

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

MIKE DUNLEAVY, GOVERNOR

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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 189*– which extends the Alaska Commission on Aging. This Commission is critical to continue to meet the needs of seniors across Alaska. As well known, Alaska has the fastest growing senior population per capita in the United States. The Alaska Commission on Aging does an amazing job with advocating on behalf of all seniors in Alaska. The Alaska Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a partner of the Alaska Commission on Aging and attends the quarterly meetings to provide updates and to also hear the latest information from senior agency partners across the State of Alaska. We also appreciate the Commission’s efforts to develop a senior plan for senior services in accordance with the Older Americans Act for the State of Alaska. The Alaska Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman appreciates the continuous updates on the data that the Commission collects as it relates to seniors, and their quality of life. We often use this data when providing presentations.

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 are part of the continuum of care for seniors in Alaska. The Alaska Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman appreciates the partnership with the Alaska Commission on Aging as well as the other senior provider networks that advocate and provide services to seniors.

Thank you for bringing this bill forward. While this bill offers an extension through 2032, I would encourage the committee to consider this to be a permanent extension without a sunset date.

Respectfully,

Stephanie Wheeler

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