

# House Finance Committee

## Public Testimony HB 281 Op Budget

Emails received to  
[HouseFinance@akleg.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@akleg.gov)

By 5:00pm on March 4, 2022

**From:** MIKE DOUVILLE Jr. <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 1:48 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** energy relief \$1,300

YES, I could use this, I recently filled my tank in February and I'm still paying the balance. My only source of income is through SSA= social security \$1282/month. I have property tax I need to save up for , I have an insurance bill and a major repair to my deck roof that collapsed from the snow this winter . I am the only occupant at my residence so some energy relief would be much appreciated. Please send money directly to my oil account at DELTA- WESTERN OIL SERVICES /ACCOUNT= RES3561 that's if you get it through the back stabbing way of government politics. I send my sincerity, hope and good luck, Mike Douville jr.

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**From:** Rebecca Dunne <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 1:04 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Base student allocation

Dear committee members,

I am strongly in favor of increasing the base student allocation for Alaska public schools. Please invest in our students. The legislature has let the base student allocation remain the same for the past seven years, but inflation has not stopped. It is more expensive to maintain school buildings and offer quality educational programs for students now than it was seven years ago. Alaska needs strong public education. It is time to increase the base student allocation.

Thank you,  
Rebecca Dunne

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Rebecca Dunne (she/her)

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Michael Bailey <m Bailey@hopealaska.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 1:02 PM

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

**Subject:** Support for HB281/HB282 SDS Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Waitlist Amendments

To: Members of the House Finance Committee

Re: Testimony on Operating Budget

Hope Community Resources Inc. is in in full support of the proposed amendments to the budget that the HSS department develop a five-year plan, in collaboration with stakeholders, to eradicate the waitlist for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities waiver and to prevent waitlists for other Home and Community Based Waivers, and submit the plan to the Co-Chairs of the Finance Committees and the Legislative Finance Division by December 20, 2022, and that the department draw a minimum of 70 new individuals from the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities waiver waitlist in FY23 to receive services.

Eradicating the waitlist and the extended waiting times for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities has been a mission objective of Hope Community Resources Inc. for decades. On behalf of Hope's leadership, we extend our gratitude to Representative Josephson and Representative Snyder for introducing these amendments and to the members of the House Finance Sub-Committee for their full support.

Supporting these amendments helps to assure all Alaskans with disabilities have access to needed supports to live full and meaningful lives in communities of choice across the state, and tangibly supports the DD Shared Vision.

Thank you for your consideration!

Michael Bailey, MBA

Deputy Executive Director  
Hope Community Resources Inc

Ph (907) 433 4721  
Fax (907) 564 7429



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**From:** Karyn Janssen <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 1:01 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Base Student Allocation

I find it appalling that since my kids were in FNSB SD schools in the 1970's, and their scores were acceptable and above average on the local graph, and Outstanding on the National graph, that Alaska has fallen to #51 in student standings in the USA.

None of the \$\$\$\$ given to ANY OTHER area of the State of Alaska budget has the long term impact that EDUCATION \$\$\$\$ do. Please pass the increase to the BSA. Otherwise, tomorrows young parents will be spending their gigantic PFDs MOVING OUT OF STATE, so their children can get a decent education!

Sincerely,  
Karyn Janssen,  
Fairbanks, AK

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**From:** Bradley Cross <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 12:51 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Fy23 budget

Please don't pass this proposed budget. The amount of overlapping expenses and layered bureaucracy is astounding and wasteful. The Medicaid system alone has ballooned in the past 5 years and it shows no signs of slowing.

You were hired to do the job of controlling expenses for our debt ridden operating budget.

Bradley Cross

[REDACTED]  
Soldtona, AK 99669  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Daniel Rizzolo <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 12:42 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Raise the BSA please

Hello Finance Committee Members,

I am the parent of a 6<sup>th</sup> grader in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District. Our education budget is in dire straits and our schools are about to fall off the cliff of austerity. The schoolboard is closing schools, reorganizing school grades, cutting programs, increasing class size. It's a mess. A mess that did not need to happen and a mess you can help clean-up.

It's been 7 years since the base student allocation has increased. Not only must you increase it, you must increase it enough to make up for the failure to make those past annual increases.

You must forward-fund education. Giving teachers pink slips because the budget is rarely set in time to give schools clarity on hiring is no way to run public education, or anything else. Be responsible.

Fix our state budget. How many years has it been now? Since 2015? The only solution so far has been draconian cuts and promises of huge PFD payouts. This is dumb. Thanks to those cuts, we now have a UA system that has been greatly diminished to the point where I, an alumnus, would not recommend it to anyone. We have fewer state troopers. We have less money to care for our roads. We have less ferry service. We have less of a community. You are failing us by keeping your head in the sand and waiting for the price of oil to increase and stay unrealistically high over long-periods of time.

Diversify the state's income. I want to pay for the state services that are important to me and make this state a great place to live, a safe place to live. We all are obligated by living in Alaska to pay for those services. I want good public schools with well supported teachers and art, music, band, sports. I want roads that get repaired and cleared of snow on a timely basis. I want state troopers that are not stretched so thin that they don't have time to investigate crimes like mail theft and fuel theft. I want support for those in my community who are most in need and at risk.

We need taxes. That includes a sales tax and a state income tax. How much income is generated by people living in Alaska only seasonally and working in industries like commercial fishing and tourism? They need to pay their share. We all must pay our share.

Our children are the future of this state. You are failing them and you are failing the future of Alaska. Do better. Do better now.

Be responsible. Make hard decisions. Stop promising rainbow unicorns and \$3K PFD checks. Enough nonsense. That helps no one.

Thanks for your time and service.

