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February 27, 2023

Rep Maxine Dibert
Alaska Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for Alaska Commission on Aging Reauthorization HB283

Dear Rep Dibert:

Thank you for introducing legislation to reauthorize the *Alaska Commission on Aging*. Without passage of this legislation, the *Alaska Commission on Aging* will end in June, 2025.

Since 1981 the *Alaska Commission on Aging* has advocated for the needs and concerns of older Alaskans to the Governor, Legislature, Congressional delegation, and the public, advised the Governor, Legislature, Congressional delegation and the public on current and potential programs and services for older Alaskans and their caregivers, and made recommendations to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority on programs and services to improve the lives of senior Trust beneficiaries.

The Commission has been a strong partner to AARP Alaska in our advocacy work to make Alaska a better place to be able choose how we live as we age. Their annual Senior Snapshot and comprehensive State Plan for Senior Services reflect the data and the stories they've gathered through surveys and listening sessions with older Alaskans and senior providers across our vast state. These products are invaluable to organizations like ours serving seniors. The State Plan is a four-year comprehensive plan for senior services including meals, transportation, homemaker and family caregiver, adult day services, senior housing, vocational training, legal assistance, and more, and is a requirement for all states receiving federal funds under the Older Americans Act for senior programs and services.

AARP Alaska supports the reauthorization for the *Alaska Commission on Aging* older Alaskans without reservation. On behalf of the fastest growing senior population per capita in the nation and our 77,000 AARP Alaska members, and for the benefit of all Alaskans, we thank you for your leadership on this important issue for older Alaskans.

Respectfully, Marge Stoneking
Advocacy Director, AARP Alaska





THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Health
ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

P.O. Box 110693
Juneau, AK 99811-0693
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February 26, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Alaska Legislature,

As the Chair of the Alaska Commission on Aging, I am writing to endorse House Bill No. 283, which seeks to extend the Commission's operation until June 30, 2032. This extension is not merely administrative; it is fundamental to our mission of ensuring the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and assisting them in leading meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.

Our commission's work, particularly in developing the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, is a statutory requirement. This plan is a testament to our commitment and a guiding framework for senior services across the state. Moreover, our collaboration with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority as a joint advocacy advisor amplifies our impact, especially in addressing the mental health aspects of senior well-being.

The continuation of our commission as proposed in House Bill No. 283 is crucial for sustaining our ability to serve Alaska's senior population effectively. We appreciate your support in passing this bill, ensuring that our seniors continue to receive the focused attention and care they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this essential bill.

Warm regards,

Bob Sivertsen

Bob Sivertsen

Chair of the Board

Alaska Commission on Aging



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February 26, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Alaska Legislature,

Re-Authorizing the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA), HB-283, is an essential step in meeting the needs of Alaska's rapidly growing Senior population. Alaska's Senior population has the highest per capita growth rate for those over 60 and particularly those over 80. As our Senior population increases, the need for services also increases. These services, whether with health, housing, nutrition, or transportation, become increasingly more important as our Seniors age. Through ACoA, the following activities are ongoing and will continue with re-authorizing for the specified 8 year term.

Alaska Commission on Aging :

- Serves the state of Alaska in meeting the objectives and requirements of the Older Americans Act;
- Provides a mechanism for receiving financial support for Alaska Senior Programs, including Home-based Services, Congregate Meals, and Housing Assistance;
- Assess trends in Alaska's rapidly growing Senior Population, including demography and regional needs;
- Prepares an annual Senior-Snapshot educating public and private interests in the who, what, where of Alaska's over 60 population
- Prepares a 4-year plan in compliance with the Older Americans Act. The newly approved State Plan for Senior Services identifies the efforts needed for the period 2024-2027.
- Through quarterly meetings, works with partners across the state addressing senior needs, including AARP, AgeNet, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and local Senior Centers.
- Works in conjunction with state programs, including Alaska Senior and Disability Services, Alaska Pioneer Homes, the State Ombudsmen Office, and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

Warm regards,

Paula Pawlowski

Paula Pawlowski

Vice-Chair of the Board

Alaska Commission on Aging



North Star Council on Aging/Fairbanks Senior Center
Meals on Wheels
1424 Moore Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
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February 23, 2024

Representative Maxine Dibert
Alaska State Capital Room 424
Juneau, AK 99801

Ref: HB 283

To Whom It May Concern:

North Star Council on Aging, aka the Fairbanks Senior Center, supports the HB 283 to extend the termination date for the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) to 2032. The ACoA is a vital voice in our state for a rapidly growing senior population. In fact, Alaska has the fastest growing senior population of all the states at a current rate of 68% with an alarming growth rate of 57% in the 85-and-older population.

ACoA is a necessary agency for the State to receive funding from the Older Americans Act, which supports in home services for seniors. All the programs housed within the Older Americans Act aid in creating safety nets for our communities that are facing the largest aging population in 3 centuries.

The power of ACoA is its single-minded focus that gathers senior data, development of the State Plan on Aging which is a necessary component in receiving federal Older American Act funding. It is also a connective link for the network of senior providers throughout the state. This singular focus approach on aging allows a unique perspective on the impacts of the "Silver Tsunami" as it gains momentum in Alaska.

The commitment of ACoA's attention to senior issues strengthens the state's ability to care for one of our most vulnerable populations. Supporting HB 283 is a smart, cost-effective way to strategize solutions for Alaska. ACoA honors the pioneers who built our state, the very same strong-willed, brave pioneers who continue to have a dramatic impact into their retirement years.

Thank you!

Darlene Supplee

Darlene Supplee
Executive Director