

Anchorage Houseless Resources Advocacy Council (member)

From: Nikki Love <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:18 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please continue to support early education

Greetings,

I ask that you please continue to include funding in the state budget for early education programs. Programs like Best Beginnings, Parents as Teachers, Infant Learning, and PreK provide a strong base for our youngest citizens and their families.

I know there is a lack of money right now, so I also ask that you instate an income tax. While not a popular idea, it may be the one that saves us from total collapse.

Thank you for your continued work on these difficult issues.

Kindly,

Mrs Nikki Love
Alaska Native, Grandmother, Homeowner, Voter

From: Evelyn D <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:07 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Not only are women at serious risk, but their children also face risk of injury or death when support services are not available. With increased anxiety and economic concerns because of COVID complications, we need to protect our citizens.

Thank you,
Evelyn DuBois
Anchorage, AK

From: Steve Plichta <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:02 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

We are writing to express our support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. We urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

AWAIC has done such an excellent job providing support for women and children who are victims of domestic violence. Please allow them to continue providing this excellent service that the state is often unable to provide. We will continue to support AWAIC with our charitable contributions. We want the state to continue providing its support to AWAIC, and similar programs.

Respectfully,

Stephen D. Plichta, Jr. MD, LtCol (Ret) USAF and Michelle A. Plichta
Anchorage, AK. 99502

From: JoVonna Schlosser <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:49 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

--

JoVonna Schlosser

[REDACTED]

Website: www.homesinwasilla.com

Alaska Built Real Estate
357 Parks Hwy., #200
Wasilla, AK 99654

From: Pamela Grow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:48 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Trina <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:48 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Best,
Trina Resari-Salao

From: Lisa Whalen <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:45 PM
To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>
Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Comments on HB 69 Operating Budget

Dear Rep. Merrick, Rep. Foster and the House Finance Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments today. My name is Lisa Whalen. I am a member of the Bethel community and an ardent supporter of Tundra Women's Coalition in Bethel.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment over the years to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. We see you and recognize you as strong advocates and consistent funders of victim services. As I'm sure you are aware by now, victim services organizations are in desperate peril across the nation and in Alaska due to a sharp decrease in available VOCA funding for the next two years.

I want to share with you one of the myriad ways I have seen our local domestic violence shelter, Tundra Women's Coalition, save lives in Bethel- and it's not what you might be thinking. I worked at Bethel Regional High School for five years. High school presents difficulties for almost everyone, but there are additional challenges for teenagers in rural Alaska, and resources to share with students to help with coping and resilience are sometimes in very short supply. One of our most consistent and dependable resources, however, is Teens Acting Against Violence (TAAV), a program at Tundra Women's Coalition that focuses on healthy relationships, empowerment and leadership for teens. Most importantly, though, TAAV is a support system- a family- for teens who sometimes join the group clinging to the fraying ends of their rope. I have seen students who I was genuinely worried wouldn't make it through the year find their place and their voice and their community in TAAV. I am not being at all hyperbolic when I say that I truly believe that TAAV saves lives.

It is for this reason that I implore you to find a way to keep Tundra Women's Coalition fully funded over the next two years until the VOCA Fix is able to step in and relieve the pressure. I absolutely understand that this is a situation that you did not create, but it is one that you have some power to rectify. **Please consider allocating state general funds or American Rescue Plan Act funds (if possible) to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.**

Victim services organizations are the front lines of safety in our communities- in the immediate moment, with crisis lines and emergency shelter, but also over the long haul, with legal services, transitional housing services and violence prevention programs like TAAV. **Thank you for finding a way to keep these essential organizations fully funded and at the ready to serve those in need all across Alaska.**

With my sincerest thanks,

Lisa Whalen

[REDACTED]

From: Meghan Barker <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:39 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Sincerely,
Meghan Barker
Anchorage, AK

April 8, 2021

Co-Chair Representative Foster, Co-Chair Representative Merrick and Finance Committee Members,
Please consider funding to represent with council and voice representation disabled and disenfranchised within communities to social supports like landlords.
Sincerely and respectfully disabled American Veteran,

Miss Jennifer Lee Dozier



Wrangell, Alaska 99929

From: Nathan Lestenkof Sr. <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:29 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Michelle Waskey <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:25 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Becky grunder <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:21 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am shocked that anything to do with this program would not be funded. Especially during this Covid year! More women and children in crisis this year more than ever!

Stop cutting the most need funding!!!

Becky Grunder

From: Becky grunder <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:19 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Jeraldine VandenTop <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:20 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Jeri van den Top

From: Ed and Pete Nelson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:18 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

please don't let this opportunity to do your part to see that domestic violence and sexual assault is dealt with by AWAIC.

From: mtrotter <mtrotter@flyfishalaska.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:16 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

Dear House Finance Committee,

Alaska has the unfortunate status as being #1 in the nation for domestic violence and sexual assault.

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Providing services to victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is not only critical, but life-saving.

Thank you for time and support

All our Best
Mike
Mike & Sally Trotter
BARANOF WILDERNESS LODGE
P.O. Box 2187
Sitka, Alaska 99835
800-613-6551
907 738-9039 cell
flyfishalaska.com

From: fassett_nancy <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:14 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Seth Johnson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:10 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Mackenzie Pope <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:06 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Written Testimony in Opposition to Cutting DV Funding

Hello,

I am writing today to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies that serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

As a State we need to recognize the epidemic of domestic violence and violence against women, and need to invest in protecting those experiencing domestic violence. If we cut funding, more lives will be lost and one of the only safe avenues out will be narrowed. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life-threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you for your time,

Mackenzie Pope

Resident of HD 20 and SD J

From: Richard Cole <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 3:25 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>; Rep. Adam Wool <Rep.Adam.Wool@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sara Rasmussen <Rep.Sara.Rasmussen@akleg.gov>; Rep. Steve Thompson <Rep.Steve.Thompson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bart LeBon <Rep.Bart.Lebon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Ben Carpenter <Rep.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB69, HB71, HB72

House Finance Committee members:

In regards to HB69, HB71, HB72

I am writing in support of cutting the budget and in support of paying out the full PFD(as originally calculated.)

When Covid hit my husband lost his slope job ,we realized that we would need to make adjustments to our budget and quickly if we didn't want to go under. It didn't mean that our WANTS had changed it meant that we had to choose what was NEEDED and be responsible.

A lot like the State of Alaska and how we budget based off the price of oil per barrel. We have known that we needed to cut spending and be responsible but for some reason that hasn't happened. The spending has actually increased??? I really can't understand it.

I watch the committee meetings and not once this year have I seen an effort to cut spending. I have heard a lot about finding other sources of revenue in the form of taxes and stealing more of the PFD. I feel like the unions and special interest groups are running the show and private citizens like my family and I are no longer being represented.

I DO appreciate the group of Representatives that have stayed true to the platforms that they campaigned on and stood strong for the Constitution of Alaska.

I appreciate your time,

Misty Cole
Nikiski Alaska

[REDACTED]

From: Samantha Taylor <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 10:41 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; representative.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov;
representative.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bryce Edgmon <Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov>; Rep. DeLena Johnson <Rep.DeLena.Johnson@akleg.gov>;
Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Steve Thompson <Rep.Steve.Thompson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bart LeBon <Rep.Bart.Lebon@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>

Subject: Opposition in the decrease of funding for social program

Hello,

My name is Samantha Taylor. I grew up on Prince of Wales Island. Growing up there I experienced, myself, mom, all of my friends, and even my teachers going through domestic violence and or sexual assault. Through all of these experiences not one time were their perpetrators put into jail, face charges, or receive great community support.

Some of the examples of this are my friend while babysitting she herself a child was molested by the father. When she went to report it, she was told that more people would have to come forward, and she was not offered counseling or any other support. I had multiple friends who were the spawn of incest. I lived in a house with a physically and emotionally abusive father. My once best friend's boyfriend became physically abusive towards her. His mom witnessed this, and lied about the actions of her son. I once had my favorite history and art teacher show up to class with a black eye that not even make-up could cover. My friend and her sister whose father was the VPSO was molested by her father. The father did not face any jail time. My only friend to go to college at that time was sexually assaulted in her own dorm room. She was not offered support and did not know where to turn. I can continue with these experiences and I can tell you that every single woman who grew up in Alaska has a similar story. These experiences made me choose a career in the domestic violence and sexual assault field.

While working at the Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living I have seen what really dark things perpetrators are capable of doing. Some of us advocates say that perpetrators make it their full time job to be a perp. The role of an advocate is not for everyone, only people who work here for an extended amount of time can fully appreciate how hard this job is and how much more we should be doing but are unable to due to funding. Residents and clients would be the exception to this statement. There are numerous times that we are not able to attend a meeting with clients, respond to a domestic violence call at the hospital because of low staffing and the high volume of needs. When individuals relocate to Alaska or to Fairbanks and do not have support I worry about them. I worry because of the already limited amount of resources and that just environmentally, Alaska is a hard place to live.

Alaska has the highest rate of domestic violence, sexual assault, and violence against women in the United States. In addition, Fairbanks is the most dangerous place for a woman to live in the U.S. This fact is not always acknowledged due to Alaskans culture of being independent, wanting to keep the peace, and sweeping things underneath the rug. Domestic violence, sexual assault, and violence against woman is not an act that affects one person or one part of a person's life. It has a ripple effect on every part of the individual's life, their friends, family, work, school, goals, their sobriety, mental health, their counselor, law enforcement,

forensic nurses, ER staff, advocates, and community members. The best way to end domestic violence and make Alaska a safer place is to increase funding for survivors not decrease it.

With great care,

Samantha Taylor 4/8/2021

From: Bonnie Bladow <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:57 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: State Funding for the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness

Please restore state contributions to the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness. ACHH's request for \$100K from HAP (Homeless Assistance Program) or elsewhere to fund one staff position, office/admin expenses, operating, and limited travel as travel becomes safer. This vital position helps direct service agencies to connect their work to the coalition's work and facilitates and opens up funding sources to local agencies. ACHH is the coalition that coordinates the Balance of State Youth Homelessness Demonstration Projects providing much needed services to our youth.

Statewide coordination is critical for:

- retaining existing millions of dollars in annual federal funding for homeless programs (YHDP, CoC)
- coordinating service delivery to ensure best practices are being followed and resources are used in an equitable way
- maintaining HMIS to allow for data-driven decision making
- Provide technical assistance and education to local coalitions/agencies

As a volunteer with Choosing Our Roots (COR), I have witnessed the important role this position provides to connect agencies and work together to find funding sources and combat homelessness among youth in Alaska. I ask you to restore state funding for ACHH.

Thank you,
Bonnie Bladow

From: Rattनावong, Jasmine S. <jasmine.rattनावong@anchorageak.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 8:38 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: AWAIC Funding

I have received a email about the loss of funding I work with low income clients and families experiencing homelessness.

This is a vital program for many people.



From: Sherry Miller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:34 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

On September 10, 2014 my 19 year old daughter was murdered by her boyfriend at his brother's home in Eagle River. She had only been dating him a short time and I knew their relationship had its ups and downs but it wasn't until after she had been murdered that we found out how dangerous he was and about his domestic violence history. Nothing can prepare you for this. My daughter's life was senselessly taken at the hands of a monster. My family has relied on the wonderful services of Victims for Justice as well as AWAIC. Alaska has a dark history of domestic violence and ranked number one as one of the most dangerous places to be for domestic violence. Without these critical funds, lives hang dangerously in the balance. These funds help support women and children who leave life threatening situations find shelter, assistance, support and counseling. These funds help raise public awareness and promote education like Bree's law as well as vital legal assistance. I can tell you from experience that the legal process is extremely overwhelming and agencies like Victims for Justice and Office of Victims' Rights help our family navigate the process. I ask you to please, do not cut funding to these agencies.

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations.

