



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Senate HSS Presentation
February 16, 2022



Today's Presentation

- Heidi Lieb-Williams, Council Chair (Anchorage)
- Corey Gilmore, Former Council Chair, Community Inclusion and Supports Committee – Chair (Anchorage)
- Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director (Homer)

Today's Presentation

- ✓ Council's History and Structure
- ✓ Concerns for Home and Community Based Services and potential solutions
- ✓ Our legislative issues

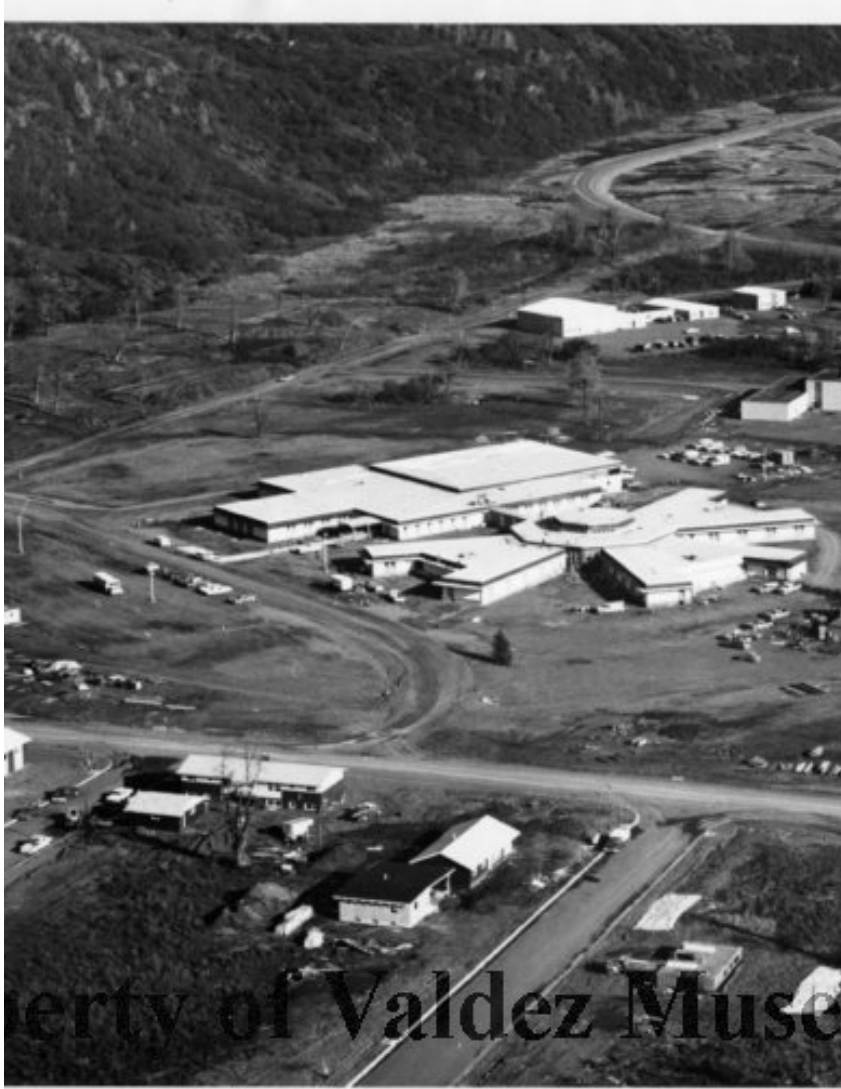


Chair: Heidi Lieb-Williams

Vice Chair: Jena Crafton

Who is the Council?