Respectfully,

Daniel Rizzolo

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From: Andy Cizek <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Friday, March 4, 2022 12:28 PM

To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
Subject: Budget Testimony

The operating budget for the state for fy23 has so many overlapping agencies it's crazy. They cover the same things over and over again like child services. Now I not saying this or other programs aren't important but what I am a saying is that I don't believe anyone knows what all these sub agencies are supposed to do and what areas they cover yet alone if the money allocated is doing what it's supposed to do. Check out the admin costs. Over 20% goes to that alone. Too heavy??? Maybe a flat tax and one computer programmed from one IT agency can keep track of all taxes removing tons of overlap with one change??? The way it is now property owners who get no subsidies of any kind pay for the majority of taxes collected in the state via property tax as well as borough and city tax as well as every other hidden tax out there and there's a lot. Retirement is another one yet alone early, k-12 school and uaa funding and also corrections , state troopers and the injustice system. Crazy! All the nonessential items (community and reg affairs at 11 million, rev sharing fisheries taxes at 3 million, alaska oil and gas conservation comm at 8 million, alaska seafood marketing institute at 28 million, community residential centers at 17 million, alaska state council of arts at 4 million, alaska state libraries archives and museums at 18 million, environmental health at 19million, air quality at 11 million, spill prevention and response at 20 million, water at 27 million) need to be removed till we get spending under control. All semi essential items need to be cut by at least 10% with that continuing until the spending is under control. All the so called essential items need to be cut by up to 5% until spending is under control. As government is set up there's no incentive to not spend your entire budget and beg for more. If you don't spend it all no matter how frivolously and beg for more the next year your budget will be cut to the new amount so where is the incentive but to spend all you have and beg for more. Set up a new system. Don't follow other states who are further in debt then we are already. Does the motor vehicle division even bring in 18 million in a year to even justify its so called purpose and existence? How about the overlapping agencies of population management at 259 million, health and rehabilitation services at 76 million, children services at 178 million, juvenile justice at 58 million (if there even is such a thing), public assistance at 283 million, public health at 120 million, disability services at 51 million, Medicaid services at 2.3 BILLION, vocational rehabilitation at 26 million, child support services at 25 million, not to mention other agencies supporting if not overlapping like the criminal division at 40 million, civil division at 49 million, alaska state troopers at 166 million, council on domestic violence and sexual abuse at 29 million, statewide support at another 49 million, administration support at 52 million (I'm sure I missed a number of other agencies in this 84 page document) and you're telling me none of these agencies can be cut at all and you can assure me that none of them overlap and that all is accounted for and what the money is allocated for is actually used precisely for its purpose? It looks to me like there is plenty of areas to cut the budget and the pork especially considering all the pet and pork projects relying on grant monies to finance their entire existence. Please do your job that you were hired to do or please resign so we can put in new people who can. Thank you for your listening ear.

Keep looking up!!!!

Andy Cizek

[REDACTED]

Soldotna, alaska 99669

[REDACTED]

Please call me anytime !

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**From:** [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:57 AM

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

**Subject:** Supporting \$912,200 increment to the Senior Community Based Grants

Dear Representatives:

I am writing in support of increasing funding for the Senior Community Based Grants as proposed by the House Finance HSS Subcommittee.

As you know - Senior Grant funding has remained essentially flat over the past decade, as inflation eats into their ability to provide services to an ever-growing population of Alaskan seniors in need. It makes sense economically to fully fund this program - much more efficient to care for people at home rather than in expensive acute, assisted. or skill nursing facility care

As an RN who has worked with seniors in the community for the past several decades, I know what a critical difference these senior safety net program can make in keeping our most vulnerable seniors safe and well cared for at home across the state. I have seen first-hand how one serious illness or injury to the senior/spouse can throw them into financial chaos just as they need to access community services to stay safely at home. They struggle to stay home - unable access basic services they may end up in an institution despite their wishes. Some seniors spend extra weeks or even months (!) in the hospital because the services they need to go home safely are not available to them. And other seniors end up in staying in Anchorage because their communities can't provide the support they need to return home safely. As a senior citizen, I want those services available if I ever do find myself in one of those situations!

Thank you again for supporting a realistic increase in funding for Senior and Disability Grant funding.

Pat Dooley

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, Alaska 99507

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Kristen Olive <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:46 AM

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

**Subject:** BSA

To the Legislature,

I am a teacher and parent in the Fairbanks Borough School District. I am writing a quick note during my lunch in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation.

We have such a great state and need to value our education system. Our constitution indicates that it is your responsibility to "maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the state".

Part of maintaining the schools is funding the schools across our state.

Please do the right thing and increase the BSA to keep a high quality of education across our state!

Please don't force districts to cut arts, music and teachers. We have been hit hard over the last 5 years.

Thanks for your time and attention to the important issue of educating the future leaders and citizens of our awesome state!

Sincerely,  
Kristen Olive  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

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**From:** Steve Rollins <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:42 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Funding for the University of Alaska

Good Morning,

I am contacting the House Finance Committee to express my support for the proposed funding for the University of Alaska passed by the UA subcommittee. After years and years of budget cuts it is critical to start the process of restoring the universities by passing these modest increases for the operating budget, the health programs, the statewide library programs, and the mariculture and fisheries programs.

Thank you for your support and investment in Alaska's future.

Steve Rollins  
[REDACTED]  
Anchorage, AK 99516

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**From:** tamara lodge <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:28 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Increasing the Base Student Allocation

Please grow our state by supporting our children!

By increasing the base student allocation you will show the community that you consider our children important enough to invest in. The last few years have been overwhelming and unsettling. Our children need consistency and support. Right now in Fairbanks, they are faced with the opposite. My son's sixth grade class has 34 students. 34 students. These



children are not receiving the education they need, or the support they need, to help them grow into the best humans they can be. Three local schools are being closed. Music and art is continuously being cut. Education is not cookie cutter, our children need diversity. They need music, art, creative outlets. Classrooms need assistants. Teachers need to know they are valued.

Please, show our children that they matter!

Sincerely, concerned parent  
Tamara Martz

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**From:** Fu Baos Mom <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:17 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Budget items in HB 281 and HB 282

RE: Budget items in HB 281 and HB 282

Please support the increase for Behavioral Grant Programs, the pandemic has increased the need for Alaskans including our family. The IDD Waiver Waitlist needs to be reduced so I support the increase in funds. The independent living service providers as well as the OPA also need the increased funding.

Regards,  
Clare Pavia  
[REDACTED]  
Juneau, AK 99801

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**From:** Lars Hansen <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 10:14 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Please increase BSA!

Hello, my name is Lars Hansen, and I'm a teacher in the Fairbanks Northstar borough school district at Hutchison High.

Over the last 13 years of my teaching, it's been increasingly apparent that there is insufficient funding for what we in the education system are trying to do for our students.

During the past three years, four positions have been cut in our school which started at 27 teachers strong. Going into next year we will lose two more positions.