I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Sincerely,
Sherry L. Miller
In Memory of Linda Anne-Martz Bower

11/25/1994 to 9/10/2014

From: Tami Eller <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:31 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Mental Health Budget

Good day,

I am writing to ask that you do not cut any funds aimed at supporting the mental health of Alaskans. I am writing as a consumer of mental health services, a parent of two children who experience ADHD and receive services to support their needs, and as a professional in the field for 20 years. As anyone in the field can tell you, we do not go into this field with the intention of becoming rich. Yet, individuals who work in this field still need to support their families. Due to years of either budget cuts or flat funding, while inflation has been increasing these wages have remained stagnant or even been cut. This leads to significant staff shortages either from turn over or from inability to hire into these positions. Frontline positions in mental health pay the same or even less than retail, yet are significantly more difficult and emotionally draining. We know that individuals with poor mental health benefit from consistent and competent services, yet this is not happening in part because those in the field are not being adequately compensated for the work they provide. Furthermore, we know that those who experience poor mental health often experience higher incidents of school disruption, employment disruption, contact with law enforcement, contact with child protective services, increase physical medical needs, and homelessness. Ultimately, by fully funding mental health services, costs in these other areas can be reduced eventually. Unfortunately, due to the impacts of COVID over the past year, the mental health of many Alaskans has deteriorated. To aid in the community recovery of the impact of COVID, we will need to rely on the services of our mental health professionals. They are vital to our recovery as we move back to "normal" and adjust to that new "normal". We do not know yet, what the long-term impact of the past year is going to have on an entire generation of youth who have lost their foundation nor on an entire generation of parents who had to figure out how to parent and work in a totally different way. Cutting mental health funding at this time could potentially have an even larger ripple effect than it would have 2 years ago due to the trauma we collectively experienced as we have lived through the COVID pandemic.

I respectfully ask you to put the mental health needs of Alaskans at the forefront of your budget decisions. Please consider using the federal CARES Act Funding as a supplement to boost the overall budget to support mental health services to Alaskan instead of agreeing to the Governor's proposed \$35 million reduction of general funds related to Medicaid Health Coverage or defunding or cutting the Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery grants.

Thank you,
Tami Eller, M.S.
Anchorage, AK

From: Brian Berube <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:27 PM
To: Brian berube <brianberube2008@gmail.com>
Cc: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>;

House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Re: Please Protect Domestic Violence Shelters in Alaska

My name is Brian Berube I live in Anchorage, and worked in Bethel for many years and I'm reaching out to you as a proud supporter of the Tundra Women's Coalition (TWC) in Bethel.

I have seen the tireless work that is done by TWC to help support victims of domestic violence. The impacts of their work go far beyond just the individuals they help by creating a stronger, safer, healthier community for all of us.

I recently learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut by 34% starting in FY2022. This will have devastating impacts for TWC and for survivors of domestic violence across Alaska. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Please help TWC by allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. I can not imagine the devastating effects this loss of funding would cause across the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Thank you for your consideration, and dedication to the residents of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Brian Beube

From: Kristin Hall <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:19 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please Protect Domestic Violence Shelters in Alaska

My name is Kristin Hall. I live in Anchorage, and work in Bethel, and I'm reaching out to you as a proud supporter of the Tundra Women's Coalition (TWC) in Bethel.

I have seen the tireless work that is done by TWC to help support victims of domestic violence. The impacts of their work go far beyond just the individuals they help by creating a stronger, safer, healthier community for all of us.

I recently learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut by 34% starting in FY2022. This will have devastating impacts for TWC and for survivors of domestic violence across Alaska. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Please help TWC by allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. I can not imagine the devastating effects this loss of funding would cause across the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Thank you for your consideration, and dedication to the residents of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Kristin Hall

From: Mary Geddes <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:18 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Senate Finance <Finance.Calendar@akleg.gov>
Subject: Written Testimony on FY22 Budget

ATTACHED IS MY WRITTEN TESTIMONY on the FY22 Budget, and on bills HB69 and HB71.

Mary Geddes
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, AK
99501
[REDACTED]

April 9, 2021

Rep. Neal Foster, Co-Chair
Rep. Kelly Merrick, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
house.finance@akleg.gov

RE: FY22 Budget: Operating (HB 69) and Mental Health (HB 71)

Dear Chairs and Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am writing you concerning the FY22 Operating and Mental Health budgets. I have been a resident of Alaska since 1984. I live in Anchorage where my husband and I own a home; we have children and grandchildren living here. All of our futures as Alaskans are at stake in this budget process. I appreciate your attention and close scrutiny of the budget proposals before you.

I am writing to you today about four budget items.

Legal Services funding: The Governor recommended a \$450,000 GF reduction to the Civil Legal Services Fund. His proposal should be unequivocally rejected by the Legislature. More than ever in the next fiscal year eligible indigent Alaskans will require legal assistance with eviction processes, with obtaining access to healthcare, and with seeking legal protections against abuse. Legal Services is already hard-pressed to meet the burgeoning needs of Alaskans. As someone who has volunteered with the many free legal clinics run by ALSC, I know how great the need is among our state's residents, particularly the elderly and those seeking harbor from abuse.

Therapeutic Courts funding: The Governor has proposed a \$488,400 increase to expand therapeutic court services and I understand that a House Finance Subcommittee has endorsed this proposal. I agree with this action. So many of the individuals appearing in the courts have behavioral and addiction disorders and incarceration for these individuals does not effectively reduce recidivism. I have had the opportunity to observe the Therapeutic Court judges, staff and agency representatives as they meet to discuss individual cases. The efficacy of the Therapeutic Courts' wraparound approach is well-established, and its expansion should be supported.

Medicaid Coverage: The Governor's proposal recommending a \$35 million reduction in general funds should be rejected. Relying on an unexplicated and undeveloped funding strategy, the Governor contends he can back-fill the \$35 million difference with federal CARES Act funding over the next fiscal year and yet not have to fund the same the next fiscal year. This is a dangerous gamble and should not be approved without a fully-clarified and achievable plan as to how essential programs and services will be covered in FY23.

Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery Grants: A House Finance Subcommittee has proposed adding 1.25 million in general funds and MET (Marijuana Education and Treatment) funds. I strongly agree as these funds provide behavioral health treatment services for those Alaskans not covered by Medicaid or private insurance. This group is greatly underserved, and the additional funds help with that.

If I can offer any clarification or if you have any questions, please let me know. My contact information is provided in the email forwarding this testimony.

Sincerely yours,

Mary C Geddes

cc: senate.finance@akleg.gov

From: Emily Wood <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:15 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: PROTECT DVSA VICTIMS!!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Sincerely,
Emily Wood

From: Kim Sibrel <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:13 PM
To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>
Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: VOCA funding cuts

Representatives Foster and Merrick, and the members of House Finance Committee,

My name is Kim Sibrel and I am a member of the Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center Board of Directors. First, I appreciate Governor Dunleavy's recognition of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, for recognizing the need for more prosecuting attorneys in the Department of Law's budget, to respond to sexual assault backlog cases, and his call to all of us to "make Alaska the safest state in the country, especially for our most vulnerable, our women and children." Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts here in Kodiak, and across Alaska.

On April 1 community-based victim services agencies received a memo from CDVSA stating that the State of Alaska's FY2021 VOCA (victims of crime act) funds would be reduced by \$4.1 million and that all victim services should expect a 30% cut in

their grants starting in FY2022. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts. Our agency provides critical services to the Kodiak community, including the remote villages within our archipelago. If we lose 30% of our funding, we will be forced to make drastic cuts to nearly every aspect of our organization. These cuts will have a devastating impact on survivors, victims, their families, and our community work.

We are reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. Within my Board work at KWRCC, I see firsthand the importance these life-saving supports offer to victims. Please help us in Kodiak by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session. Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. As Alaskans, we can, and must do better.

Thank you for taking your valuable time to hear our cry, and advocate for those whose voices go unheard.

Regards,

Kim Sibrel

Board, KWRCC

Kodiak, AK

From: Blaze Bell <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:10 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Finance <finregs@akleg.gov>

Subject: VOCA Funding Cuts

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you today to voice my concern over the recent decision to cut the State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA funding by \$4-6 million. Clearly, these cuts will be absolutely devastating to our Alaskan communities. A 30% loss in funding to our local domestic violence/sexual assault programs is outrageous & entirely unacceptable. Now, more than ever, is the time these agencies need our support the most!

I am currently the Board Chair for Victims for Justice. We serve victims of ALL non-DV/SA crime. VOCA funds are ESSENTIAL to our organization continuing to serve this community.

These funds MUST be restored.

Thank you for your time, I know we can do better than this and I am so grateful for the state's role in restoring this imbalance.

Sincerely,

Blaze Bell-Erickson
[REDACTED]

From: Anne & Bill <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:07 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Imminent Cuts to Funding for Victim Services

Thank you for your work for the people of Alaska.

My name is Anne Doerpinghaus, I have worked as an RN in Fairbanks since 1993, and I am currently a Forensic Nurse at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. I represent myself, and also the women and men I provide care in the Emergency Room - in the past four years that is over 400 people, and I am one of a team of six.

The upcoming cuts to community based victim services agencies in Alaska will be devastating for victims of violence in Alaska. Without the expertise and presence of advocates victims will have to navigate invasive medical exams, grueling interviews, complicated legal procedures all without support and skilled guidance. The teams that work to respond to sexual assault, strangulation, and domestic violence include law enforcement, prosecutors, and nurses, but we all rely on victim advocates to come to the hospital whenever we call - 24/7. They help victims survive trauma, seek justice, find healing. Shelter services are also critical for victims and families in crisis.

If we as a community truly care about addressing the plague of violence that affects women and men and children in our state, we cannot lose 30% of the funding for critical victim services.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or if I can be helpful in any way.

Thank you for your time.

Anne Doerpinghaus, RN, SANE-A
Forensic Nursing Services, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital
[REDACTED]

From: Alexis Morris <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:40 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Victim Services

Hello, my name is Alexis Morris. I am emailing to express the concern I have due to the 34% federal funding cut to victim services. I, myself have utilized some services that TWC offer, have very memorable and fond moments. I am the third generation to be employed at TWC. During all my time working at TWC have seen many people benefit from the services we offer and provide for our region. I am grateful for the opportunity to email my letter.

Growing up, I attended the after-school group that the Children's Program, and then later joined the Teens Acting Against Violence. Looking back at the memories I have created in those programs warms my heart, because with the limited amount of programs for children and young adults, they really helped mold the person I am today. Both programs instilled resiliency in me, for the world around me, and helped pave the path into adulthood. I was and am able to express myself, while also having the comfort of being able to ask questions. Especially if you are a young adult and have question that need answers to. I learned many social emotional skills attending these groups. I learned to present about Teen Dating Violence to my peers, and also learned about being aware to social set backs. Having an environment to be yourself and express yourself is one of the best ways to help a person grow.

I am the third generation to work at TWC. My maternal grandma started when it was the Quonset Hut. Later, my mom was employed at TWC for about fifteen years in which she did different jobs. A few years later I became employed at age sixteen or seventeen. I worked numerous jobs under different programs. I've worked at the very first Thrift Store, I did a program called the Promoting Health Among Teens, presenting to peers about sexual education, I worked at the front desk answering phones, I've done childcare along with many other assigned tasks. I worked seasonally for years when school was on breaks. I then graduated in 2014 and soon after became a full time advocate as the Children's Advocate and have been since.

Working all these years starting at a young age, I witnessed the impact that we as a work community have on the people we work with. People of all ages, babies, children, young adults and experienced adults all ages and stages of life. No matter how young or experience a person is, they can still experience violence. We need to keep our programs running so that we can be helping our region heal and grow. There is always room to educate, about violence, what you can do if you're a survivor of violence, ways to move forward from violence, ways to work with people who've experienced violence and who are your allies.

Thank you for the option of sending in an email. I would also like to thank you for always being supporting of victims services and I am sure you are just as shocked as we were to learn the budget cuts.

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:03 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: AWAIC funding

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I received the email below just now. If it is factual—and I have no reason to think it is not—I **am writing to advocate for fully funding AWAIC**. It has a solid reputation for helping women and families for nearly 40 years, and I believe they are responsible stewards of their money. As long as domestic violence remains a serious problem in Alaska, agencies like AWAIC need our full support.