- ✓ 21-26 Members from Alaska appointed by the Governor
- ✓ Majority are persons with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability (I/DD) or family member
- ✓ Includes many Federal and state designated partners
- ✓ One seat designated for current member of the Legislature (vacant)
- ✓ Council staff: 8 persons, 50% with a disability



Council History

- ✓ The Council was established in 1978.
- ✓ Early years was all about moving people from Harborview and other institution-like settings into the community and establishing principals for home and community-based services.
- ✓ Council successfully advocated for over 20 pieces of state legislation, and changes to federal laws, aimed at improving our capacity to serve persons with disabilities in the community and improve opportunities such as employment. For example...

- ✓ Closure of Harborview Developmental Disabilities and switch to home and community-based services
- ✓ Medicaid Buy-In for Working people with disabilities
- ✓ Creation and reauthorizations of the Special Education Service Agency (SESA)
- ✓ Medicaid support for children with disabilities in schools
- ✓ Newborn Hearing Screening
- ✓ Removal of “R” Word from statutes

Past legislation advocated by the Council

- ✓ Employment First
- ✓ ABLE ACT and ABLE Act Update (Achieving Better Life Experience savings plan)
- ✓ Used Durable Medical Equipment
- ✓ Disability Training and ID
- ✓ Developmental Disabilities Shared Vision
- ✓ Supported Decision Making Agreements
- ✓ Elimination of minimum wage exemption for persons with disabilities

Past legislation advocated by the Council

State Developmental
Disabilities Council from
federal law, DD Act

Special Education
Advisory Panel (SEAP) for
Department of Education
and Early Development
(DEED) from federal law,
Individual with Disabilities
Education Act (IDEA)

Interagency Coordinating
Council (ICC) for Dept of
Health, Senior and
Disability Services
(DOH/SDS); also IDEA

Special Education Service
Agency (SESA) board
oversight from state law

Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority Beneficiary
Advisory Board (I/DD) also
from state law

Five Council Roles

Shared Vision



Alaskans share a Vision of a **flexible** system in which each person directs their own support, 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.**

Statute Reference: AS 47.80.095 and AS 47.80.130(a)

Community Inclusion, Supports, and Services Committee (CISS)

- ✓ ACL Living Well – committee members participating in activities (presentations, I have Rights PSA)
- ✓ Disability and Aging Summit (October 2022)
 - ✓ Hybrid – Approximately 85 attendees



Intellectual and Developmental Disability (I/DD) Registry

- ✓ **I/DD Registry:** 423 individuals, 254 of whom are active on the ISW waiver
- ✓ **ISW Waiver:** 553 individuals on, or offered a spot
- ✓ **I/DD Waiver:** 2,075 individuals on, or offered a spot on the IDD waiver
- ✓ **IDD Draws:** For FY23 – 33 for the I/DD waiver, 80 for the ISW waiver
- ✓ Approx. as of October 26, 2022

Self Advocacy and Leadership Committee

- ✓ Council members attended the Independent Living and Trust conferences, and Trust pre-conference trainings.
- ✓ Council chair delivered keynote speech and Vice-Chair led panel of self-advocates at the National Association of Developmental Disabilities conference in Washington DC this past summer
- ✓ While in DC, met with both Senator Murkowski and Senator Sullivan and enlisted their support in fight for the Council to exist as multiple boards in one. The feds wanted to break us into pieces saying we were out of compliance with federal law.
- ✓ The **advocacy** and **leadership** by GCDSE Council members and staff regarding the DD Act Compliance matter **WORKED!**

Self Advocacy and Leadership Committee



- Council members attended the Bill signing to repeal Subminimum Wage statute.
- Empower Hour for self-advocates is back on schedule (monthly) after year hiatus.
- Members participate in national self-advocacy groups, like Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC):
<https://www.selfadvocacyinfo.org/>

Special Education Service Agency (SESA)

- ✓ Established 1986, the Council serves as majority of governing Board of SESA. Recently reauthorized for 8 more years.
- ✓ They host quarterly meetings in their new building in Midtown Anchorage, which includes a lending library.
- ✓ Specializes in low incidence disabilities and travel to rural and remote schools around Alaska to train teachers/staff on:
 - Autism
 - Deaf and hard of hearing
 - Vision impairment
 - Emotional disabilities
 - Multiple disabilities



Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)

- ✓ Required under Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) Part C
- ✓ Support and advise Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program(EI/ILP) under Senior and Disability Services (SDS)
- ✓ Identify sources of fiscal and other support; promote interagency agreements
- ✓ Collaborate with EI/ILP on transition of toddlers w/disabilities to preschool and other appropriate supports
- ✓ Developing and implementing policy

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)

- ✓ Required under Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) part B
- ✓ Support and Advise Dept. of Education and
 - Unmet needs
 - Evaluation and data reporting
 - Corrective action plans
 - Developing and implementing policy
 - Annual “Inclusive Practice Awards”

Employment Committee

- ✓ Support of Project SEARCH internship for youth with I/DD sites in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Matsu
- ✓ Keeping up with Employment Transitions for adults and youth
- ✓ Supporting cultural and Rural Transition Curriculum
- ✓ Trust Micro Enterprise Grants (up to \$10,000)
- ✓ Promote employment for persons for disabilities in state government with partners
- ✓ Examine regulations that may be limiting persons with I/DD from operating micro business in group homes



Alaska Work Matters Task Force



Work Matters Task Force Report



Alaska Work Matters Task Force
Final Report

- Task Force formed by Governor Dunleavy in 2020
- Wrapped up this summer and produced 23 recommendations on improving opportunities for employment for persons with disabilities
- Centralized Accommodation Fund within State Government
- Possible Lunch and Learn coming up
- Ad Hoc group moving recommendations forward to include Council, Vocational Rehabilitation, Trust, and Beneficiary Boards

PEER POWER ALASKA PRESENTS

Empower Hour

February 16, 2023

7-8 PM

For Zoom Link, please email Peer Power at peerpower907@gmail.com

A gathering for people with disabilities to get to know each other, support each other and increase awareness of opportunities.

February's theme is How to Choose a Good DSP
Co-Facilitated by: Sara Kveum and Maggie Winston

If you have any questions, call Ric Nelson (907) 777-0195

This project was supported, in part, by grant number 907020006-01-03 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC 20501. Content or findings in this project with government sponsorship are encouraged to be shared with the public, but the findings and conclusions are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent official ACL policy.

Peer Power: Empower Hour

- ✓ Statewide Monthly meetings of self-advocates
- ✓ They choose subject matter and speakers
- ✓ Self-advocates paid to lead or co-lead events
- ✓ Council is contracting with Peer Power to run these

We are in a
Workforce
Crisis!