Meanwhile, we have roughly the same number of students.

We've been watching academic and sports programs getting cut, and student support activities being cut during this time.

Please consider increasing the Base Student Allocation.

While I fully realize that this won't solve the economic crisis that Alaska is facing with oil prices being low, it is a step forward in preventing education from foundering.

Thanks, Lars Hansen

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**From:** Martha Tansik <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 9:57 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Department of Public Safety---CDVSA

Dear Finance Committee members,

I am writing in support of the proposed budget for the Department of Public Safety, CDVSA. I am the President of the Board of Directors for Abused Women's Aid In Crisis (AWAIC) in Anchorage. AWAIC is the largest domestic violence shelter in state, a dubious honor in a state that has rates of domestic violence and sexual assault eclipsing those of other states.

Perhaps surprisingly, AWAIC is the only provider of legal advocacy services dedicated to supporting respondents with the protective order process. Last year we helped 298 individuals with protective orders and referrals to pro bono services. This is a unique program that supports both AWAIC participants and the community as a whole. Regardless of our side of the aisle, we all believe that no one should be subjected to domestic violence and that there is a moral imperative to assist those who have suffered at the hands of loved ones.

CDVSA's funding formalizes an integral part of the financial well-being of AWAIC's 67 bed shelter, allowing us to support 405 women, men, and children with emergency shelter, safety planning, crisis intervention, and case management last year. Another 177 were assisted through nonresidential support receiving case management, resources and referrals, and personal support. AWAIC is the only emergency domestic violence shelter in Anchorage and is uniquely equipped to support victims in crisis. The CDVSA funding is imperative to that ability.

I know resources are stretched thin, but this is a population who do not have options elsewhere--and we as a state have to commit to in order to turn the rising tide of abuse. I sincerely appreciate your support of CDVSA and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Sincerely,

Martha Tansik

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**From:** Jennifer Arseneau <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 9:56 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support Education

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

As you prepare the upcoming budget, I encourage you to consider our state's present and future. Education funding is core to a healthy state now and in years to come. Families need and want quality schools with music, art, sports, and other opportunities. Our children deserve and need class sizes where they get adequate attention. Educators need sustainable working conditions and adequate pay. Please increase the base student allocation. It is long overdue.

As education doesn't stop after high school, I also encourage you to invest in the University of Alaska. Stable and appropriate funding for all our educational institutions will lead to a thriving state.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Arseneau  
[REDACTED]  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

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**From:** Jenna Hamm <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 9:50 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** HB 281 Testimony

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing to you this morning to testify in favor of increasing the allocation for K-12 education by increasing the amount of the Base Student Allocation.

The BSA has not seen a dollar more for the last five years, steady at \$5930. During this time school districts' operating expenses have increased. Property and liability insurance premiums have risen by 49%. Health insurance premiums have increased 25% and the cost of fuel oil has gone up by 42%. Even less volatile commodities such as coal for the district's boilers and electricity to power the school buildings have each gone up 13%.

It is unconscionable to maintain a flat BSA while the costs of goods and services inevitably go up each year, goods and services that directly enable districts to fulfill the state's public education mandate. Efficiencies and cost savings measures have been implemented district-wide, leaving our only remaining options to begin to cut student services, increase classroom sizes and forgo student transportation. How can districts continue to provide an excellent education every day for our students when we're being forced to compromise excellence?

Please fulfill your obligation to Alaska's students by increasing the basic funding for K-12 education in HB 281.

Sincerely,  
Jenna Hamm

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School Board Member  
Denali Borough School District, Seat B  
Cell: 907-505-0534 | Work: 907-683-2290  
[www.dbsd.org](http://www.dbsd.org)

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**From:** Toni <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 8:46 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Please Invest in childcare and Pre-K Education

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

Thank you for your work and especially for your goal of using state funds for long-term investments that will set the foundation for a solid Alaska economy in the next 10-30 years. For those of us who live here and hope our children have a reason to stay here, this time frame is the important one. But what about people who are worried about their finances in the period of days to weeks not decades? There are some areas of overlap between immediate and long-term needs that deserve your laser focused attention.

- 1) Subsidized high quality childcare that supports working families in the short-term and builds a capable work force in the long-term. This means help families pay for high quality childcare.
- 2) Create incentives for people to work in the childcare sector. This means add to the paychecks and/or benefits of these workers so that they are competitive with other jobs. Could there be a way to provide them good health insurance benefits as a group for example? A state matching fund for their IRA's? These are things childcare businesses cannot afford but would be possible for our state to contribute.

I have been an Alaskan from childhood onward for over 50 years. Please don't add to our boom and bust history. We have some breathing room with the current high oil prices. Please find ways to help the people who need it in ways that benefit us all, that does not mean lump sum payouts to everyone. Please no more booms and busts,

Antonia Sparrow

Anchorage, AK

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**From:** kanaan bausler <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 8:15 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** I support increased funding for public education

I support increased funding for public education.

Thanks you

-Kanaan Bausler  
Juneau

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**From:** Sharon Hansen <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 8:13 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Please fund our schools

It's hard enough as it is to retain new teachers these days, but to give them a pink slip after their first year of teaching and then pull them back in right before the school year starts is not a good system. Three schools are closing, staff are being cut, critical programs (music+) will be non existent. Can you even imagine being in a Kindergarden or first grade classroom that has 30+ kids in it? I definitely would not want to be that teacher.

I recently had close friends say that they are seriously considering leaving Fairbanks because they are concerned about the education system. Do we want people to leave? Please fund our schools.

Sharon Hansen  
Fairbanks, Alaska

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**From:** Laurie Hueffer <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 7:41 AM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support BSA increase

I am writing in support of an increase to the BSA to benefit our students and communities.

The BSA, an amount the state provides per student each year, has not seen an increase in seven years. During that time, we've seen our schools increase class sizes and force cuts on important programs to stretch district dollars.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough is closing schools and is cutting programs and educator positions. While physical space due to overall reduced student numbers may be justified, the outcome does not balance the budget shortfall in-part due to the long-term lack of funding due to an insufficient BSA.

I strongly urge you to fund the most important part of our state, our students and communities, recognizing the need to adjust the BSA regularly for inflation. We teachers cannot serve our students when we have large class sizes and inadequate resources. Please help us provide the services our future deserves.