Thank you,
Constance Quinley
[REDACTED]
Anchorage AK 99508
[REDACTED]

From: G Nelson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:05 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Budget testimony

Good morning,
I'll keep this simple. I do not support and expect legislators to not support the governor's proposal for a high- \$3,000 was it?, PFD payout. Do not deplete savings. \$800 is fine.
Gretchen Nelson
Anchorage, AK

From: Jerry Alderman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:50 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

I am Jerry Alderman and I feel very strongly about this. I have helped raise money for AWAIC and now I'm asking the legislature to do the same.

From: Abby Amick <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:48 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault

Dear House of Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations.

Alaska has the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in our nation. Failing to help those facing this kind of suffering and violence is far too harmful.

I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you for your consideration,
Abby Amick

From: Jacenda Fletcher <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:45 AM
To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>
Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Finance <finregs@akleg.gov>
Subject: VOCA Funding Cuts

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing you today to voice my concern over the recent decision to cut the State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA funding by \$4.1 million. Clearly, these cuts will be absolutely devastating to our Alaskan communities. A 30% loss in funding to our local domestic violence/sexual assault programs is outrageous & entirely unacceptable. Now, more than ever, is the time these agencies need our support the most!

The most recent statistics show that 59% of adult women here in Alaska, have experienced intimate partner violence and/or sexual assault. That is HERE...in our beautiful home state of Alaska that this crisis is happening! I am personally a part of that statistic, and I know too many other women that are as well. Whether you know it or not, I would wager a bet that each one of you reading this, also know someone who is a part of the statistic. Yet, our funding to help remedy this dire situation is being massively cut? This is absurd and impermissible.

These funds MUST be restored, and it is essential that these programs such as STAR Alaska, AWAIC & Victims for Justice (to name only a few) get the support that they need, and that our communities deserve.

Thank you for your time, I know we can do better than this.

Sincerely,

Jacenda Fletcher


From: CFRC@ctcak.net <cfrc@ctcak.net>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:44 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Public Testimony to House Finance
Importance: High

Dear Finance Committee,

Please find the attached written testimony for House Finance public testimony hearing for April, 9, 2021.

April 9, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Respectable House Finance Committee regarding HB69 and HB71. My name is Nate Taylor, I am the Police Chief of the Cordova Police Department and I am speaking on behalf of my agency.

First, I appreciate Governor Dunleavy's recognition of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, for recognizing the need for more prosecuting attorneys in the Department of Law's budget, to respond to sexual assault backlog cases, and his call to all of us to "make Alaska the safest state in the country, especially for our most vulnerable, our women and children."

Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts across Alaska.

On April 1 community-based victim services agencies received a memo from CDVSA stating that the State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA (victims of crime act) funds would be reduced by \$4.1

million and that all victim services should expect a 30% cut in their grants starting in FY2022. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Our small community benefits greatly from the services provided by the Cordova Family Resource Center (CFRC). CFRC handles thousands of clients a year, providing services that are not available from other resources in our community. The proposed cuts in funding would have a devastating impact to victim services in our community and put a higher workload on our small police department which has just four sworn officers.

I am reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. Our police department sees firsthand the importance these life-saving supports offer to victims. Please help us in Cordova by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Respectfully,
Nate Taylor
Cordova Police Chief

From: Tyler Henegan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:44 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

As you well know, our state leads the nation in domestic abuse. Support for organizations like AWAIC is absolutely critical for us to move ahead of this disgraceful record, not cuts. Please support AWAIC as they continue to support some of our most at-risk community members.

Sincerely,
Tyler Henegan

From: Laura Baldwin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:40 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Director <info@ernc.org>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:38 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Testimony: Governor's FY2020 Budget for the Division of Natural Resources from the Eagle River Nature Center

Importance: High

Dear Members of Alaska's House Finance Committee,

During the Fall of 2020, Alaskan's lost hundreds of thousands of dollars that could have been spent to help our state parks' infrastructure needs through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. It's imperative that we do not "leave money on the table" that is vitally needed. People have been using our parks more than ever and they are in desperate need of our attention. With the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, our state will have a chance to finally have access to funding to improve the places and services Alaskans regularly use and which make our state so attractive to visitors.

The Eagle River Nature Center has been operated by a non-profit Friends organization since 1996, because the budget for Chugach State Park had been but so significantly cut in the early 1990's. Thanks to hundreds of volunteers and engaged citizens, our small grassroots organization has been able to keep the doors open, the trails maintained and natural history education thriving. However, much of our infrastructure is nearing its useful life. Our Salmon Viewing Deck, for instance, enjoyed by so many Alaskans and visitors is on the verge of structural deterioration. This is just one of the many items of infrastructure in our parks that requires our attention. Do we really want iconic places such as the Salmon Deck to become an ugly eyesore rather than a place to learn about salmon habitat, view wildlife and enjoy stunning scenery?

By approving Governor Dunleavy's recommended 2020 DNR Budget and staffing a person(s) to administer DNR's Land and Water Conservation Fund it will be a win/win for our State. These funds can be administered efficiently in the proper hands and sustainable sources for matching funds can be established. I hope that the Committee will find this budget proposal in the best interest of our citizens and our future.

Sincerely,

Asta Spurgis, Director
Eagle River Nature Center

32750 Eagle River Rd., Eagle River, AK 99577
907-604-2108 www.ernc.org Non profit 92-0156981
1996-2021 Celebrating 25 Years Connecting People to Nature in Alaska

From: Riggs-Kaiser, Gina <virginia.riggs-kaiser@anchorageak.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:36 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Funding needed for DV Shelters

Please fund the AWAIC DV Shelter. Domestic Violence is real in Alaska, lives are depending on the State of Alaska's DV support.



Virginia (Gina) Riggs-Kaiser
Sr. Staff Accountant
Anchorage Health Department
825 L Street, Anchorage, AK 99501
Office: (907) 343-4828
Mobile: (907) 223-1735
muni.org/health



From: Tracy Breimo <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:27 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: FY22 State Operating Budget

Thank you for supporting FY22 Operating Budget which includes early childhood resources and services such as child care benefits, infant learning and early learning coordination, pre-k and other family supports. These critical resources play a vital role in our children's future. Cuts to early childhood education means less access to high-quality care throughout Alaska. These services are crucial and benefit single, low income, and those families who receive additional educational supports and services. As new funding becomes available please designate additional resources toward early childhood supports for our youngest Alaskans.

Sincerely,
Tracy Breimo

From: I baker <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:13 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Operating Budget Testimony

Hello,

I am a 44 year resident of Alaska. *I do not support large unsustainable PFD annual payouts.* The PFD fund should be managed in a way that allows it to support government services over time and then, if there is enough surplus, make modest payouts to Alaskans. If there is not enough surplus, payouts to Alaskans should be suspended.

Further, *we should institute a state income tax* so that wage earners at positions in Alaska contribute to the health and welfare of the state. This would especially result in people who live out of state and work at well-paying jobs would not make use of state resources without contributing back to Alaska. If a person is working, they are able to contribute and should.

Thank you for your consideration.

Linda Baker, Fairbanks, AK

From: John Gaedeke <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:12 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69 testimony

My testimony on HB 69 to the House Finance Committee is as follows:

I strongly urge more budgetary and policy oversight of The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority. I have traveled from Fairbanks to attended their meetings in person at the home office in Anchorage. I have flown out to numerous villages to testify in response to their proposals. I have called in to their board meetings to plead for more transparency, fiscal responsibility and moral accountability. In each instance the board members and staff appear troubled that the public has comments and concerns about the corporate welfare that they propose. Subsidizing the extraction of Alaska's raw materials for the benefit of foreign companies seems to be a policy above reproach to them. They gamble with our land and resources like it's just another weekend in Vegas.

As Alaska is gripped by recession and economic uncertainty the board members repeatedly close the doors and retreat to extended "executive sessions". The phone line goes silent for hours. They have reduced a right to public comment from 3 minutes to 2 minutes as their actions produce a growing alarm across Alaska and subsequently more participation in their randomly scheduled meetings.

Alaskans are worried that the unchecked spending of the board will not only fail to produce new benefits, it will also destroy existing businesses and Alaska's celebrated wild lands and waterways.

AIDEA appears to be in violation of the Open Meetings Act, is under investigation for employee abuse tactics, and granted \$400,000 of CARES Act funding to its own staff and family members while the fund ran far short of meeting the state's dire needs.

The board maintains unchecked power to authorize the spending of millions on poorly planned proposals, often with disastrous results and no accountability. Their failures are never audited and they seem only to repeat their mistakes.

Please, Alaska Legislators, step in, audit this mess and clean house before it burns to the ground. The last thing Alaska needs right now is another boardroom of Firecracker Boys.

Thank you for increasing Alaska's prosperity by attending to this matter.

John Gaedeke

[REDACTED]

Fairbanks, AK 99709

From: Nikolai Joekay <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:46 AM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: HB 69 & 71

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I live in Bethel and grew up in this region that is approximately the size of the state of Oregon with a population of more than 23,000 people who live among 58 rural communities not

connected by road. Our region has the highest rates of violence in the entire country, with the highest rates of Indigenous women being victims of this abuse.

We only have 3 organizations that serve victims of domestic and sexual violence in our region. That is less than 70 beds in shelters altogether.

Victims of crime in Indigenous communities have literally nowhere else to go to escape their perpetrator. The homes in our communities are either overcrowded or altogether not safe environments to live in.

We are a people who must make do with what little access we have to resources like law enforcement and the judicial system.

It doesn't make sense for the federal government to cut funding during a time when the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People is finally getting the nationwide attention it deserves.

I hope that you will help our organizations to stay operational during a time when a cut in their funding endangers women and children in our communities.

Thank you,

Nicholai Joekay

[REDACTED]

Bethel, AK

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:47 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Tammy and Steve Warnke

Anchorage, Alaska

From: Shelly Schmitt <Shelly_Schmitt@chugachelectric.com>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:18 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Shelly Schmitt
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, Alaska Resident for 28 years
[REDACTED]

From: Wini Kelly-Green <wini@nativecouncil.org>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:02 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69/HB71

Good morning. My name is Winifred Kelly-Green and I am representing myself today. Thank you Rep Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for your work to fully fund victim services through the CDVSA. Please do not cut the funding. An Elder told me as a young bride and she was experiencing DV, she had no place to go. She would walk on the tundra and sleep where she can find a "warmer" place in the bushes. As a survivor myself, I cannot imagine sleeping outside with my small children. Please, for the sake of our children do not cut the funding. The Elder lady told me that we younger victims are so lucky to have a place to go. Continuing to fund our shelters, you will be saving lives, as well as further emotional/mental/physical damage. Please fight for our children who have no voices in this matter. Thank you for listening to the plea of our children.

Winifred *Amliralria* Kelly-Green
Family Victims Services Coordinator
wini@nativecouncil.org
907-543-2608

Qanruyuteput linruugut

From: Rachel I <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:06 AM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Cuts to VOCA Funding

Good morning,

I hope this email finds you well. I'm contacting you today in regards to the proposed 4.1 million reduction of VOCA funds for the upcoming fiscal year.

To cut funds for services that help domestic violence survivors and their families is never the answer, but especially now, as we are still in a global pandemic and folks are more vulnerable than ever. In Juneau alone, this cut would result in AWARE being unable to fund their children's programs which help kids cope with trauma and have access to extra supports, and put an end to their Sexual Assault Response Team, which accompanies survivors to the hospital in the aftermath of their assault.

As a victim of assault myself, and someone with a family member who was molested at a young age, I cannot stress enough how critical continued access to community-based victims services are. To cut these funds would be sending the message that victims and their families are on their own-- we must never let them feel that way. Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, and cutting these funds will do nothing to remedy this.

I recognize that we are in a tough spot financially, but please do not cut funds for vital programming that helps those in their darkest hours.

Thank you

Rachel Iafolla
Juneau, AK

From: Ashley Simon <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:03 AM

To: Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall

Representatives Neal Foster, Co-chair and Kelly Merrick, Co-chair,

My name is Ashley Simon and I work as a victim advocate at the Interior of Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living in Fairbanks, Alaska.

First, I appreciate Governor Dunleavy's recognition of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, for recognizing the need for more prosecuting attorneys in the Department of Law's budget, to respond to sexual assault backlog cases, and his call to all of us to "make Alaska the safest state in the country, especially for our most vulnerable, our women and children."

Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts across Alaska.