Flexible HCBS
and Self-
Directed
Services

Deaf and Hard
of Hearing Bill of
Rights

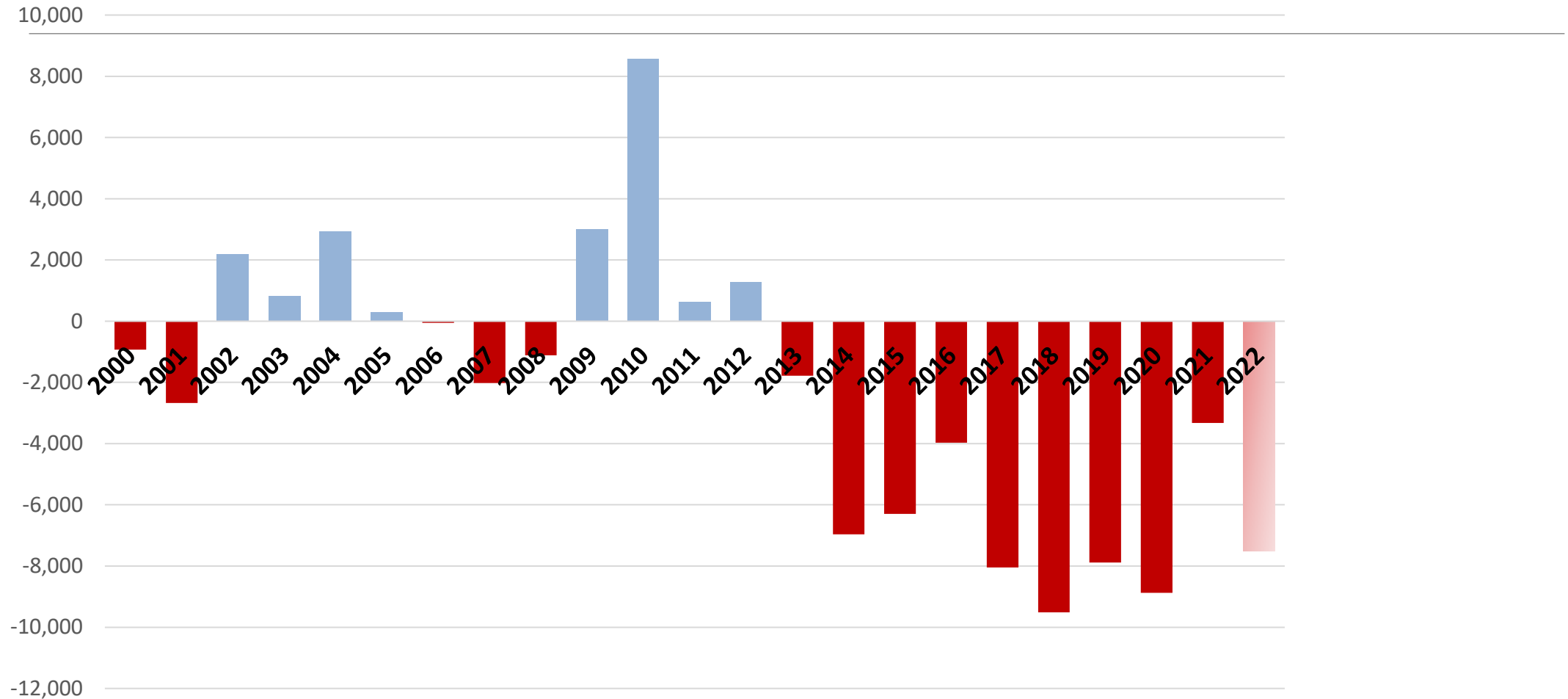
Adult Home
Care

Centralized
Accommodation
Fund

Community and
Public
Transportation

2023 Advocacy Agenda:

Alaska Net Migration, 2000-2022 (from Alaska Dept. of Labor)



Eradicate the Waitlist

- The 32nd Alaska Legislature directed the Department of Health (DOH) to develop a plan to eradicate the “waitlist” for IDD HCBS services
- DOH developed a comprehensive plan the Council supports.
[Waitlist Eradication Plan](#)
- Without the right resources and tools to address issues in the short-term, long-term goals like *Eradicating the Waitlist*, cannot be realized.
- ***The Council recommends funding the first step in the Waitlist Eradication Plan, estimated at \$647,800***