Thanks for your time,  
Laurie Hueffer

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**From:** [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2022 8:39 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Budget Testimony

I am writing to express my support for the proposed \$50 million increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This amount directly represents the investment that Alaska makes in its future - the public education of our children. Yet it has remained stagnant for seven years, without increasing AT ALL, even to account for inflation. Do we not see the need any longer to invest in our future? During those same seven years, we've seen class sizes increase and cuts to important programs, such as music and the arts, in order to stretch school district dollars. These directly reduce the quality of education we can provide to Alaska's children and this stagnation is a direct reflection of Alaska's Legislature.

The proposed increase to the BSA is only part of a multi-pronged effort to ensure that Alaska's kids have every opportunity to succeed in the classroom - and that success reverberates through the entire community. Appropriately funded schools are also part of the economic engine of Alaska's communities. Coming from Fairbanks, I have been heavily involved in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District's effort to continue providing a quality education to our kids in the face of inadequate funding by the state. The District Administration has had to make extremely hard decisions to close schools and lay off teachers and staff, cut programs and eliminate services. They have done their part and now the state of Alaska must do its part. We cannot continue to say that we value our children's' futures - the real future of Alaska - if we don't invest in it.

Sincerely,  
Caroline Brown  
[REDACTED]  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Jim Bailey <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2022 8:33 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Budget Testimony

I am Jim Bailey and have lived in Anchorage for 45 years. I am currently Involved with the Anchorage Senior activity center and with the municipal senior advisory commission. I am a senior citizen and an advocate for senior rights and concerns. I am asking your support for financial support for bills that support senior benefits. Specifically for telehealth and for Senior grants. These help seniors Stay at home, be safer, And also help their caregivers if appropriate.

Jim Bailey  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Erin Gleason <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 3, 2022 7:15 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support of Increase to Base Student Allocation

Hello,

Rep Grier Hopkins has recommended an increase of \$50 million to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) . I am in support of this increase!! This small investment will have a significant rate of return by providing better education for Alaskan children. Please vote in favor of this increase.

Thank you,  
Erin Gleason  
(Fairbanks resident)

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**From:** E Nadin <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 2:02 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** increase support in Alaska's public schools

I am the parent of public schoolchildren in Fairbanks, AK.

I would like to see the financial support for public education increase in Alaska. It is scary, as a parent, to hear year after year that our teachers are getting pink slips and our classroom sizes will be increasing (again). The classrooms are bulging, with typically 28 kids per room in K-6. Fairbanks just voted to eliminate music and arts in the schools. Three elementary school buildings are closing. These are cuts that have to be made because of the current financial situation, but we should not be in this crisis. Our kids shouldn't have to face annual tightening of school resources.

If you are looking for a place to save money for public schools, consider getting rid of the supplement for homeschoolers. As someone who homeschooled my kids for a year, I can tell you I would have gladly returned the \$2K per kid to our public schools. Homeschooling should be a choice, but it is a CHOICE, and public schools are a NECESSITY because they are available to all.

Please do what you can to increase the state financial support of our public K-12 schools. I am willing to pay state income tax and to forego a full PFD in order to see this happen.

Elisabeth Nadin  
mother of Fairbanks Public School kids

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**From:** Diana Johnson <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:21 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** HB 281

House Finance Committee,  
Please support Alaska's students with an additional \$50 million in funding proposed for K-12 public education. It has been years since the Base Student Allocation has been increased for Alaska's students, and the strain on students, educators, schools, and districts has been increasing in intensity each year. Students' mental and physical health requires the presence of dedicated teachers, nurses, and counselors in buildings. Due to strained budgets, staff have been lost, turnover has increased, and stress on remaining educators and school staff has increased. Alaska's children and Alaska's future workforce are losing more with each passing year. Please allocate one-time funds for this year's state education budget AND instate a plan to increase Alaska kids' Base-Student-Allocation to make up for these years of strained school budgets.  
Thank you,  
Diana Johnson  
Wendler Middle School Nurse  
Anchorage, AK 99508

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**From:** CJ Koan <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:09 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Public Testimony HB 281

Hello -

I am emailing representing myself.

Please consider rescheduling for public testimony as there has been little time to review this with many changes.

This is not a time to continue adding funds to EVERY special interest group looking for more money. It is time for the state to use the additional funding to pay the STATUTORY PFD to the Alaskan residents, then reduce the state budget to a sustainable amount without need for supplemental funding from the PFD. State legislators are setting the example of a "lawless" state by not following the state statutes. The statutory PFD is easy - follow the law. A balanced budget is possible, but items will have to be removed to do it. Of course this isn't popular, but it is the right thing to do for the future generations.

One area that could be reduces is EDUCATION. By creating completion, and having education funding follow the child, public schools will have to make the necessary changes to keep the children and the funding. The normal status of pouring more dollars into the education department isn't working and



must be changed. We are one of the worst in the nation for education. More money obviously isn't the answer.

To summarize:

1. Pay the STATUTORY PFD and the back pay owed the Alaskan residents.
2. Balance the budget without using the PFD funding.
3. Reduce education spending.

Thank you,  
CJ Koan  
Wasilla, AK

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**From:** kathleen shoop <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 2:45 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** State and Capital Budget comments

Dear House Finance Committee,

Pay the people their full PFD! Nothing else would benefit the State of Alaska more than the people getting their fair share of their money.

Cost of living is very expensive in Alaska; I have to use heating oil to warm my home.  
If the people calling need money for inflation this means the people need the same.

It feels like you don't care, and you are not listening to the voters/people.

Do what is right; Pay us our full PFD!  
Kathleen Shoop

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**From:** Kevin Munson <KMunson@matsuhealthservices.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 2:44 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health Funding

Dear Finance Committee:

I would like to write in support of the House Health & Social Service subcommittee actions on the behavioral health budget. I support the committee's rejection of the Governor's recommended \$790K cut to the treatment and recovery grants. I further support the modest increase of \$959,520 to those same lines. These grants are critically important to sustaining the safety net provision of behavioral health services.

I further support the increase in the prevention grant lines of \$346,660.

Thank you for your ongoing support of behavioral health.

