

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 28, 2012

8:44 a.m.

[8:44:28 AM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Hoffman called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 8:44 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Lyman Hoffman, Co-Chair
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair
Senator Lesil McGuire, Vice-Chair
Senator Johnny Ellis
Senator Dennis Egan
Senator Donny Olson
Senator Joe Thomas

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Carl Rose, Executive Director, Alaska Association of School Boards; Joy Lyon, Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children; Richard Monkman, Chairman, Juneau Douglas High School Site Council; Emily Coate, Coordinator, Parents as Teachers-Juneau; Lynn Williams, Owner, Williams Educational Consulting; Pam Mueller-Guy, Southeast Alaska Independent Living; Kim Mix, Infant Learning Program, REACH; Bruce Botelho, Mayor, City & Borough of Juneau; Allison Smith, Teacher, Juneau School District; Denise Doniello, Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Aging; Blue Shibler, Administrator, Discovery Preschool; Kathie Wasserman, Executive Director, Alaska Municipal League; Sarah Johnson, Student, Juneau-Douglas High School; Dan Johnson, Self; Andi Story, Vice-President, Juneau School Board; Mary Hakala, Coordinator, K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Initiative; Abel Bult-Ito, Professor of Biology, University of Alaska Fairbanks; Representative Bill Thomas.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Linda Conover, Self, Mat-Su; Freeman Kingeekuk, Self, Mat-Su; Cheryl Jackson, Wasilla; Jeffrey Lambe, Instructor, Process Technology, Kenai Peninsula College; Shawn Laplin, Assistant Professor, Mechanical Technology, University Of Alaska, Kenai River Campus; Rich Kochis, Assistant Professor, Electronics, University Of Alaska, Kenai; Tom Dalrymple, Co-Chair, Business And Industry, Kenai Peninsula College, Soldotna; Doug Griffin, City Manager, Palmer; Amber Champagne, Head Start, Rural Cap, Tok; Karen Page, Head Start, Rural Cap, Tok; John Luick, Student, Kenai Peninsula College, Kenai; John Landua, Teacher, Kenai Peninsula College, Kenai; Christine Pichotta, Parents As Teachers, Rural Cap, Seward; Bryron Kashevarof, Self, Kodiak; Cera Choy, Self, Anchorage; Mary C. Nanuwak, Self, Anchorage; Maureen Pintner, Self, Anchorage; Suzi Pearson, Executive Director, Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC); Nikole Nelson, Executive Director, Alaska Legal Services Corporation; Greg Roczicka, Self, Bethel; Melissa Pickle, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Eagle River; Kristin Rainstad, Parents and Teachers Director, Rural CAP, Anchorage; Patrice Griffin, Director, Head Start, Rural CAP, Eagle River; Allen M. Bailey, Family Lawyer, Anchorage; Zoya X. Ponomareva, Volunteer, American Cancer Society, Cancer Action Network, Anchorage; Rick Adams, Assistant Professor, Kenai Peninsula College, University of Alaska Extension, Kenai; Jennifer Charvet, Resource Navigator, Alaska Brain Injury Network, Palmer; Kamaree Altaffer, Self, Anchorage; Pat Ferucci, Self, Anchorage; Amanda Metivier, Facing Foster Care in Alaska, Anchorage; Jonathan Teeters, Best Beginnings, Anchorage; Mike Tucker, Alaska Works Partnership, Anchorage; Heidi Frost, Executive Director, Statewide Independent Living Council, Anchorage; Arliss Sturgulewski, Self, Anchorage; Sheila Barrett, Self, Anchorage; Melinda Myers, Thread Alaska, Anchorage; Regina Manteufel, Executive Director, Back to Work Network, Anchorage; Karen Matthias, Volunteer, Anchorage Imagination Library, Anchorage; Danny Gray, Board of Directors, Alaska Alzheimer's Resource Agency, Anchorage; Barbara Cleary, Self, Anchorage; Jackie Brunton, Board Member, Alaska Alzheimer's Resource Agency, Anchorage; Nancy K. Holtry, Self, Fairbanks; Judith Ramos, Self, Fairbanks; Todd Brinkman, Research Assistant Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Kevin Hillmer-Pegram, Student, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Taber Rehbaum, Arctic Alliance for People, Fairbanks; Linda Hapsmith,

