

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

MIKE DUNLEAVY, GOVERNOR

**Office of the Long-Term Care
Ombudsman**

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To: Senate Finance Committee

The Alaska State Long Term Care Ombudsman program is so pleased to offer support for *SB 57 – Adult Home Care*, which establishes a new residential setting category for Adult Home Care Services. This bill will also offer seniors in our communities an alternative to existing service and living environment options.

The mission of the LTC Ombudsman program is to provide resident-centered advocacy designed to protect the rights, health, safety and welfare of Alaskans living in long term care settings.

We advocate to improve the quality of life for all seniors.

Often while visiting seniors in Assisted Living Homes, we frequently hear from elders that while they love their current living environment, they wished that they could find an Assisted Living Home close to the community where they have family or a home close to where they were born and raised.

Despite Alaska being the biggest state in the United States, it also has the fewest options when it comes to assisted living. Meeting the needs of older Alaskans in their community is critical to supporting healthy aging and community sustainability.

This bill would offer an additional service option for our ever-increasing aging population and help to support elders to remain in or near their community of preference.

Thank you for your work on this bill and for supporting the choices of elders to remain in their home communities.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Wheeler

Stephanie Wheeler, PhD
State of Alaska, Long-Term Ombudsman Program