*Kevin Munson*

Kevin Munson, MS MAPA LPC CRM  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mat-Su Health Services, Inc.  
(907) 352-3210 (voice)  
(907) 352-3363 (fax)  
[kmunson@matsuhealth.org](mailto:kmunson@matsuhealth.org)  
[www.mshsak.org](http://www.mshsak.org)

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**From:** Thomas Farrugia <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:52 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** UA Budget Testimony

Good afternoon,

My name is Thomas Farrugia and I live at [REDACTED] in Anchorage.

I am an alumni of UAF, where I obtained my PhD in Fisheries in 2017. I now work for the Alaska Ocean Observing System in Anchorage where I help bring in federal funds for ocean-based research in Alaska and facilitate data collection and management for our state.

The education I received and the contacts I made while in the UA system has been crucial to my success and has allowed me to now work effectively for Alaska to be at the forefront of science and resource management.

I would like to express my support for the subcommittee recommendations for the University of Alaska budget. As exemplified by my experience, our University is a cornerstone of economic development both today and in the future, and plays a major role in diversifying our state's economy. After 3 years of extreme austerity it is important to look at how we can invest in our state's future and the subcommittee's recommendation is a good start.

Thank you,  
Thomas Farrugia

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**From:** Nicole Eiseman <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:48 PM  
**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Support HB 272 and 273

My name is Nicky Eiseman. I'm a 47-year resident of Fairbanks, a retired children's librarian and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, and grandmother of three upcoming Fairbanks students. I'm speaking on my own behalf.

I'm testifying today in support of increased financial support for education and specifically for an increase to the Base Student Allocation which, as you know, has been flat -funded for the past 7 years, all the while fixed-costs have increased. Flat funding of the BSA has effectively resulted in 7 years of state cuts to education. Flat funding runs counter to the department of education's mission statement: An excellent education for every student every day. What does 7 years of flat BSA look like at the local level? Increased class sizes, cuts in math, science and language arts, cuts in workforce development programs, and cuts in elective programs from, STEM, to sports to the arts. New teachers, threatened by the constant reality of pink slips, leave the profession. Potential teachers choose NOT to enter the profession when they hear of the lack of stability.

Business and families move to municipalities because of the quality of their schools, and likewise families leave. Here in Fairbanks we worked hard to bring the F-35s to our community. We promised airforce families rich educational opportunities. While the airmen are assigned to Eielson Air Force base, their families are not. Will Fairbanks schools bring them and keep them here? Strong schools affect the entire community and, as you know, are an essential part of it's economic engine.

UA Pat Pitney, during her state of the university address spoke of the importance of workforce development, and of developing local talent. Local talent development starts with k-12 education.

The Fairbanks Northstar Borough School District has just implemented a sweeping efficiency program in its effort to save money, including the heartbreaking move of closing three elementary schools. We're doing OUR part. But this alone is not enough to make up for the 7 years of a flat BSA. No school district in our state can give students the education they need and deserve without the state stepping up to do its constitutionally mandated part. The state department of education cannot meet its' own goals for recruitment and retention without an increase to the BSA. The state won't be able to meet its own five measurable goals without an increase to the Base student Allocation. It's time.

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**From:** Benjamin Richardson <brichardson@hopealaska.org>

**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:41 PM

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

**Subject:** Public Testimony regarding HB 281 & HB 282

Hello House Finance Committee,

Due to time constraints, I am unable to wait any longer to testify over the phone. My name is Benjamin Richardson, and I am in Anchorage, and I am reaching out on behalf of Hope Community Resources and myself as an advocate today.

I am in full support of the proposed amendments to the budget that the Health and Social Services department develop a five-year plan, in collaboration with stakeholders, to eradicate the waitlist for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities waiver and to prevent waitlists for other Home and Community Based Waivers, and submit the plan to the Co-Chairs of the Finance Committees and the Legislative Finance Division by December 20, 2022 and that the department draw a minimum of 70 new individuals from the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities waiver waitlist in FY23 to receive services.

As the Statewide New Services Coordinator for Hope Community Resources, I speak directly with members of our community who experience disabilities, their parents, and various advocates from throughout the state that all tell me similar stories about how an individual has gone into crisis, sometimes requiring extensive hospital interventions, while they were waiting to be drawn from the waitlist that would have provided the very services they needed to prevent the crisis from happening. This is not hyperbolic anecdote. This is a single mother who works in healthcare in Kenai taking unpaid time off work for an extended period while she waited for the State to grant the funding. Currently there are many adults with disabilities living with their demographically aging parents despite their children having been on the registry for years, losing out on opportunities to spread their wings and grow while the responsibility of care is deferred to their parents. Case workers and guardians receiving suggestions to “reapply with a change in circumstance when they face homelessness or are hospitalized”.. This should not be the method we delineate who receives support. I urge the legislative committees to see the wisdom that prevention of crisis as cost-reductive and the moral justice behind the amendments as they are proposed.

I am very grateful to Representatives Josephson & Snyder for bringing the amendments forward, the full support of the subcommittee along with the members of the House Committee who have responded to the Key Coalition priority which supports the DD Shared Vision.

Thank you so much for your time and for allowing the opportunity for public testimony today.

***Benjamin Richardson***

Statewide New Services Coordinator

Hope Community Resources, Inc.

Phone: (907) 433-4745

Fax: (907) 564-7429

Alaskans share a Vision of a flexible system in which each person directs their own supports, based on their strengths and abilities, toward a meaningful life in their home, their job and their community. Our Vision includes supported families, professional staff and services available throughout the state now and into the future.

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Visit us at <http://www.hopealaska.org> or on our [Facebook](#) page.



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From: Kathy <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Friday, March 4, 2022 3:38 PM  
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
Subject: Testimony on Budget

My name is Kathy Allely. I live in Eagle River and am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself and my daughter.

I urge you to include the intent language in the budget for Senior and Disabilities Services to develop a five year plan to eradicate the waitlist for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and further to fund an additional 20 people for services.

Further, I support the funding that would reverse cuts in human services as well as to fund WWAMI.

Thank you

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From: Libby Silberling <[REDACTED]>  
Sent: Friday, March 4, 2022 4:08 PM  
To: House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>  
Subject: Increase BSA

As a parent of 2 children who have gone through the Fairbanks public school system I believe it is key to the quality of our childrens' education that the Base Student Allocation be increased now! It has been 7 years. It is overdue with class sizes increasing and programs being dropped.