Academic Advising Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Sean Topkok, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Ginny Redmond, Director, Student Support Services, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Sara Smith, Academic Coordinator, Student Support Services, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Dana Kinzy, Intensive Advisor, Student Support Services, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks; Elsie Vent, City Administrator, City Council, City of Huslia, Fairbanks; Emily Vockeroth, Imagination Library, Fairbanks; Gara Bridwell, Self, Fairbanks; Nelle Andrews, Program Manager, Rural Apprenticeship Outreach Program, Fairbanks; Shirley Williams, Self, Fairbanks; Luke Hopkins, Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough; Richard Carlson, Superintendent, Klawock City School District; Michelle Bricker, Self, Sitka; Naomi Michalsen, Executive Director, Women in Safe Homes, Ketchikan; Caroline Smith, Mayor, City of Aleknagik; Deserie Bond, Self, Dillingham; Ken Bergman, Self, Homer; Katy Adams, Self, Homer; Val Angasan, Deputy Director, Bristol Bay Housing Authority, Dillingham; Janette Burnhoff, Self, Sitka; James Swift, Commercial Fisherman, Sitka; Lisa Busch, Director, Sitka Sound Science Center, Sitka; Jerry Dzugan, Alaska Marine Safety Education Association, Sitka; Tomi Marsh, Self, Sitka; Tahnee Curran, Self, Sitka; Robert Purvis, Board Member, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Sitka; Emily Guthrie, Self, Ketchikan; Beth LaCrosse, Self, Ketchikan; Kevin Gadsey, Advocate, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Ketchikan; Bill Auger, President, United Southeast Gillnetters Association, Ketchikan; Melanie Bahnke, Vice-President, Kawerak, Nome; Lily Ray, UAF Resilience and Adaptation Program, Nome; Elizabeth K. Johnson, Chair-person, Nome Imagination Library, Nome; Juanita Smith, North Slope Borough Health Department, Barrow; Joseph Dingman, Self, Barrow; Sonia Handforth Kome, Unalaska City School District, Unalaska; Mia Kome, Student, Unalaska City School, Unalaska; Marybeth Green, Early Childhood Coordinator, Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD), Bethel; April Blevins, Self, Bethel; Mary C. Pete, Campus Director, Kuskokwim Campus, University of Alaska, Bethel; Michelle Dewitt, Executive Director, Tundra Women's Coalition (TWC), Bethel; Cecilia Martz, Self, Bethel; Monica Charles Leinberger, Self, Bethel; Anthony Cravalho, Self, Kotzebue; Debby Edwardson, President, North Slope Borough School District Board of Education, Barrow; Peggy Cowan, Superintendent of Schools, North Slope Borough School District; Polly Tocktoo, Chairperson, Brevig Mission Imagination Library, Brevig Mission; Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyruf,

Self, Kayana; Bridget Aline, Board Member, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, Bethel; Judith Johnson, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, Anchorage; Shirly Marquardt, City of Unalaska, Unalaska; Marjorie Strauss, Self, Bethel; Nicki Shelton, Trainer, Parents as Teachers, Hoonah; Dave Talerico, Mayer, Denali Borough, Healy; Jeanette Davis, Independent Living, Homer; Anita Van Dyck, Self, Sitka; Alavini Lata, Self, Juneau; Ron Johnson, Self, Fairbanks; Francis Kelly, Self, Anchorage; Carrol Lyberger, Self, Anchorage.

SUMMARY

CSHB 284(FIN) APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

CSHB 284(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in Committee for further consideration.

CSHB 285(FIN) APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

CSHB 285(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in Committee for further consideration.

[8:45:36 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman stated that the two minute time limit for testifiers would be strictly adhered to and discussed the meeting's agenda.