On April 1 community-based victim services agencies received a memo from CDVSA stating that the State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA (victims of crime act) funds would be reduced by \$4.1 million and that all victim services should expect a 30% cut in their grants starting in FY2022.

Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Our agency provides critical services in our community of Fairbanks. If we lose 30% of our funding, here are some of the choices we will be forced to make:

* We will be forced to reduce services and limit our emergency shelter space because we will be forced to cut our staff in half or more. What this ultimately means is that **victims of sexual assault and domestic violence seeking a safe and secure location away from their perpetrator will be turned away and forced to return to their unsafe situation.**

* We will be forced to cut all children's services, including counseling and art therapy programs available to minors who are victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

* We will no longer be able to respond to the hospital to provide support and resources to clients who have just been violently sexually assaulted or strangled.

* We will be forced to limit access to legal assistance available to victims.

These cuts will have a devastating impact on survivors, victims, their families, and our community work. I have personally helped dozens of individuals in the last week alone by:

* Checking individuals both with and without children into our emergency shelter because their partner was actively trying to **kill them**.

* Helping to relocate individuals to other parts of the state or country because their partner or stalker was actively trying to **hunt them down to kill them**.

* Coordinating counseling referrals for men, women, and children because they were sexually assaulted and/or victims of domestic violence.

* Coordinating with forensic nurses and law enforcement to help mothers seek safety and justice for their **minor children who have been sexually abused**.

- * Coordinating legal referrals for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault as they seek justice through the court system.
- * Helping victims to secure safe and affordable housing once they are considered safe from their perpetrator.
- * Educating clients who have been controlled and abused their entire lives on resources available to help them to survive on their own rather than depend on their perpetrator.
- * Being available at all times, whether by phone or in-person, to help victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault to process and discuss the horrific violence they have experienced.

I am reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. This is happening every hour. My cohorts and I see firsthand the importance these life-saving supports offer to victims. Every. Single. Day. If 30% of our funds are slashed, we can expect to see more women, children, and even men dead due to domestic violence and sexual assault.

I hope that my passion for this work and for the victims that I work with comes through loud and clear in this message. Our program and the work we do is, quite literally, the **only** glimpse of hope for the victims that we work with. Please help us in Fairbanks by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Please consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut life-saving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ashley Simon

From: Abigail S. Paul <abigail.paul@k12northstar.org>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:56 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Education Funding

Dear Legislators,

A robust public education system, including pre-schools, charter schools and higher education, is critical to our democracy and the health and well-being of our entire state. Please allocate the maximum amount of funding possible to these endeavors. My parents, my husband and I all graduated from UAF and my sons are current students.

Thanks for all you do!

Abigail Paul
Special Education Teacher, Co-Founder
Watershed Charter School
FNSBSD

From: Freda Jimmie <fjimmie@nativecouncil.org>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:50 AM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Cuts to victim services

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Freda Jimmie and I work for Orutsararmiut Native Council Social Services Department and I am speaking on behalf of the agency and our subgrantee Tundra Womens Coalition.

Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut by 34% starting in FY2022. This will have devastating impacts across Alaska. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

We are reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. I work with ONC Social Services Department under the Office on Violence Against Women and see firsthand the importance these life-saving supports offered to victims. Please help us in Bethel by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

If the shelters are not fully funded as before, we will be unable to help victims, survivors and even the children.

Freda L. Jimmie

Community Outreach & Activities Coordinator

Social Services

P.O. Box 927

Bethel, Alaska 99559

(907) 543-0520

(907) 543-2608

(907) 543-2639 FAX

From: JoAnn Jeffery <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:51 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

From: Allison Carr <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:45 AM
To: Finance <finregs@akleg.gov>
Subject: Cutting of funding for Domestic Violence Shelters

Please enter the following testimony into the public record.

I am writing to voice my grave concerns about the proposed cuts to funding for domestic violence shelters in Alaska. Here in Fairbanks, these shelters provide a lifeline for all people fleeing domestic violence. At a time when domestic violence rates are spiking due to the pandemic, and jobs and the economy are still recovering, we need these funds to save lives and provide shelter. This is not the time to cut funding for domestic violence shelters in the state.

Thank you,
Allison Carr

From: Farah Sears <Farah_Sears@ykhc.org>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:38 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>
Subject: 34% Cut to Victims Services in Alaska - Written Testimony

Co-Chairs Foster and Merrick,

My name is Farah Sears and I am a Family Nurse Practitioner at Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation in Bethel. I perform medical forensic exams for both adult and pediatric sexual assaults. In the YK Delta, we have 2 times the number of SA (child and adult) than the Alaska state average which is already 4 times higher the lower 48 average. In Bethel we have worked very hard to build a multidisciplinary SART

that responds to each and every Child or Adult SA. This team includes a Law Enforcement agency, either Bethel PD or the Troopers, the medical forensic examiner and an advocate from CAC or TWC. I consider the advocate to be the glue that holds this team together and helps the patient navigate the medical, law enforcement and judicial systems.

Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts in our region.

The advocate is with the patient before the team comes together, throughout the forensic interview/exam to gather DNA evidence/photos, and the advocate remains available to the survivor for as long they need or want afterward. These advocates become a trusted ally and go-to for the survivor to answer questions about their case, sit with them during glass warrants, help them with protective orders, secure shelter at TWC, help them relocate, connect them with local resources, get them in to see Behavioral Health and countless other services. If the funding of Victims Services in our region is cut, that will devastate our community, that desperately needs these services and undermine the foundation that our multidisciplinary team is built on and continues to rely heavily on. I urge you to consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall as I have seen on an almost daily basis how invaluable the services of our TWC and CAC are to the YK Delta survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Child Sexual Assault/Abuse and Child Abuse.

Thank you,

Farah Sears, FNP

Child Abuse Coordinator

Adult SART Forensic Consultant

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation

SART

O: (907) 543-6043

C: (719) 244-3300

P.O. Box 528 Bethel, Alaska 99559

www.ykhc.org

From: JAMES COLLMAN <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 9:05 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

James M Collman

From: Tomi Winters <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:51 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Budget Cuts to CDVSA Public Testimony

To the House Finance Committee,

My children and I were provided with support from the Fairbanks IACNVL when I sought protection from an abusive spouse. I have a parenting plan that protects our family and individual protective orders thanks to the legal services provided. Prior to legal services, My family spent over \$90,000 to fight legal abuse. My family spent all of their resources and there wasn't any money left. At one point, I was at risk of losing custody because I had no representation. If it were not for the CDVSA grants, I would likely have lost custody. Now, I have full custody and their father does not have any visitation. After years of representation by IACNVL, the truth of his abuse came to light. For many years the courts did not believe me. Thanks to the support of IACNVL, the abuse was acknowledge by the system and my family can live a safe and peaceful life free of domestic violence and legal abuse.

Sincerely,

Tomi Winters

From: Jan Conitz <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:48 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: budget testimony

Dear Alaska Representatives,

As you are meeting to decide on the course of Alaska's financial future for the next year or more, and as you are accepting public testimony this week, I would like to offer the following comments.

First, I urge you to consider Alaska's long-term financial future above all else, and ensure that we will have adequate, sustainable sources of revenue. I strongly urge you to consider all options currently under consideration, but especially a restructuring of oil taxes and income taxes on corporations and high earning individuals. Cutting the budget further will not result in a sustainable economy, and risks doing permanent damage to Alaska's long-term future.

Second, as a long-time Alaskan, I know that education funding is the first and foremost responsibility of the Alaska State Legislature. No other need is as important as ensuring that our younger generations of Alaskans are provided for with high quality educational opportunities. These opportunities should extend from early childhood, when they make their most long-lasting impact on a human being, through college, when they affect the lifetime earning potential of our young adults. Please ensure that education across the state is securely and adequately funded, in all school districts throughout the state.

Third, I would like to place special emphasis on the needs of our University of Alaska system. As a proud graduate of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I can testify firsthand to the quality of the education I received and the advantages it provided me in the workforce. (I earned a Master of Science degree from the School of Fisheries and Ocean Science, and have made my career working in Alaska fisheries management and research.) Our institutions of higher education are what really set our population apart from the rest of the country. Although many states have far greater numbers of, and older and more prestigious, universities, none in my opinion have anything that equals the relevance, adaptability, and dedication to the unique needs and opportunities in Alaska. As just two examples, the programs in Alaska Native studies - culture and language revitalization - and in Arctic sciences and related economics, are globally respected and cannot be replicated anywhere else. Equally important is the ability of the University of Alaska system to provide affordable education in relevant, workforce-driven programs for all Alaskans. The value of these opportunities to Alaskan families cannot be overemphasized.

I am of course aware that you must also consider many other funding needs for the state, including transportation, law enforcement, resource management, assistance to municipalities, etc. I would reiterate my first point about the urgent need to put in place sustainable systems of revenue generation for our future. One area that has been sadly hurt and neglected by the current Administration is our marine transportation, the Alaska Marine Highway system. Alaska is a maritime state, and marine transportation is vital to our economy. Dismantling the Marine Highway system is a serious mistake and must be reversed, so that all of our coastal communities can survive and thrive.

I greatly appreciate this opportunity to provide comments, and thank you for taking the time to listen to and read what your fellow Alaskans think about our finances and economy.

Thank you for your service to all Alaskans.

Jan Conitz

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

From: Jody Tow <jtow@petersburgak.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:39 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 69

Good afternoon,

I am emailing you today on HB 69, the State of Alaska Operating Budget.

I want to just reiterate what you have already heard from so many, how important the School Bond Debt reimbursement is to communities in Alaska. Petersburg's school bonds were issued

to help pay for our school major maintenance, a swimming pool replacement and a vocational education building expansion. The residents of Petersburg voted over ten years ago on issuing debt for these projects with the assumption that the State would be reimbursing over 60% of the annual bond interest and principal each year. Alaska municipalities all over our state have issued bonds relying in good faith on the State of Alaska to live up to its financial commitments to education. In recent years the funding commitment by the State for school bond debt reimbursement has been variable and has created increased hardship for municipalities to budget and plan with confidence in our communities.

I also want to take the time to mention how important Community Assistance Payments are to our local community as well as the community jail funding that the Borough receives annually. As funding for both programs has decreased over the years, our costs have not. Personnel costs, insurance, technology, all expenses associated with maintaining our community's basic needs have increased significantly over the years. Please keep in mind how important this funding is to our communities when you are making decisions on the operating budget for FY2022.

Thank you for your time, I appreciate being able to testify by email.

Jody Tow
Finance Director
P.O. Box 329
Petersburg, Alaska
Phone 907.772.5401



From: Karen Talifero <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:31 PM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Federal VOCA funding cuts

Good afternoon,
My name is Karen Talifero. I live in Anchorage and am a 4th year apprentice with Ironworkers Local 751. I am writing today regarding the recent reduction in VOCA funding for Alaska. As our state has some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence in the nation this loss of funding will be devastating. Not just for the programs supporting victims, but for the many men, women, and children who are dealing with the pain and trauma from these events. I was abused as a child myself and only recently began to address the damage it did. I've suffered from depression, anxiety, and PTSD for 25 years and working through those things is tough. I am not exaggerating when I saw that I would not be alive right now if it wasn't for the amazing help I received from counselors at STAR. But I know there are so many

others who need help, too, so I am writing today to ask you to help. If there is any way to allocate funds towards these programs, or ask the federal government to reverse their cuts, I plead with you to do so. Sexual and domestic violence is a crisis in our state. Please don't leave victims without the help and support they need.

Sincerely,
Karen Talifero

From: Perry Klein <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:28 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Year after year

Year after year I send a note asking you to spend prudently. Year after year Alaska spends like an irresponsible fool. This year you so called leaders and lawmakers are arguing over tax dollars doled out by the federal government like so many seagulls over a dead humpy carcass. Every year our fine state gets further and further behind as we spend well beyond our means, one of the most expensive governments on a per capita basis in the union.

All of you are destroying my home state. You should be ashamed of yourselves. But you continue to spend, year after year, behaving like so many spoiled children.

Cut spending. Be leaders, not corrupt inept failures.