Please do right by our children and our education system!! It is Alaska's future.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Libby Silberling

Sent from my iPhone

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**From:** Ronald Johnson <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Friday, March 4, 2022 3:37 PM

**To:** House Finance <House.Finance@akleg.gov>; Rep. Bart LeBon <Rep.Bart.Lebon@akleg.gov>

**Subject:** HB 281 testimony

I support the overall spending levels of HB 281.

I especially back the 75/25 POMV split as the 50/50 plan in my view will not allow our government to be adequately funded in the future.

I like the idea of putting excess revenue associated with high oil revenue [this won't last] into the SBR. This deposit will come in very handy in lean times that will occur.

With the \$ 2 B of new federal money for infrastructure et al, I support more funding for workforce training.

I like the increase in WAMI funding to allow more students to be enrolled [assuming UW can provide the slots].

--

Ron Johnson

[REDACTED]

Fairbanks, AK 99709

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CROSSROADS ASSISTED LIVING  
5316 E 24<sup>TH</sup> AVE  
ANCHORAGE ALASKA 99508

March 3, 2022

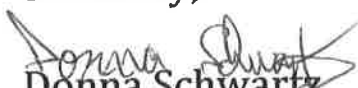
Hose Finance Committee  
Alaska State Capitol  
120 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I would like to thank you for your support of this amendment as it will greatly increase all GR homes ability to provide care that is much needed. We have been working with a 20 year old budget that has long been insufficient to serve our residents and employees as we would like, and they deserve. Expenses have more than quadrupled in that time.

The pandemic has only exacerbated the situation as the hourly wage increases across the state. We cannot compete when unskilled labor jobs are starting wages from \$15 -\$24.00 an hour or offer benefits. I myself work between 72 and 96 hours a week on the floor in addition to my administrative duties as I do not have the funds to pay for more staff. The current budget also does not allow much room for needed repairs and maintenance. Of course there are many more issues but I know your time is short so I thank you for your time and attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

  
Donna Schwartz

# **HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY**

## **MARCH 4, 2022**

My name is Frank Rast. My first Saturday in Anchorage was in January, 1983. I went to Governor Sheffield's inaugural ball in the Sheraton Howard Rock Ballroom, so I have been here for a while.

### **Permanent Fund Dividend**

I support issuing a \$1300 immediate check and subtracting that amount from the Statutory Dividend for FY 2023.

### **Department of Education Budget**

The Base Student Allocation has not increased since FY 2017. The FY 2023 BSA should be adjusted for inflation from the 2017 BSA Amount

### **Percent of Market Value and Conflict with PFD Statute**

The Statutory PFD should be eliminated and the PFD made a percentage of the 5% POMV draw from the Permanent Fund. The POMV statute should be adjusted so that 20% of the POMV be used for the PFD and the remainder for the FY 2023 Budget and budgets moving forward.

### **Revisit Senate Bill 21**

Alaska has the lowest oil taxes in the US and oil companies make higher profits in Alaska than any other State. SB-21 does not meet Article VIII, Natural Resources, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution which states "development of its resources for maximum use consistent with the public interest"

The \$8/barrel Gross Value Reduction Credit subsidy for oil production in Prudhoe Bay and other Legacy Fields should be eliminated.

### **Remaining Alaska Department Budgets**

I do not understand why Health and Human Services are being split. More management does not fix mismanagement. Maintain department budgets as much as possible adjusting for inflation.

### **Federal Infrastructure Spending**

100% of this funding should be used for previously identified Capital Improvements, or Maintenance Backlog. None of this money should be used for recurring government expenses.

### **Constitutional Budget Reserve**

This most recent revenue windfall should be used to replenish the CBR as much as possible

Thank-you for accepting my testimony





Nicholson's Assisted Living Inc.  
P.O. Box 2495  
Kenai, Ak 99611

March 4, 2022

[House.Finance@akleg.gov](mailto:House.Finance@akleg.gov)

**TO: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Re: Support of Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program**

First, I wish to express my thanks to Representative Ivy Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and extend my gratitude to the HSS Finance Subcommittee for adopting the amendment to increase the funding to the General Relief Assisted Living Program.

My name is Mary Nicholson and I am the owner of Nicholson's Assisted Living, Inc. in Kenai, Alaska. I have been in business since 1999. I operate a 10- bed home and one of the only homes that will even take general relief in my area. As a general rule the level of care of these individuals are very high constituting usually additional staffing in order to care for their needs – many of which are behavioral, mental, and/or drug issues; therefore I must limit my intake of this population.

The cost of caring for general relief residents has risen so much that I try to be quite selective in caring for a general relief individual. My heart desires to give them a home and a chance in life while my mind and pocket book tell me it just isn't feasible due to costs verses reimbursement for the service. I have personally experienced the nearly 20- year stale rate and therefore look forward to an increase in the amount.

I feel that if this increase can happen, it would open the door for more homes to be more willing to take in the General Relief residents. I am one of a few dual licensed homes here on the peninsula which is very limiting when it comes to finding a home for those that might have chronic mental issues. They don't qualify for the Waiver program because their level of care (nursing home level now) doesn't rise to make them eligible, yet their needs are great and their care is very high.

I enjoy what I do and appreciate the plight of those I serve, so after a 20-year stale rate, to be able to receive an increase is so much appreciated and certainly does not go unnoticed for those of us willing to care for this vulnerable population.

Again, I voice my support of this increase to the General Relief Assisted Living Program and thank you all for your time in making this happen.

Respectfully,

*M. Nicholson*

Mary Nicholson, Owner/Administrator  
NICHOLSON'S ASSISTED LIVING, INC.

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

My name is Amber Nicholson, I am writing to you on behalf of myself as a Care Provider in an Assisted Living Facility (ALF) on the Kenai Peninsula regarding the increase of funding to the General Relief Program. I have 8 years of experience in an ALF as a Care Provider and I have grown to working not only as a care provider but being a shift lead to my co-workers as well as working when needed in the office with my administrator.

Most ALFs are frequently put into positions where they cannot and will not accept a person on GR because the GR assisted living program only provides \$70 per day as coverage. This rate has remained the same since 2002, and it is an inadequate amount to be able cover all the services required for ALFs to provide proper care. Most people that do not qualify for other payment options, such as Medicaid, and private pay are stuck in a hospital setting or go without care, until they can get a placement which could be months to even years.