#hb284

#hb285

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 284(FIN)

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs, capitalizing funds, amending appropriations, and making reappropriations; and providing for an effective date."

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 285(FIN)

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and capital expenses of the state's integrated comprehensive mental health program; and providing for an effective date."

JUNEAU

[8:46:41 AM](#)

Senator Egan reiterated that testimony would be limited to two minutes. He referenced a mass email that was released by the governor and offered that it suggested that the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Education and Early Development had disenfranchised Alaska's youth. He explained that the subcommittee had never implied that the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) program was not good for Alaska's Children, but that it did believe that students with financial needs, who were seeking an Alaskan education, should get help. He related that the governor had promised not to touch the \$400 million that the legislature had put towards future endowments until a bill setting the rules for the fund had passed. He opined that the governor had walked away from the bill during the current year and had effectively made the legislature "eat" the funding. He believed that the governor's promise and refusal to work with the Senate was what stood between the class of 2012 and the APS program. He shared that the Senate applauded Governor Parnell for the APS program, but that Alaska needed to provide for students who were financially disadvantaged. He communicated that the Senate would work with the governor to keep the promise of a responsible funding plan for the class of 2012.

[8:48:54 AM](#)

CARL ROSE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS, spoke in strong support of increased funding for the Base Student Allocation (BSA). He referenced the large amount of money that had been added to different state agencies and programs. He pointed out that the governor's budget included \$610 million for the retirement systems, \$400 million for exploration credits, \$66 million for labor contracts, \$45 million for fuel and utilities, \$100 million for agency operations and maintenance, and \$29 million for the Goose Creek project. He observed that education would only receive \$62 million if it got an increase in the BSA; out of that \$62 million, \$8 million would be allocated to APS and \$23 million would be for major maintenance. He wondered why education was being singled out when the state was funding other agencies.

[8:51:33 AM](#)

JOY LYON, ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN, urged her support for the Best Beginnings' partnership with Imagination Library and the Parents as Teachers program; she requested an increase to the proposed budget request for the Best Beginnings' partnerships to \$500,000 from \$250,000. She also spoke in favor of the \$250,000 for Parents as Teachers that was currently included in the House budget. She stated that Juneau had seen a 10 percent increase in kindergarten readiness rates and that it was one of the first communities to start the Imagination Library program.

[8:53:48 AM](#)

RICHARD MONKMAN, CHAIRMAN, JUNEAU DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL, expressed strong support of increased funding for the BSA. He stated that education costs had increased and mentioned that the high school was struggling to maintain the courses that it currently had. He pointed out that the high school was only able to offer one foreign language course due to the declining budget, but that it used to offer four such courses. He referenced a chart showing that Alaskan students ranked last among the 50 states in college success. He pointed out that Alaskan students' lack of success in college was a direct result of minimal funding to the education system.

[8:56:07 AM](#)

EMILY COATE, COORDINATOR, PARENTS AS TEACHERS-JUNEAU, spoke in support of funding for the Parents as Teachers program and related that it worked to empower parents, strengthen families, and to improve children's school readiness.

[8:56:39 AM](#)

LYNN WILLIAMS, OWNER, WILLIAMS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING, testified in strong support of increased funding for the BSA. She related that increases in the costs of transportation, medical services, and fuel were taking the focus away from the teachers. She shared that quality teachers made the biggest difference in a child's education and that the state needed to invest more funding in its teachers. She shared a personal story about how 15 minutes of violin lessons had helped improve students' focus, cooperation, and ability to follow directions.

[8:58:39 AM](#)

PAM MUELLER-GUY, SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, spoke in support of increasing the \$200,000 in funding for Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL). She stated that SAIL provided help with transportation expenses, housing, technology services, and outreach services. She concluded that SAIL was good at adapting to the individual needs of its clients and was very effective at outreaching services to potential consumers.

[9:00:26 AM](#)

KIM MIX, INFANT LEARNING PROGRAM, REACH, urged her strong support of continued funding for the Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers programs. She shared her strong support of the two programs and stated that past funding had helped the field of early childhood development. She advocated an increase in funding for the following year.