Perry Klein
[REDACTED]
Ketchikan Ak 99901

From: Jessica Limbird <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:26 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Restoring cuts from the operating and mental health budgets

To the House Finance committee-

I know times are hard, worse than hard. We are still in the midst of a global pandemic and our state continues to struggle with challenging economic decision-making. Perhaps the thinking behind budget cuts is that federal infusion of dollars will cover the costs of cuts today. But it sets a terrible precedent and our critical services and infrastructure need an influx of additional funding to respond to the collective grief and mental un-wellness resulting from over a year of social isolation.

I'm writing in support of restoring and expanding funding to much-needed funding for services that help people get well and stay well, including housing services and infrastructure like the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness and Tundra Women's Coalition, behavioral health services and therapeutic courts, and programs and services supported by the Mental Health Trust Reserve Fund. The fallout of the pandemic has yet to be seen and we need to be bolstering ourselves for what's to come, not cutting funding to the people and services that will be responding to deferred costs of the pandemic for months and years to come.

Respectfully,
Jessica Limbird

99504

From: Skookums Sonnenschein <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:19 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Please protect victims of domestic violence and sexual assault!

I am writing to express my support for AWAIC and the many victim service agencies across our state. The reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault will be devastating to the agencies who serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This could result in services being denied to victims who have no other safe place to go, which would be life threatening in many situations. I urge the legislature to help to fill this gap in funding.

Thank you for your thoughtful considerations during this most difficult time of isolation for victims of domestic violence.

Regards, Skookums

From: Rebecca Van Wyck <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:09 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Funding for Domestic Violence Shelters in Alaska

Hello,

I am writing in support of State funding for Domestic Violence Shelters in Alaska. My concern is that in some areas of our State, [more women are dying of domestic violence \(DV\) than COVID-19](#). There is an epidemic of DV in Alaska and the reduction in this funding comes at a time when our most vulnerable populations are even more isolated and vulnerable due to the pandemic. I hope you will [consider the impact that these funds have on the lives of women and their families in crisis](#), and how profound the overall positive benefits in our communities can be if the cycle of violence can be broken. Let's not lose sight of the goal of improving the overall mental wellness of Alaskans. If the most vulnerable cannot receive support, it will have negative impacts on our communities for decades to come.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Van Wyck

From: Kimmi Shelden <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:51 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: CDVSA Grants

I am writing to express my concerns addressing the fact that our programs are at risk of financial danger if there should be a 34% cut in our CDVSA grants.

I am a survivor of domestic violence. I believe that I would not be where I am today if I did not have the support from IACNVL in Fairbanks. My son and I had a safe place to reside. We had access to numerous services which included: food, shelter, clothing and mental health support as well as legal support services.

These services are extremely vital and I fear that cutting back on grant funding would create a devastating impact on vulnerable adult individuals, as well as their children in need of aid.

Sincerely,
Kimberley Shelden

From: Mary Griswold
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 5:03 PM
To: finance.committee@akleg.gov
Subject: State budget

I am a strong advocate for the established POMV draw from the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve. There is rarely a "one-time ask" for a larger draw, as proposed by the governor. The demise of the CBR and SBR is a vivid reminder of what happens to pots of money in reserve for hard times. These pots do not get refilled. There are always "extraordinary circumstances" requiring their use until there is nothing left. Please do not overdraw the Permanent Fund. Please protect it for future beneficiaries who will also undoubtedly face financial difficulties. The Permanent Fund managers also need a consistent withdrawal formula to promote good investment strategies. The state's borrowing ability also depends on a stable financial situation. Please promote a responsible draw from the Permanent Fund.

Mary Griswold
Homer

From: La Vada Bush <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:02 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: DV/SA cuts

I would like to address the issue of the need for not only continuing services at the current level but, for increased funding for services that are already strained to the max. Any cuts to the present funding would be devastating for women and children who so desperately need the safety and help the shelter provides. Covid has intensified the need for safety for women and children. Now is a terrible time to even think about cutting services. Funding cuts translate into service cuts. Please, do not cut funding to DV/SA Programs/shelters

From: Jeff and Susan Allen <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:02 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>; House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Daniel Ortiz <Rep.Daniel.Ortiz@akleg.gov>

Cc: 'Lindsay Allen' <lindsay_allen@live.com>

Subject: Star Funding - State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA

Committee Members,

Alaska is first in the nation in sexual assaults. Alaska Natives make up 20% of Alaska's population yet are the victims of sexual assault in almost 50% of all cases in Alaska. This equals to one Alaska Native being raped every 18 hours and this is just the reports that have been filed with law enforcement. Many victims still don't report their crime, so the real numbers are more than likely higher.

Now is not the time to take away any funding to non profits like STAR, who help serve victims of sexual assault through any needs that they may have in their healing process, from emotional support if their case goes to trial, in-house counseling and group therapy provided, assistance with housing options, a 24/7 volunteer staffed crisis hotline, and prevention through school presentations.

All STARs services are completely free which is why monetary support is desperately needed. **Please do not cut funding to these essential programs.**

Thank you

Jeff Allen

From: Nancy Wainwright <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:22 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: Unable to call in - here are my remarks HB 69 - AIDEA

Honorable Co-Chairs Foster and Merrick and House Finance Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I was unable get through on the teleconference line, so I am submitting these comments via email.

I am writing to address the appropriations for the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA). AIDEA's dividend for fiscal year ending 2022 should be carefully reviewed in light of AIDEA's questionable policies and lack of transparency. The formula AIDEA uses for its dividend should be

compared to other State entities, such as AHFC, to ensure that AIDEA is declaring the proper dividend, and not wastefully or unlawfully expending funds without legislative oversight.

AIDEA has a non-transparent, non-public process that disregards Alaska tribal governments and entities, in favor of foreign mining companies. As an example, AIDEA has held many hours of private executive sessions and work sessions and numerous hearings with Trilogy, Ambler Metals and Rick Van Neuwenhuyse about the Ambler Road Project. However, when the Alaska Tribes whose economic and subsistence security is impacted by the Amble Road requested a specific hearing with AIDEA to address their concerns, AIDEA responded:

“Both the Board Chair and the Executive Director state that public comments or statements relating to the Ambler Project fall within the “public comment” portion of the board meeting.” [email Response of AIDEA] This is limited to 2 minutes per comment.

AIDEA’s non-public, non-transparent decision-making violates the Open Meetings Law and potentially jeopardizes the finances of any Alaska project that AIDEA is handling.

The Legislature is respectfully requested to conduct an audit of AIDEA’s finances and ensure that the audit results are transparent.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Wainwright

[Wainwright Legal Services, LLC](#)

[REDACTED]

[Anchorage, Alaska 99508](#)

[REDACTED]

From: Tanya Iden <Tanya@agnewbeck.com>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:22 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Eileen Arnold <eileen_arnold@twcpeace.org>; Keeley Olson <kolson@staralaska.org>; director@petersburgwave.org

Subject: Please offset reduction in Federal VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) Funds

Representative Foster, Representative Merrick, and Honorable members of the AK House Finance Committee,

Thank you for your service to our great state. It is a hard job to legislate and understand all of the complex issues that come before you. I appreciate the time and dedication you commit to the democratic process. I understand you are considering and deliberating HB 69 (Operating Budget) and HB71(Mental Health Budget) in your committee this week. As you have likely been made aware by now, CDVSA (Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) has been informed that all victim service providers in the state will suffer a 30-33% funding cut as of July 1 due to a reduction in funding that has occurred with the Federal Victim of Crime Act’s (VOCA) Crime Victims Fund (CVF) – an non-taxpayer source of funding that supports thousands of crime victims services providers serving millions of victims of crime annually . This massive cut to funding for Alaska’s community-based victim services agencies will be devastating to communities throughout the state. **I ask that you please consider offsetting a decrease in federal VOCA funds by**

appropriating state funds to support the numerous victim service agencies across the state who are impacted by this cut in federal funding. As our state is about to receive a massive influx of funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, please consider designating some for a short term fix for victim services. A longer term fix is in the works at the federal level; however, it's estimated that it will take approximately 2 years.

I have had the great honor to work with several of the agencies who are impacted by this funding cut. Currently, I sit on the Board of Directors to STAR (Standing Together Against Rape) and through my work as a consultant I have helped to support the work of TWC, Tundra Women's Coalition in Bethel and the SHARE coalition in Petersburg which is supported by WAVE (Working Against Violence Everywhere). I have seen firsthand the commitment and dedication of the staff of these organizations, their efficient operations, and the real need that they serve in communities. To have 1/3 of a non-profit organization budget eliminated means laying off staff and a dramatic reduction in services to Alaskans who have been the victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

This is particularly troubling since, as I imagine you know well, Alaska has some of the highest rates of domestic violence and sexual assault in the nation. Over half of all adult women in Alaska report having experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or both in their lifetime in our State. That statistic is horrifying. That means one out of every two women in Alaska carry with them the trauma and toll of having experienced this violence. The community-based agencies across Alaska that are there for community members experiencing violence must be made whole and funded fully.

I know this funding issue is not of your making, but I hope you will consider helping in the short term.

Thank you so much for your time. Wishing you well in Juneau.

Best,

Tanya Iden

907-205-0108

Tanya Iden

Principal | Owner, Agnew:: Beck Consulting

907.222.5424 Office | tanya@agnewbeck.com | www.agnewbeck.com | Engage. Plan. Implement.

Dena'inaq e'nen'aq' gheshtnu ch'q'u yeshdu. (Dena'ina) *I live and work on the land of the Dena'ina. (English)*

From: Morgan Lim <morgan.lim@ppallianceadvocates.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 9:10 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB69 Testimony

Hello House Finance Committee,

Please find attached testimony from Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates on HB69 Operating Budget regarding funding for victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Thank You,
Morgan

Morgan Lim (he/him)

Alaska Government Affairs Manager

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates - Alaska

3231 Glacier Highway | Juneau, AK 99801

C: 907.713.5733 | ppallianceadvocates.org



House Finance
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99081

Re: HB 69 (Approp: Operating Budget/Loans/Funds)

April 8th, 2021

Dear Co-Chair Merrick, Co-Chair Foster, and Finance Committee Members:

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Alaska (“PPAA”) urges the committee to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (“CDVSA”) grant program in the Public Safety Budget. Without full funding, the committee will be cutting critical, lifesaving services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

As a trusted provider of sexual assault and domestic violence survivors, PPAA is deeply committed to advancing policies and programs that work to reduce sexual assault and domestic violence, provide support for survivors, and help survivors seek justice. Alaska’s sexual assault and domestic violence rates are some of the highest in the nation – and these rates are likely underestimates because these occurrences are often tragically underreported. We know that survivors, many of whom are our patients, face a myriad of obstacles when accessing justice and seeking support services.

On April 1st, 2021, recipients of CDVSA grants were notified by the Council’s Executive Director to expect a 30 percent cut in recipient grants for FY 22, due to \$4.1 million less in anticipated federal Victims of Crime Act (“VOCA”) coming into Alaska. This means that the funds that appear in the House Finance sheets are not actually available to programs that provide emergency safety and shelter for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Without action by the House Finance Committee, these programs will experience dramatic funding decreases in less than 12 weeks.

These cuts will have a devastating impact on survivors and their families and will be particularly devastating given the increased need for these services in the wake of COVID-19. If the House Finance does not fill this funding gap, community providers will be forced to reduce services and limit emergency shelter space – which is already at capacity – meaning fewer survivors will have access to safe shelter and critical resources. This will also cut all children’s services, medical accompaniment for both domestic violence strangulation and sexual assault to hospitals, and limit access to legal assistance.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify and urge the committee to allocate adequate state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Sincerely,

Morgan Lim
Alaska Government Relations Manager
Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Alaska

From: Michelle Price <mprice@ci.unalaska.ak.us>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 5:14 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Cc: Erin Reinders <ereinders@ci.unalaska.ak.us>; Mayor Tutiakoff <mayortutiakoff@ci.unalaska.ak.us>;
Dianne Blumer <dianneblumer@gmail.com>; Nils Andreassen <nils@akml.org>

Subject: Budget Testimony for House Finance

Good afternoon,

Attached is the written testimony from Erin Reinders., City Manager on behalf of the City of Unalaska.