Medicaid Waiver pays \$170.27 per day for services in ALFs, plus the residents contribution, GR is only \$70 including the residents contribution. Twenty years ago, the cost of living was significantly different then what it is now. ALFs must provide a certain level of care to each individual person. The services covered ONLY with GR include, room and board, and cost of care.

Cost of Care is defined as assistance with ADLs (Activities with Daily Living) and IADLs (Instrumental Activities of Daily Living). IADLs are things you do every day to take care of yourself and your home. They are one way to measure how well you can live on your own. While ADLs are basic self-care tasks like bathing, feeding yourself, IADLs are more complex and are thinking tasks (I.E.-writing a check, paying bills, cooking). We as ALFs cannot continue to provide care to a GR client at the rate of \$70 per day, in the manner we are required to do.

In my 8 years of experience, I strongly believe that increasing the GR rate would benefit the ALFs to provide better and more care to the people that need it. As well as the benefit it would have on a client who has been in a nursing home/hospital, or completely without care that are waiting to be able to go to an ALF that can provide them the care that they need. It is our job to provide the upmost care to our community and the people that need our assistance. By increasing the GR rate we could allow more ALFs to be able to accept more GR clients.

I appreciate your consideration regarding the increase in the General Relief Assisted Living Program. Thank you for your service to Alaska.

Sincerely,

*Amber Nicholson*

Care Provider

March 4, 2022

TO: House Finance Committee Members

[House.Finance@akleg.gov](mailto:House.Finance@akleg.gov)

**RE: Supporter of Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program**

As our time is so limited, the first thing I would like to do is to thank Representative Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and thank also the HSS Finance Subcommittee for approving it. We are also very well aware of those that opened their office doors and answered their phones as we made the rounds at various times to bring to the forefront this most crucial issue. I want to thank Representative Josephson who made time at the very first to hear the plight of the Behavioral Health/General Relief from an assisted living home operator of 5 homes.

Today we are here in support of the Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program for so many reasons, some of which are:

1. It has been nearly 20 years since General Relief has had an increase in its daily rate.
2. The level of care of this vulnerable population has certainly increased in those 20+ years.
3. This rate is all inclusive which means a provider has to not only supply the room and board which constitutes a place to live with all of its costs, the food for 3 meals plus snacks on a daily basis, but also many times this population comes to a provider with little or no personal hygiene items, no clothes for the various weather conditions, truly many times they arrive at our doors with nothing.
4. A great deal of this population has mental and/or drug issues constituting a constant redirect by staff.
5. Transportation is an issue whether it is getting recipients to a bus stop, into a cab, or providing the service in our own provider vehicles.
6. Many times this population needs someone to accompany them to appointments, whether it be to doctors, hospitals, pharmacies, assist with shopping, exercising, socializing – all of which is a part of this assisted living experience and costs to providers.

Having read the letter of support from Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association, we certainly concur with their assessment that with this increase more assisted living homes would be able to receive this population more readily. In doing so they would be able to save many dollars over time by getting these individuals into environments that are less expensive to the system and other providers, and certainly more accommodating to the needs and probably desires of the individuals.

To many of our providers, there is a genuine love and satisfaction in caring for this population, but the costs cannot be bore solely by assisted living homes; therefore, we totally support the increase funding to the General Relief Assisted Living Program.

With this, I am sure my time is up, so again thank you and please accept my sincerest appreciation for all that has been done on this amendment in ushering it forward.

I am always available to answer any questions that might arise. Again thank you all for your attention to this matter and willingness take this on and see it through this stage of the process.

Regards,

Sherry Mettler, Consultant / Accountant to  
Various ASSISTED LIVING HOMES

[smrk@ak.net](mailto:smrk@ak.net)



Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

I am the executive director of Recover Alaska, a multi-sector action group working to reduce excessive alcohol use and its harms across the state. Our vision is for Alaskans to live free from the harms of alcohol misuse, so we are all empowered to achieve our full potential.

I am writing regarding the FY23 Operating and Mental Health Budgets, specifically in support of:

- Increase to Behavioral Health Grant programs;
- General Relief for Temporary Assisted Living;
- Increase for the Village Public Safety Officer program;
- General Funds to support community-based Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault programs.

Re: the Behavioral Health Grants: Before the pandemic, roughly 44,000 Alaskans experienced an alcohol use disorder,<sup>1</sup> yet only 15% of the people who qualified for treatment were actually receiving it. During COVID-19, roughly a third of Alaskans increased their alcohol use in order to cope with stress and difficulty due to the pandemic.<sup>2</sup> This is an especially dangerous type of drinking, and more commonly leads to alcohol use disorders.

When talking to partners and providers statewide, many are worried about the forthcoming increase in needs for substance use disorder treatment and services. There is already a greater demand for services than Alaska can provide, and this gap is expected to steadily grow in the coming years. The additional funding to support community service providers is much needed and will serve some of our most vulnerable populations.

The other three items I reference are critical in terms of meeting basic needs, increasing safety and wellness for Alaskans across the whole state, and providing wrap-around services to people when they are most at need.

Please support these aspects of the budget, which all work toward creating a safer, healthier, and more equitable Alaska. Thank you for your consideration, and your service to our state.

Best,

Tiffany Hall  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> SAMHSA. *Behavioral Health Barometer: Alaska, Volume 5*. No. SMA-16-Baro. 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Alaska DHSS, [Covid-19 Family Behavioral Health Survey](#), 2020.

March 4, 2022

To: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

First, I would like to thank Representative Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and also thank the Finance subcommittee for approving the amendment. I am well aware that other representatives have been instrumental in working with Representative Spohnholz to bring to fruition this most important issue to assisted living providers and those they desire to serve.

On behalf of many assisted living homes, I cannot express our sincerest appreciation for your support of this amendment. We so whole-heartedly support this amendment. We so much desire to be a solution to the situation, one of which was raised by the Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association in finding suitable homes for those ready to be discharged from a higher level of care. In supporting this amendment, it will afford the homes a better and broader ability to take care of these individuals seeking a home.

We would like for the committee to appreciate the fact that this \$104.30 a day must cover all aspects of daily living – shelter, food, clothes, hygiene, transportation, gas, vehicles, insurances, utilities, recreation, socializing - absolutely everything that an individual needs and or wants in order to live the most productive life possible.