[9:00:59 AM](#)

BRUCE BOTELHO, MAYOR, CITY & BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, spoke on behalf of state revenue sharing and particular supported the measure in Section 24(f) of the bill. He furthered that the measure would help strengthen local governments and shared that the increasing costs of energy was a major issue for the city of Juneau. He pointed out that there had been a 15 percent increase in electricity costs and a 30 percent increase in fuel costs over the last two years. He expressed appreciation for the treatment of revenue sharing in the legislation.

[9:02:39 AM](#)

Senator Egan noted that Juneau was a second home for many people and thanked Mayor Botelho for making the community a hospitable place to be.

[9:03:09 AM](#)

ALLISON SMITH, TEACHER, JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT, expressed strong support of increased funding for the BSA and thanked the committee for its support of SB 171. She related that an increase in funding would keep schools innovated and current with technology and programming. She mentioned that increased funding would greatly benefit the Elementary Art

program, specialist staff, special education staff, and cultural paraprofessional educators. She noted that an increase in the BSA would also enable the district to maintain the student to teacher ratio and would help keep class sizes small.

[9:05:37 AM](#)

DENISE DONIELLO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING, spoke in support of the proposed funding increments for senior in-home services, adult day programs, and the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative. She stated that the senior grant programs helped seniors maintain their health, independence, and ability to live at home. She pointed out that the cost of nursing home placement was \$250,000 annually. She noted that the collaborative was an effort by the Division of Behavioral Health to help people with impairments that led to challenging behaviors. She stated that the collaborative helped people with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, and traumatic brain injuries and concluded that the services were very important to residents of pioneer homes.

[9:07:33 AM](#)

BLUE SHIBLER, ADMINISTRATOR, DISCOVERY PRESCHOOL, urged continued support for Best Beginnings and related that the preschool had secured Best Beginnings MINI grants for four of its teachers. She furthered that the grant program provided teachers technical training, funding for new equipment, and directly impacted early childhood programs.

[9:08:34 AM](#)

KATHIE WASSERMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE, testified in support of the supplementary language in SB 97 that addressed increases in energy costs. She shared her appreciation for the Senate's efforts and pointed out that energy costs were "killing" the municipalities.

[9:09:24 AM](#)

SARAH JOHNSON, STUDENT, JUNEAU-DOUGLAS HIGH SCHOOL, spoke in support of the APS program and related that the

scholarships were a great motivator for her to focus, achieve high scores in school, and attend college in Alaska. She concluded that the APS program was a great opportunity for her.

[9:10:34 AM](#)

DAN JOHNSON, SELF, testified in support of the APS program and stated that the program had been a great motivator for his child. He shared that there were many distractions in school and that the scholarship program kept students focused for college. He pointed out that there were objections to the exclusion of needs-based scholarships in the legislation, but stated that his perspective as a parent was different. He observed that children could succeed on their own merits and make parents proud.

[9:11:49 AM](#)

ANDI STORY, VICE-PRESIDENT, JUNEAU SCHOOL BOARD, urged support of an increase for education funding and shared that the board had worked hard to be accountable to citizens for increasing graduation rates, removing budget waste, eliminating the achievement gap between students, and for making each dollar count. She pointed out that the board appreciated the funding for its Career and Technical Education program and retirement systems. She stated that the Juneau School District would be forced to cut \$5.8 million under the proposed budget, which would result in the loss of 65 jobs. The Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) estimated that the job losses would result in a negative impact of \$11.5 million to the community.

[9:14:05 AM](#)

MARY HAKALA, COORDINATOR, K-12 SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) INITIATIVE, urged support of public education funding and related that the Juneau School District's Elementary Art and music programs were creative, rich, and successful. She stated that Alaska needed an increase in the BSA and shared that STEM was opening opportunities for children in the state. She spoke about FIRST Robotics and how Alaska led the nation in participating in the program.