HCBS Medicaid Rates Need Overhaul

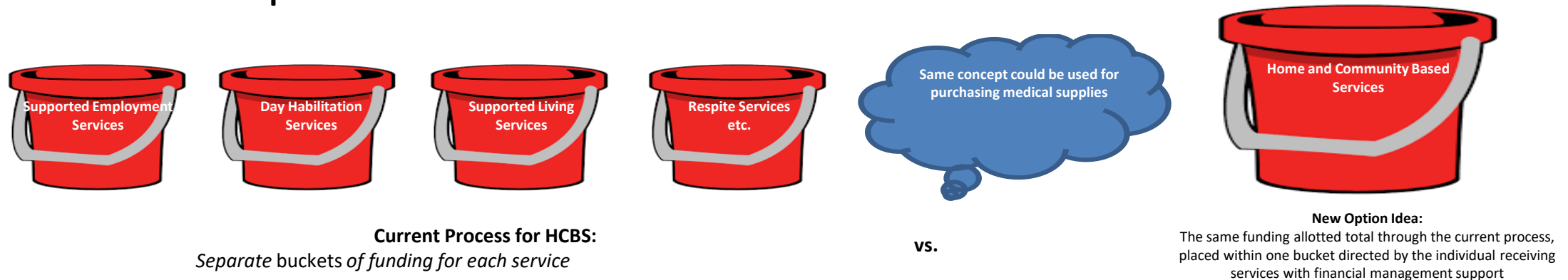
- ✓ Outdated rate structure that does not cover the cost of doing business in some service categories.
- ✓ Workforce shortage crisis equals loss of providers, and/or providers choosing not to serve rural and remote areas, or hard to serve individuals
- ✓ The Department has new rates currently under review now
- ✓ Hopeful for changes, but a long-term review of rate setting for HCBS services must be addressed

Create Self-directed option thru Medicaid HCBS Waivers

- ✓ Self-directed services are personal care and related services provided under the Medicaid State plan and/or section 1915(c) waivers
- ✓ Participation in self-directed option is voluntary
- ✓ Participants set their own provider qualifications and train them
- ✓ Participants determine how much they pay for a service, support, or items
- ✓ The federal government, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) allows state to select this option, under *1915 (j) State options*.
- ✓ States can target people already getting section 1915(c) waiver services

1915 (j) Person Centered and Directed Planning Process

- ✓ Service plan is based on an assessment of need for PAS
- ✓ Service plan and budget plan are developed using a person-centered and directed process
- ✓ Participants can engage in and direct the process
- ✓ Participants can choose family, friends, and professionals to be involved as needed/wanted
- ✓ Participants' preferences, choices, and abilities, as well as strategies to address these preferences must be identified in the service plan



Other Solutions:

- ✓ Improve Environmental Modification (Emods) system
- ✓ Initiate Adult Companion Services
- ✓ Convert funding for medical supplies into a debit card
- ✓ Provide Department of Health Background Check Unit (BCU) with resources to improve efficiency and allow hires on provisional basis while waiting for background check
- ✓ Consider other emergency powers to DOH/SDS that allow for flexible solutions for persons at risk of institutionalization

Support HB 58/SB 57 Adult Home Care

- ✓ Establishes a new residential setting category, “Adult Care Home,” in which a smaller, non-business home can provide care for 1-3 individuals
- ✓ This will help address the shortage of services and settings for seniors and other individuals who require help with the activities of daily living and other assistance to live more independently.
- ✓ This bill allows for the youth to transition from a licensed foster care home to a licensed adult care home.
- ✓ Allows family members to care for individuals and receive financial support for their service.

****Please support the passage of the HB 58 or SB 57, Adult Home Care Services****



Create Centralized Accommodation Fund for State Employees with Disabilities



Put \$100,000 into the State of Alaska, Department of Administration, to create a Centralized Accommodation Fund (CAF) for state employees with disabilities.

- ✓ People with disabilities are still underemployed and unemployed at much greater levels than the general population
- ✓ Myth: hiring people with disabilities will incur high job accommodation costs. This fund would dispel that myth.
- ✓ Studies have found that over 50% of accommodations do not cost anything, of those that do – the accommodation usually costs less than \$500 an individual

Pass Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bill of Rights

Support the passage of the Deaf Children's Bill of Rights

- ✓ All children have the right to receive their education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- ✓ Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children have the right to:
 - Have their ability to communicate and to acquire language treated as a priority.
 - Learn from qualified professionals who can communicate directly with Deaf children
 - Have opportunities to interact with Deaf adult role models
 - Have Deaf peers of the same language mode, level, and age
 - Have full access to all information, specialized personnel, school programs, social activities





Thank you, any questions?