Regards,

Michelle Price
Administrative Coordinator



43 Raven Way
P.O. Box 610
Unalaska, Alaska 99685
Phone: (907) 581-1602
Fax: (907) 581-4469
Email: mprice@ci.unalaska.ak.us
Website: www.ci.unalaska.ak.us

CITY OF UNALASKA
43 Raven Way - P.O. Box 610
Unalaska, Alaska 99685
TEL (907) 581-1251 FAX (907) 581-4469



April 8, 2021

Representative Neal Foster
State Capitol Room 505
Juneau AK, 99801

Representative Kelly Merrick
State Capitol Room 511
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Finance Budget Testimony

Dear Representative Foster and Representative Merrick,

Thank you for taking the time to consider comments and for all your efforts on behalf of all Alaskans.

The City of Unalaska is working hard to fulfill its obligations as a local government, in spite of the various challenges that we've faced as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and our location in the Aleutian region. Our ability to do so is limited by statute, public interest, and available resources. As a result of this, we strongly support recapitalizing the Community Assistance Fund to its full amount to provide funding stability for local governments during these uncertain times. We support retaining the shared taxes in place for distribution to communities in the proposed budget.

We support all efforts leading to Reliable and High-Speed Internet, such as funding for broadband assistance and internet for schools. Unalaska's internet connection speeds impede business growth, medical services, post-secondary education, and overall quality of life. Residents are unable to fully utilize cloud-based systems to improve efficiencies and effectiveness in personal, educational, medical, and business processes. We need to do all we can to bridge this digital divide.

The cost of living in these remote areas of the state continues to grow, and Unalaska supports the PCE payment for high energy costs in most of Alaska to help cushion these expenses for our residents.

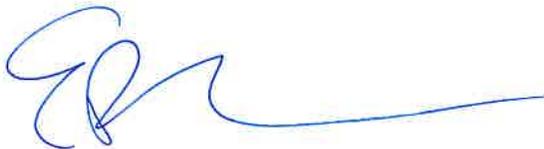
We support funding for the Alaska Marine Highway System and continue to advocate for service to Unalaska. The AMHS provides a cost-effective way for community members and businesses to travel and ship equipment and materials. The Ferry is how teachers move to this island, this is how our Aleutian Island neighbors access critical stores and services, this is how large families can travel off the island to visit loved ones, this is how the mobile mammogram van comes to our community to provide life-altering healthcare. The Alaska Marine Highway System provides an essential service to Unalaska and is necessary for our community health, safety, economic and social wellbeing.

Unalaska also supports funding for harbor facility matching grants, a component of the agreement made in the transfer of these State assets to municipal governments. We especially are in favor of funding for Unalaska's Bobby Storrs Boat Harbor, which was inherited by the City of Unalaska from the State of Alaska.

Also, our Public Safety and emergency preparedness are vital for remote communities like Unalaska. Funding for community and regional jail agreements has remained flat since 2015, and are being supported by local governments like the City of Unalaska. We also support Reinstating the Local Emergency Planning Committee funding so that local governments are better prepared for crises such as those experienced during this pandemic and natural disasters.

Again, thank you for your service to all Alaskans, and the opportunity to address these pressing issues in writing on behalf of the City of Unalaska.

Sincerely,



Erin Reinders
City Manager
City of Unalaska

From: Jennifer Peeks <jpeeks@bethelfamilyclinic.org>

Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:56 PM

To: Rep. Neal Foster <Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick <Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Cc: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Don Black <dblack@bethelfamilyclinic.org>

Subject: Written Testimony_Cuts to Victim Services_HB69 & HB71

Dear Co-Chair Foster and Co-Chair Merrick,

Please see my attached written testimony regarding concerns for the proposed cuts to victim services. Please let me know if you have additional questions or comments.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jen Peeks, LCSW
Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Bethel Family Clinic
Office 907-543-9862
www.bethelclinic.org

To: House Finance Committee
Attn: Rep. Neal Foster and Rep. Kelly Merrick
Re: Budget Cuts to Victim Service; HB69 and HB 71
Written Testimony: Jennifer Peeks, Bethel Family Clinic Behavioral Health Director

April 8, 2021

Dear Co-Chair Foster and Co-Chair Merrick:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding the proposed budget cuts to victim services. My name is Jennifer Peeks. I am a Behavioral Health Clinician and the Director of the Behavioral Health Department at the Bethel Family Clinic in Bethel, Alaska; I am writing to you today in this capacity.

Thank you to Representative Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut starting in FY2022. This will have devastating impacts to all of our communities across Alaska. Victims of crime should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

I have worked in the Yukon-Kuskokwim (YK) Delta as a social worker since 2004 and served with the Bethel Family Clinic (BFC) since 2019. Throughout my career in the YK Delta, I have developed a close working relationship with the Tundra Women's Coalition (TWC) and the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC)- IRNIAMTA IKAYURVIAT. For decades, these agencies have consistently provided crisis services, legal support, medical and behavioral health resources, shelter, preventive and educational services, and more, to the people of our region. These programs will be significantly impacted by the proposed cuts.

Our clinicians at the BFC work in partnership with TWC/CAC to ensure that our clients are safe from harm and have the support they need to navigate through traumatic and often life-threatening events. Our Behavioral Health team has collaborated both directly and indirectly with TWC/CAC in several situations where TWC/CAC were instrumental in providing rapid removal of individuals and families from crisis situations where they were at risk of being harmed and, in some situations, being killed. The TWC/CAC staff work around the clock to promote safe and healthy communities using both traditional and western approaches to meet the unique needs of each family. We desperately need their services to be fully funded.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

To: House Finance Committee
Attn: Rep. Neal Foster and Rep. Kelly Merrick
Re: Budget Cuts to Victim Service; HB69 and HB 71
Written Testimony: Jennifer Peeks, Bethel Family Clinic Behavioral Health Director

The Tundra Women's Coalition and Children's Advocacy Center play a vital role in ensuring the health and wellness of our communities; and the healing of victims and survivors of crime. We urge you to consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall so that these services may continue into the future.

Thank you for hearing our concerns and for your continued support of Alaskan communities and families.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Peeks, LCSW

Jennifer Peeks, LCSW
Bethel Family Clinic
Behavioral Health Dept. Director
Ph: 907.543.9862
jpeeks@bethelfamilyclinic.org

From: Marianne Mills <marianne.mills@ccsjuneau.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:26 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Operating Budget Written Testimony

Dear Committee Chairman and Members,

Please accept my written testimony in support of a long-range management plan for the Alaska Marine Highway to ensure that Alaskans have stable and reliable service that operates year-round.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marianne Mills
Southeast Senior Services

Alaska Marine Highway Testimony 4/8/21

586-9085

house.finance@akleg.gov

My name is Marianne Mills and I am the Program Director of Southeast Senior Services. Our mission is to help older Alaskans remain in their own homes and traditional communities for as long as possible through providing meals on wheels, wheelchair accessible transportation and other services.

We operate a network of senior centers throughout Southeast Alaska and most of the communities we serve are only accessible by boat or plane. Our staff and senior citizens live in Angoon, Craig, Haines, Hoonah, Juneau, Kake, Ketchikan, Klawock, Klukwan, Saxman, Sitka, Skagway, Wrangell, and Yakutat.

Today, I am asking you to support a long-range management plan for the Alaska Marine Highway.

The Alaska Marine Highway is a virtual lifeline to our communities and to our programs. The most cost-effective way that our senior centers in communities such as Angoon and Hoonah can get their food is through transportation made possible by the Alaska Marine Highway. In the months the ferry is not running, our food costs skyrocket. Alaskans need a stable and reliable service that operates year-round.

We also depend on the ferry to transport our lift-equipped buses to Juneau for their annual preventative maintenance. This past year when the ferry service was curtailed, our senior center vehicles were not able to get timely maintenance. This affects their ability to operate efficiently, safely, and to last for the many years we need each of them.

Most importantly, the elders in our villages depend on the Alaska Marine Highway to access life-sustaining medical care in Sitka, Ketchikan, Juneau and beyond. Especially during the winter months and in inclement weather when planes cannot fly, the elders need the ferry to get the care they need. Older Alaskans have built our state and we owe it to them to give them access to the services they need through dependable Alaska Marine Highway service.

Thank you so much for allowing me to testify in support of the Alaska Marine Highway system.

From: Helen Howarth <citymanager@cityofcordova.net>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:37 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: City of Cordova letter

Attached is City of Cordova House Finance committee public testimony

CITY OF CORDOVA



April 9, 2021

Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

City of Cordova is an isolated fishing town of nearly 2500 people. We take pride in being able to maintain a good quality of life through services paid for with local sales and property taxes.

Cordova looks to the State as a partner in investments in our economic future but also for support in extraordinary times of need. In FY20, COVID-19 resulted in an unexpected loss of nearly \$700K in budgeted revenue, eroding our reserves, and potentially impacting essential services City of Cordova provides its residents.

Cordova cannot make up this lost revenue on its own. The State can help by avoiding cost-shifting or cuts that impact local governments. We ask that you fully fund Community Assistance and School Bond Debt Reimbursement programs. We applaud rejection of the Department of Law's misdemeanor proposals. We encourage continued revenue sharing arrangements.

Economic growth is only possible with investment. As a coastal community, Cordova has relied on the Alaska Marine Highway for its transportation needs for over 50 years. The sudden and dramatic defunding of the ferry system (last year we had no service for eight months) has been debilitating. Cordova pleads for appropriate funding of the Alaska Marine Highway system.

Cordova's economy is fisheries based and we are consistently ranked among the top ten commercial fishing ports nationally, producing over 80 million pounds of seafood valued at over \$60 million dollars. Cordova contributes an average of \$1.3 million annually to the State of Alaska in fisheries taxes. Reliable science-based Fisheries policy and adequate funding for Alaska Department of Fish and Game for management is essential for the statewide fishing industry to succeed.

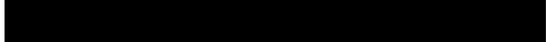
Rebuild of our South Harbor is Cordova's top infrastructure priority. We have been the state's top-rated harbor project for two years and hope our \$5M request is funded this year. This nearly \$30M harbor improvement project will sustain the fishing fleet that drives our economy. Cordova has skin in the game with a voter approved \$5M bond and we are actively pursuing other funding avenues.

We acknowledge the difficult financial decisions you are facing, but also understand the possibilities presented by the Federal Government through the American Rescue Act. I encourage you to invest those resources for maximum local impact.

Sincerely,

Helen Howarth
City Manager

From:



Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 6:33 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Neal Foster
<Rep.Neal.Foster@akleg.gov>; Rep. Kelly Merrick

<Rep.Kelly.Merrick@akleg.gov>

Subject: Scanned from a Xerox Multifunction Printer

advocate@kwrcc.org

From: advocate@kwrcc.org
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:49 AM
To: Advocate Desk
Subject: VOCA cuts

4/9/2021

My name is Trinidad C. Ardoña, I work at KWRCC, Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center, and I am writing this letter in behalf of my agency.

I appreciate Governor Dunleavy's recognition of April as Sexual Assault awareness month, for recognizing the need for more prosecuting Attorney's in the Department of Law's budget, to respond to Sexual Assault backlog cases, and His call to all of us to " make Alaska the safest State in the country, especially for our most vulnerable, our women and children "

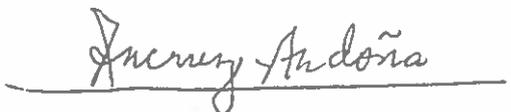
Thank you to Representative Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the CDVSA, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, We just learned that federal funding for LIFE-SAVING advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have a devastating impact across Alaska.

On 4/1/2021, community based victim services agencies received a memo from CDVSA stating that the State of Alaska FFY 2021 VOCA, Victims of Crime Act, funds would be reduced by \$ 4.1 million and that all victim services should expect a 30% cut in their grants starting FY 2022. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cut. These cuts will have a devastating impact on survivors, victims, their families and our community work. This last year, KWRCC, Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center, had contact and helped 632 clients and responded to 500 community based inquiries for information, referrals, and safety planning. We are a temporary home where women and their children can relax and feel safe. Advocates are actively involved in restructuring their lives, from helping them to find housing, resources, crisis intervention, information and referrals, employment, education via discussion sessions, reading materials and support groups. KWRCC also do outreach programs to the Kodiak community, Coast Guard Base and Kodiak Island Villages.