[9:16:37 AM](#)

ABEL BULT-ITO, PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, expressed his support of the University of Alaska's budget and the STEM initiative. He mentioned that there was an upcoming STEM research presentation at the University of Alaska Fairbanks by 22 students from across the state. He further explained that the students would present research proposals and that the top five entrants would travel to the national competition in Bethesda, Maryland.

[9:18:37 AM](#)

RECESSED

[10:05:12 AM](#)

RECONVENED

[10:06:16 AM](#)

KENAI, VALDEZ, KODIAK, SEWARD, MAT-SU, GLENNALLEN , TOK

LINDA CONOVER, MAT-SU (via teleconference), urged continued support for early education programs such as Best Beginnings, Imagination Library and Head Start. She stressed that these programs helped children stay in school and succeed in life. Over 16,000 children received free books through the Imagination Library program. Families were also strengthened through the programs.

FREEMAN KINGEEKUK, SELF, MAT-SU (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Works Partnership program. He was helped through its apprenticeship program.

CHERYL JACKSON, SELF, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation, which had helped her with her domestic violence problems.

[10:10:53 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman noted that the Alaska Legal Services Corporation component was increased by the Senate Finance Committee to \$200 thousand above the governor's request.

JEFFREY LAMBE, INSTRUCTOR, PROCESS TECHNOLOGY, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE (via teleconference), urged support for the Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology at the Kenai Peninsula College. He observed that

the program had one full time process technology instructor and two instructors under temporary funding. The program was in demand and filled within two hours of open registration. He stressed the importance of the technology program to ready students for oil and gas jobs in the Cook Inlet and other areas of the state. He noted that the governor had line item vetoed funding for the program over the last number of years and urged support.

[10:13:02 AM](#)

SHAWN LAPLIN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, MECHANICAL TECHNOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, KENAI RIVER CAMPUS (via teleconference), urged support for work force development funding. He maintained that the [Process Technology] program would enable individuals to obtain employment in the industries. He maintained that wait listing students prevented them from succeeding.

RICH KOCHIS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ELECTRONICS, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, KENAI (via teleconference), urged support for the Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology at the Kenai Peninsula College. He stressed the need of training for oil and gas industry jobs. Students were being maxed out of the classes.

[10:15:48 AM](#)

TOM DALRYMPLE, CO-CHAIR, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE, SOLDOTNA (via teleconference), urged support for the Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology at the Kenai Peninsula College. He stressed that the program supports local hire.

[10:16:52 AM](#)

DOUG GRIFFIN, CITY MANAGER, PALMER (via teleconference), testified in support for local governments and state revenue sharing. He emphasized the high costs of snow removal, energy, health insurance premiums for employees and other services to citizens.

[10:18:52 AM](#)

Co-Chair Hoffman observed that the Senate had passed SB 97 and urged Mr. Griffin to express support to the House.

AMBER CHAMPAGNE, HEAD START, RURAL CAP, TOK (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for Rural Alaska Community Action early education programs (RurAL CAP). She stressed the up to date information and resources provided to families.

[10:20:24 AM](#)

KAREN PAGE, HEAD START, RURAL CAP, TOK (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for RurAL CAP programs, especially the Head Start program.

[10:21:32 AM](#)

JOHN LUICK, STUDENT, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE, KENAI (via teleconference), urged support for the Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology at the Kenai Peninsula College. He noted that he had returned to the state after 20 years to pursue the opportunities the program provided.

JOHN LANDUA, TEACHER, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE, KENAI (via teleconference), urged support for resource jobs related programs and the Associate of Applied Science degree in Process Technology at the Kenai Peninsula College. He stressed the need to maintain and expand the program.

[10:24:20 AM](#)

AT EASE

[10:25:57 AM](#)

RECONVENED

CHRISTINE PICHOTTA, PARENTS AS TEACHERS, RURAL CAP, SEWARD (via teleconference), spoke in support of RurAL CAP programs for small children and parents. She emphasized the success of the program in skill achievements.