Having had the same General Relief Rate for nearly 20 years at \$70.00 a day, it had become simply impossible to support and care for individuals without an increase. To have our Legislative individuals and HSS understand the need for an increase is heart-warming and certainly beneficial to those we serve. I must also state that over nearly the last 20 years, the level of care of these individuals has so much increased.

Many of these individuals would have qualified for Waiver long before they do today when Waiver was intermediate level of care and not nursing home level of care. But with that change it made the providers to have to seek better qualified staffing which of course constitutes a better wage. Furthermore, those coming into the program had a relatively high level of care that was needful of constant redirecting. Everything adds to requirements in order to serve this special group of individuals.

While we could go on and on for all the reasons we support and encourage the passing of this amendment, with time being limited we will close with the tremendous gratitude to those that have opened their doors and phone lines to hear our plight and actually do something that will afford us the ability to again address the need and care of this population.

AOC/AOC

Lucy Bauer

March 4, 2022

House.Finance@akleg.gov

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Re: Support of Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program

My name is Lucy Baner and I am the owner of ARL/ARL assisted Living.

I want to express my thanks to Representative Ivy Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and thank the HSS Finance Subcommittee for adopting the amendment to increase the funding to the General Relief Assisted Living Program.

I have been an assisted living home provider for 23 years. The cost of caring for residents has risen so much that I was not able to take general relief residents as the payment just would not cover the basic costs of caring for them.

I feel that if this amendment can pass, I can again address taking a general relief client and be of assistance to those trying to place individuals needing these services. My home is generally a GR (Behavioral Health or GR) home. I have 76 beds so I have a little bit of an economy of scale which helps somewhat in spreading the cost over a wider spectrum so this increase will certainly be of assistance in caring for this population.

I enjoy what I do and appreciate the plight of those I serve, so after a 20 year stale rate, to be able to receive an increase is so much appreciated and certainly does not go unnoticed for those of us caring for this vulnerable population.

Again, I voice my support of this increase to the General Relief Assisted Living Program and thank you all for your time in making this happen.

Signed:

Lucy Baner

Lucybaner1127@yahoo.com



March 4, 2022

To: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

First, I would like to thank Representative Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and also thank the Finance subcommittee for approving the amendment. I am well aware that other representatives have been instrumental in working with Representative Spohnholz to bring to fruition this most important issue to assisted living providers and those they desire to serve.

On behalf of many assisted living homes, I cannot express our sincerest appreciation for your support of this amendment. We so whole-heartedly support this amendment. We so much desire to be a solution to the situation, one of which was raised by the Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association in finding suitable homes for those ready to be discharged from a higher level of care. In supporting this amendment, it will afford the homes a better and broader ability to take care of these individuals seeking a home.

We would like for the committee to appreciate the fact that this \$104.30 a day must cover all aspects of daily living – shelter, food, clothes, hygiene, transportation, gas, vehicles, insurances, utilities, recreation, socializing - absolutely everything that an individual needs and or wants in order to live the most productive life possible.

Having had the same General Relief Rate for nearly 20 years at \$70.00 a day, it had become simply impossible to support and care for individuals without an increase. To have our Legislative individuals and HSS understand the need for an increase is heart-warming and certainly beneficial to those we serve. I must also state that over nearly the last 20 years, the level of care of these individuals has so much increased.

Many of these individuals would have qualified for Waiver long before they do today when Waiver was intermediate level of care and not nursing home level of care. But with that change it made the providers to have to seek better qualified staffing which of course constitutes a better wage. Furthermore, those coming into the program had a relatively high level of care that was needful of constant redirecting. Everything adds to requirements in order to serve this special group of individuals.

While we could go on and on for all the reasons we support and encourage the passing of this amendment, with time being limited we will close with the tremendous gratitude to those that have opened their doors and phone lines to hear our plight and actually do something that will afford us the ability to again address the need and care of this population.

Pine Creek  
E. Tug

March 4, 2022 Testimony for House Finance Comm

March 4, 2022

[House.Finance@akleg.gov](mailto:House.Finance@akleg.gov)

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Re: Support of Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program

My name is Erin Terry and I am the owner of Pine Creek assisted Living.

I want to express my thanks to Representative Ivy Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and thank the HSS Finance Subcommittee for adopting the amendment to increase the funding to the General Relief Assisted Living Program.


I have been an assisted living home provider for 26 years. The cost of caring for residents has risen so much that I was not able to take general relief residents as the payment just would not cover the basic costs of caring for them.

I feel that if this amendment can pass, I can again address taking a general relief client and be of assistance to those trying to place individuals needing these services. My home is generally a GR (Behavioral Health or GR) home. I have 16 beds so I have a little bit of an economy of scale which helps somewhat in spreading the cost over a wider spectrum so this increase will certainly be of assistance in caring for this population.

I enjoy what I do and appreciate the plight of those I serve, so after a 20 year stale rate, to be able to receive an increase is so much appreciated and certainly does not go unnoticed for those of us caring for this vulnerable population.

Again, I voice my support of this increase to the General Relief Assisted Living Program and thank you all for your time in making this happen.

Signed:

Erin Terry  


March 4, 2022

[House.Finance@akleg.gov](mailto:House.Finance@akleg.gov)

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Re: Support of Increase to HSS General Relief Assisted Living Program

My name is Debbie Bennett and I am the owner of New Concept assisted Living.

I want to express my thanks to Representative Ivy Spohnholz for introducing the amendment and thank the HSS Finance Subcommittee for adopting the amendment to increase the funding to the General Relief Assisted Living Program.

I have been an assisted living home provider for 12 years. The cost of caring for residents has risen so much that I was not able to take general relief residents as the payment just would not cover the basic costs of caring for them.

I feel that if this amendment can pass, I can again address taking a general relief client and be of assistance to those trying to place individuals needing these services. My home is generally a GR (Behavioral Health or GR) home. I have 16 beds so I have a little bit of an economy of scale which helps somewhat in spreading the cost over a wider spectrum so this increase will certainly be of assistance in caring for this population.

I enjoy what I do and appreciate the plight of those I serve, so after a 20 year stale rate, to be able to receive an increase is so much appreciated and certainly does not go unnoticed for those of us caring for this vulnerable population.

Again, I voice my support of this increase to the General Relief Assisted Living Program and thank you all for your time in making this happen.

Signed:

Debbie Bennett

907-274-1661