We are reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. Please HELP us in Kodiak by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Please consider allocating State General Funds to cover the gap created by VOCA shortfall. Alaska Continues to have some of the highest rates of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence against children. Now is NOT the TIME to cut life saving services to victims and survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

1


TRINIDAD C. ARDONA
4/9/2021

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:48 AM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: written testimony for House Finance Hearing
Importance: High

Dear House Finance Committee,

Please see the attached written testimony for House Finance Hearing on April 9, 2021.

Respectfully,
Mike Hicks

Cordova Volunteer Fire Department

FIRE CHIEF MICHAEL HICKS



P.O. Box 304
Cordova, Alaska 99574
(907) 424-6117 or (907) 424-6100
Fax (907) 424-6120
email: fire@cityofcordova.net

April 7, 2021

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

My name is Michael Hicks and I am a Cordova Family Resource Center Board Member, the Chief of the Cordova Volunteer Fire Department, and a Retired Chief of Police for the City of Cordova. I have been a member of the Cordova community for the past 32 years and have a vast variety of first-hand knowledge and experience concerning crimes of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and homelessness in our community.

First, I appreciate Governor Dunleavy's recognition of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, for recognizing the need for more prosecuting attorneys in the Department of Law's budget, to respond to sexual assault backlog cases, and his call to all of us to "make Alaska the safest state in the country, especially for our most vulnerable, our women and children."

Thank you to Rep. Merrick and the DPS subcommittee for their work to fully fund victim services through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Unfortunately, we just learned that federal funding for life-saving advocacy and shelter services for victims and survivors is being cut. This will have devastating impacts across Alaska.

On April 1 community-based victim services agencies received a memo from CDVSA stating that the State of Alaska's FFY2021 VOCA (victims of crime act) funds would be reduced by \$4.1 million and that all victim services should expect a 30% cut in their grants starting in FY2022. Crime victims should not be expected to bear the brunt of these cuts.

Being in a remote community like Cordova presents unique challenges as it does in other remote communities around the state. We have extremely limited resources that are already being strained to their limits. A 30% cut to our program would be devastating. We do not have a homeless shelter and must pay as we go to house those in need. In FY21 we have provided temporary housing for 195 people so far. Last year we did not house any homeless people because there was no money. These people were housed this year from a grant we were awarded. The number of DV shelter nights have more than doubled from the FY20 total of 80 to 171 and counting in FY21. The direct services we provide to DV/SA victims have climbed from 804 in FY20 to 1,444 in FY21 so far.

These are a couple examples. Our numbers are on the rise across the board and will likely continue to rise. If we sustain any cuts to our program, we will have to make choices between providing services or paying the rent and utilities to keep our doors open.

This will be devastating to the survivors, victims, their families, and our community work.

If you combine the direct non DV/SA participants (420), the Crisis Helpline responses (279), the Covid-19 services (259), and the DV/SA program participants (132), the combined total represents 1,090 people who have benefited directly in some way from some of our programs. That number represents approximately 50% of our entire community of 2,100 people that have received one or more of our services.

It makes absolutely no sense to cut these vital programs when people all over the country are asking for exactly these types of services to be provided. I cannot speak for other communities, but I would be willing to bet that they have similar if not higher needs.

We are reaching out to you to let you know that this is happening now. I volunteer as a board member at the Cordova Family Resource Center and the Fire Chief at the Cordova Volunteer Fire department and see firsthand the importance these lifesaving supports offer to victims. Please help us in Cordova by finding a solution to this crisis before the end of session.

Consider allocating state general funds to cover the gap created by the VOCA shortfall.

Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. Now is not the time to cut lifesaving services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,



Michael Hicks
Chief

From: Kristi Williams <kwilliams1@calistacorp.com>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 10:48 AM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Cc: mark leary <napaimute@gci.net>

Subject: Public Testimony: Operating Budget - Requesting Full Funding for the Kuskokwim Ice Road

Good morning,

Calista Corporation, headquartered in Anchorage with an office in Bethel, in coordination and consultation with the Native Village of Napaimute, would like to submit the attached public testimony in regard to the Operating Budget.

Thank you,

Kristi Nuna'q Williams, J.D.
Government Relations Manager
Direct: (202) 374-4901



CALISTA CORPORATION
www.calistacorp.com



CALISTA CORPORATION
WWW.CALISTACORP.COM



February 11, 2021

The Honorable Michael Dunleavy
Governor of the State of Alaska
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001 Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

The statement you issued recently regarding the Emergency Declaration for Tuluksak said that your administration is working with local partners “to ensure the people of Tuluksak have constant access to drinking water and that the ice road is maintained.” Calista, an Alaska Native Regional Corporation representing over 33,000 shareholders in the Yukon Kuskokwim (YK) Delta region, and the Native Village of Napaimute, write to thank you for issuing the Declaration and to call attention to the ongoing emergency needs of our Region. We request the State deploy the National Guard to deliver fresh water supplies to Tuluksak and direct a portion of emergency funds toward maintenance of the essential and life sustaining Kuskokwim Ice Road that is maintained by Napaimute in collaboration with other Tribes and regional organizations.

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region in Western Alaska is home to 56 federally recognized Tribes, nearly one-quarter of all the Tribes in Alaska. The YK Delta communities are located along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and Bering Sea. Spread across an area the size of New York State, our communities are not connected to each other by road system and the only access to each community, and the rest of Alaska, is by ice road, frozen tundra, or airplane. The YK Delta region also has some of the highest costs of living in the nation and vehicle access to Bethel can offer significant cost savings for food, fuel, and other essential supplies, and of course, access to health care. Over 200 vaccinations were recently delivered by way of ice road when a doctor and two nurses traveled to Kwethluk over the frozen Kuskokwim River.

We receive near daily communications from community and Tribal leaders telling us how the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted their daily lives. Stores in villages are not always stocked, mail delivery is inconsistent and unreliable, and as you know, a recent fire devastated the Tuluksak community by burning down the only facility that provides fresh water to the village. In addition to the devastating fire, Tuluksak, along with many other YK communities, continues to suffer serious COVID-19 outbreaks and recently lost a respected elder to the virus.

With severe climate impacts now permeating the region, harsh winter blizzards frequently impede air travel and in such dangerous winter storm and blizzard conditions wind chill can cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 10 minutes. Flying in water to Tuluksak may not always be an option with weather delays. The Ice Road can also be unsafe and difficult to navigate in certain weather conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to deploy the National Guard to deliver emergency water supplies to Tuluksak, not only due of the enormous expense of flying in pallets of water, but because Tuluksak is only one big storm away from total isolation and no access to potable water amidst a COVID-19 pandemic.

Calista Corporation, the Native Village of Napaimute, Donlin Gold, the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation, and numerous other public and private organizations throughout the region and beyond, help fund the Ice Road program. The Native Village of Napaimute has long played a leading role in the establishment and maintenance of the Ice Road and works cooperatively with all the tribal transportation departments along the River. Napaimute leadership has been instrumental in maintaining the road every year, which allows families to travel to and from their communities along the frozen river.

Advocacy by Napaimute and other partners also helps fund plowing and safety marking of the winter road. The cost to carve out the first road and maintain it throughout the winter easily exceeds six figures annually. It is important to note that many State and federal agencies use the Ice Road regularly to perform governmental operations. Yet, the only maintenance funding that has been offered by the State has been by way of grant, which must be requested and secured annually.

As you know, last year the Alaska Legislature included \$50,000 in operating funds for management of the Napaimute Ice Road, similar to \$50,000 in funding that the State has long appropriated to the Northwest Arctic Borough to provide safe and efficient ice road construction between Kotzebue, Noorvik, and Kiana. Unfortunately, while the shorter Noorvik ice road funding remained intact, funding for the nearly 300-mile-long Kuskokwim Ice Road was line-item vetoed by your administration. To our rural river communities, the Kuskokwim winter Ice Road is as integral a part of the rural transportation system as the Alaska Marine Highway is to rural coastal communities, also to the many State and federal agencies that regularly use the road to carry out governmental functions. We are asking the State to provide funding parity for the rural communities of the YK Region.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 makes it clear: the duties and obligations to protect and promote the welfare of Alaska Native people as citizens belong to the State and Federal government. The Tuluksak emergency highlights just one emerging crisis in rural Alaska: dozens of villages reliant on decades-old infrastructure that is now failing. Power plants providing electricity and heat to homes are often run by old diesel generators. When old generators fail, an entire community may lose power and families can lose several weeks or months of food. In addition, dozens of rural Alaskan communities, including Tuluksak, still lack basic running water and sanitation. The State of Alaska must do more to protect the health and welfare of its rural citizens, particularly after benefitting so considerably from rural resource development resulting from ANCSA.

We are acutely aware of the fiscal challenges, particularly as our State and nation are nearly a year into this devastating pandemic. However, when it comes to supporting rural Alaska, as Calista noted in an [editorial](#) published last March, “more than 40 years and 17 billion barrels of oil after ANCSA was signed into law, it is well past time for clear and specific action by our elected officials.”

We look forward to continuing to work together and hope the Tuluksak emergency underscores the clear and critical need for your administration to support essential maintenance funding for the Kuskokwim Ice Road.

Sincerely,



Andrew Guy
President and CEO



Vice President, Native Village of Napaimute



FUNDING PARITY FOR THE YUKON KUSKOKWIM ICE ROAD

February 24, 2021

Request:

We are seeking funding parity for the Yukon Kuskokwim Region and respectfully request \$370,000 in annual operating budget funds to be appropriated to the Native Village of Napaimute to construct and maintain safety of the critical Kuskokwim Ice Road.

Background

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region in Western Alaska is home to 56 federally recognized Tribes, nearly one-quarter of all the Tribes in Alaska. The YK Delta communities are located along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and the Bering Sea. There are currently six school districts within a region spread across an area the size of New York State. Our communities are not connected to each other by road system and the only access to each community, and the rest of Alaska, is by ice road, frozen tundra, or airplane.

The YK Delta region also has some of the highest costs of living in the nation and the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted the daily lives of YK region residents. Stores in villages are not always stocked, mail delivery is inconsistent and unreliable, and a recent fire devastated the Tuluksak community by burning down the only facility that provides fresh water to the village. In addition to the devastating fire, Tuluksak, along with many other YK villages, continues to suffer virus outbreaks.

With severe climate impacts now permeating our region, harsh winter blizzards frequently impede air travel and in such dangerous winter storm and blizzard conditions wind chill can cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 10 minutes. Flying in supplies and mail is not always an option with weather delays. The Ice Road can also be unsafe and difficult to navigate in certain weather condition so frequent safety maintenance is an absolute necessity.

Current Status

The Native Village of Napaimute manages ice road construction and maintenance and a recently completed financial analysis of the true cost of Kuskokwim Ice Road maintenance established the needed

Request: Funding parity for the Yukon Kuskokwim Region and annual funding for the Ice Road.

Issue: Last year the Alaska Legislature approved funding for Kusko Ice Road maintenance; funds that were later line item vetoed by the Governor.

Solution: Pass Ice Road funding and work with Governor Dunleavy to ensure all Ice Road funds remain in the final operating budget.





maintenance cost at \$370,000 annually. The Kuskokwim Ice Road serves communities all along the river from Kasigluk to Crooked Creek and in some winters is over 300 miles long, connecting 17 or more villages. When there is a justifiable need, such as for emergency services, fuel delivery, school construction, etc. the road can be extended even further up and down the river system.

Calista Corporation, the Native Village of Napaimute, Donlin Gold and numerous other public and private organizations throughout the region and beyond, help fund the Ice Road program. The Native Village of Napaimute has long played a leading role in establishing and maintaining the Ice Road and works cooperatively with all the tribal transportation departments along the River. Napaimute's leadership has been instrumental in maintaining the road annually, which allows families to travel to and from their communities along the frozen river. Vehicle access to Bethel can offer significant cost savings for food, fuel, and other essential supplies, and of course, access to health care. Over 200 vaccinations were recently delivered via Ice Road when a doctor and two nurses traveled to Kwethluk over the frozen Kuskokwim.

Advocacy by Napaimute and other partners also helps fund plowing and safety marking of the winter road. The cost to carve out the first road and maintain it throughout the season easily exceeds six figures. It is important to note that many State and federal agencies use the Ice Road regularly to perform governmental operations. Yet, the only maintenance funding that has been offered by the State has been by way of grant, which must be requested and secured annually.

Last year the Alaska Legislature included \$50,000 in operating funds for management of the Napaimute Ice Road, similar to \$50,000 in funding that the State has long appropriated to the Northwest Arctic Borough to provide safe and efficient ice road construction between Kotzebue, Noorvik, and Kiana. Unfortunately, while funding for the shorter Noorvik ice road remained intact, funding for the nearly 300-mile-long Kuskokwim Ice Road was line-item vetoed by the Governor.

Conclusion

To our rural river communities, the Kuskokwim winter Ice Road is as integral a part of the transportation system as the Alaska Marine Highway is to rural coastal communities, also to the many State and federal agencies that regularly use the road to carry out governmental functions. We are asking the State of Alaska to provide funding parity for the rural communities of the YK Region.

If you would like more information or are interested in supporting this effort, please contact:
Kristi Williams, Government Relations Manager, Calista Corporation at kwilliams1@calistacorp.com.



A local Native Elder and musher passed away from the effects of COVID. He caught the virus long before there was a snow go trail or an ice road. But the ice road was used to bring his body home. The ice road allowed People all along the River to safely pay their respects





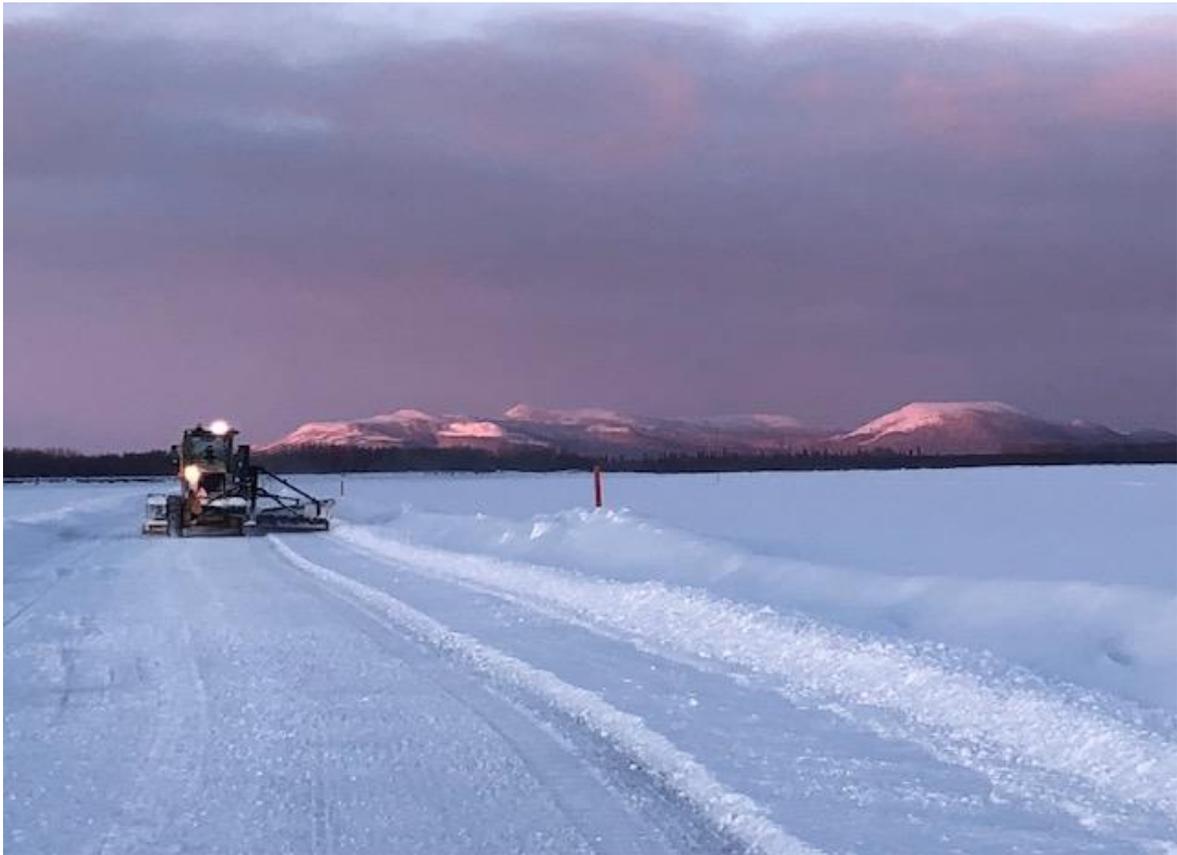
No planes due to inclement weather. 200 COVID vaccines, a doctor, and two nurses being delivered to a village via Kuskokwim Ice Road.



Driving conditions on the Kuskokwim Ice Road.









Fire Truck transport on the Kuskokwim Ice Road.

From: Brennan Cain <bcain@eyakcorp.com>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 12:42 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Cordova Family Resource Center <cfrc@ctcak.net>
Subject: Letter from The Eyak Corporation

Dear Madam or Sir,

Please see the attached letter from The Eyak Corporation.

Thanks.

Brennan



April 9, 2021

Representative Neal Foster
Representative Kelly Merrick
House Finance Committee

Via Electronic Mail to house.finance@akleg.gov

RE: Cuts to Funding for Non-Profits that Support Victims of Sexual and Domestic Violence

Dear Representatives Foster, Merrick, and Other Members of the House Finance Committee:

The Eyak Corporation submits this letter to express our support for Cordova Family Resource Center (CFRC) and other victim services non-profits across Alaska. We recently learned of an anticipated 30% reduction in funding from the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to these non-profits due to reduced federal funds.

At CFRC, these cuts will likely result in staff cuts, program reductions, and the elimination of services despite experiencing higher community need for their services in the past year. These cuts will directly impact vulnerable victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, many of whom have no other safe place to go.

As the Alaska Native Village Corporation for the Eastern Prince William Sound, Cordova and Copper River area established pursuant to ANCSA, The Eyak Corporation is concerned about the impacts these cuts will have to our Shareholders, Descendants, and their families. We have 587 Shareholders, with approximately 180 living in Cordova and an additional 160 Shareholders living in other parts of the State.

As we all unfortunately know, Alaska continues to have some of the highest rates of sexual and domestic violence, including violence against children. We urge the legislature to help fill this funding gap.

Sincerely,
The Eyak Corporation

Rod Worl
Chief Executive Officer

Nancy C. Barnes
President

Brooke Mallory
Board Chair

cc. Nicole Songer, Cordova Family Resource Center

████████████████████@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:02 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>

Subject: VOCA/CDVSA funding cuts

Hello,

I have attached a letter concerning the recent funding cuts to services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. As a community member living in Anchorage (in Rep. Rasmussen's district), I am very concerned about the serious impacts this cut in funding will have on victim services.

Thank you for your time!

Heidi

April 9, 2021

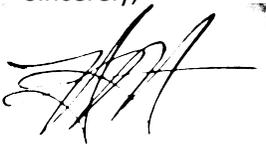
Dear Co-Chairs Foster and Merrick and all members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to you about a cut to a federal funding stream that has a dire consequence for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) receives federal funding from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Victim service agencies were just informed that they would be facing 30% cuts in the upcoming fiscal year because of cuts to VOCA which will slash funding for core services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

I support Abused Women's Aid In Crisis (AWAIC) in Anchorage. AWAIC is the only emergency shelter for victims of domestic violence in our community. Due to COVID-19 they have already had to reduce services to victims in the community. This cut will drastically reduce the funding they receive to maintain basic services for those they serve who are among the most vulnerable in our community.

I am asking that the legislature use general funds to make up for the loss of this federal funding. It is critical that AWAIC maintains its services for the safety of victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Heidi Hill', written in a cursive style.

Heidi Hill

From: Mark Lackey <mlackey@ccsalaska.org>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:34 PM
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>
Subject: FY22 State Operating Budget - Early Childhood Funding

My name is Mark Lackey. I am the Executive Director of CCS Early Learning and offer my testimony in support of the recommended \$5,000,000 increment that was offered by Representative Story in House Finance DEED subcommittee for increasing pre-k services in Alaska.

CCS Early Learning is celebrating our 50th Year (since 1971) of providing high quality early childhood education services in Chugiak, Eagle River, and the Mat-Su. I have worked for CCS for 22 of those 50 years and I am very proud of the countless young children (and their families) that we have assisted to be more prepared for success in school and in life. Our primary programs are Head Start and Early Head Start. These programs are primarily federally funded with funds flowing directly from the Federal Office of Head Start to 17 local grantees around the State of Alaska (CCS is one of these). Currently, nearly \$60 million of federal funds come into our state annually for these programs - and in some years millions more are obtained for one-time facility projects, school buses and the like. I have provided a document from the Alaska Head Start Association that shows federal funds to Alaska since 2008.

Alaska has long been behind the rest of the nation in supporting Pre-K services. This recommendation for a two year increment is a fabulous opportunity for our state to increase the number of children and families that enter the school years more prepared.

Having worked in this area for 22 years, I also have experienced the ongoing challenges that come with a fragmented and piecemeal approach to early childhood education. This recommended increment also presents an opportunity for us to establish more coordination and collaboration - more efficiency and less duplication. With that in mind, I offer four suggestions which I believe will strengthen early childhood education in Alaska, both now and in the future.

Suggested Legislative Requirements	Purpose/Background
1. Eligible applicants should include school districts and private entities who have demonstrated experience in providing and sustaining high quality preschool services in Alaska	If Alaska wants to increase Pre-K services and programming (yes please!) - all qualified and experienced hands should be able to answer the call to action.
2. Applicants must provide a community assessment that demonstrates unmet community need.	If new state Pre-K funding comes into a community with existing services (private, federal funding, etc) it could result in displacement/replacement of these services instead of increasing the availability of services to more children. In the case of federal funding, Head Start programs who are chronically under enrolled (because perhaps a new state program opened up and half the children in the community enrolled in that program) are

	<p>at risk of losing that federal funding. Currently, nearly \$60 million of federal funding comes into Alaska for Head Start and Early Head Start services that we do not want to put at risk. In addition to concerns about the number of children that are available to be served, finding qualified staff members to deliver early childhood services in some communities can be extremely difficult. Our goal as a state should be to supplement early childhood services - not to supplant.</p>
<p>3. Priority for awarding funding shall go to applications that demonstrate a high level of community collaboration and support (signed agreements, letters of support, joint ventures, etc) by any existing Head Start grantees and other early childhood education providers in the community proposed to be served. This collaboration and support must be specific to the proposed increase in Pre-K programming, not just evidenced by providing existing (and required by federal law) MOU's and MOA's. One way of addressing this in communities with multiple providers would be to provide an agreement for coordination of early childhood services.</p>	<p>Alaska has a lot of work to do in coordinating and governing an early childhood landscape that has been pieced together over time. Our communities are diverse and have different levels of existing services and resources, and every community has different early childhood education needs and priorities. Successfully meeting these diverse needs in a coordinated and non-duplicative way requires parents and all providers to work together.</p>
<p>4. Applicants should specify the locations, the eligibility criteria, the qualifications of staff, the hours of child contact, the amount of child transportation offered, curriculum to be used, assessment tool to be used and how often, provision of health, dental, nutrition, vision, and mental health screenings and services, and their plans for family engagement and involvement</p>	<p>These are all very important factors that contribute towards high quality early childhood education programs.</p>

Thank you for your service to Alaska and for the opportunity to testify. If there are questions or more information is wanted, I can be reached using the contact information below.

Mark Lackey
CCS Early Learning
Executive Director

2060 E Industrial Dr. ~ Wasilla, AK 99654
 Phone. [907-373-7000](tel:907-373-7000) Fax. [907-373-7020](tel:907-373-7020)
mlackey@ccsalaska.org

Making a difference in the lives and families of young children within our communities

Total Federal Funding for Head Start & Early Head Start Services in Alaska (including one-time funding)