[10:27:17 AM](#)

AT EASE

[10:43:37 AM](#)

RECONVENED

BRYRON KASHEVAROF, KODIAK (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Work Partnership. He stressed that the training he received from the program would assist him in finding work.

10:47:03 AM

AT EASE

1:03:02 PM

RECONVENED

Co-Chair Hoffman stressed that the public testimony should be limited to two minutes per person.

Co-Chair Hoffman handed the gavel over to Senator McGuire.

ANCHORAGE

1:04:46 PM

CERA CHOY, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. She stated that she had a difficult time with employment and insurance due to her son's behavioral problems. She furthered that her son was placed in a special institution on the east coast, because Alaska did not have the appropriate facilities to accommodate her son's condition. She felt that Alaska needed a specialized residential facility to encourage vocational and educational opportunities for individuals with behavior disorders.

1:06:53 PM

MARY C. NANUWAK, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support for mental health programs. She appreciated the committee's consideration and support for mental health treatment programs in rural Alaska. She thanked Co-Chair Hoffman's advocacy for his constituents. She felt that the mental health treatment issues were not addressed adequately, and that the funding was available to resolve the problems. She supposed that the violence in Anchorage was due to the high number of individuals with mental health problems.

1:10:41 PM

MAUREEN PINTNER, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. She was a volunteer parent advocate for her two children with

disabilities, because her son had various behavioral disabilities. She stated that her marriage and family was strained, because of the stress she faced from resolving her son's complex behavioral problems. She remarked that her son referred to his recent hospital stay as "torture", because he was assaulted in the hospital, was idle most days, and heavily medicated. She stressed the importance of understanding and treating complex behavioral problems.

1:14:30 PM

SUZI PEARSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ABUSED WOMEN'S AID IN CRISIS (AWAIC) (via teleconference), expressed support for funding the governor's increase for domestic violence and sexual assault programs. She explained that the Food Bank of Alaska was limited in their food resources, and her organization was forced to buy food. She stressed the pressures of high health care costs, but was grateful for the funding for new heating and cooling systems in the AWAIC facility in Anchorage.

1:16:39 PM

NIKOLE NELSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION (via teleconference), urged support of funding for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation. She explained that the agency provided help to many vulnerable Alaskans. She announced that the corporation turned away one person for every two people that approached them; therefore the funding would improve the availability of the program for more Alaskans.

1:18:16 PM

GREG ROCZICKA, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Office of Subsistence Management in the Department of Fish and Game, to conduct community baseline subsistence harvest surveys for the regional fishing hubs. He stated that he had worked on the regulatory processes and management issues for natural resources issues for 27 years. He explained that harvest surveys had been conducted for the rural villages, but the regional hubs had been overlooked. He remarked that Bethel, Nome, Kotzebue, Unalaska, Kodiak, Barrow, and Dillingham were in need of harvest surveys. He felt that the lack of attention resulted in a large data gap. He noted that he had served on the Board of Game, and encountered

subsistence fishing allocation issues. He thanked the committee for including \$456,000 for harvest surveys in Bethel and Kotzebue, and hoped that the other communities would be surveyed in the next five years.

1:20:24 PM

MELISSA PICKLE, COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA), EAGLE RIVER (via teleconference), urged an increment of \$250,000 for the Parents as Teachers Program (PAT) in the Rural Community Action Program's (Rural CAP) Child Development Program. She stated that a CASA was a trained volunteer that advocates for children who are in state protective custody. She explained that the children she worked with had experienced neglect and/or abuse, and had to be removed from their homes. She encouraged an increase the PAT funding by an additional \$250,000, so more children and families could exploit the services that PAT offered. She noted that families and children who were enrolled in the PAT program experienced many positive benefits. She declared that the parents enrolled in the PAT program had increased knowledge of child development and positive child-rearing practices; and had fewer documented cases of child abuse and neglect.

1:22:35 PM

KRISTIN RAINSTAD, PARENTS AND TEACHERS DIRECTOR, RURAL CAP, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), supported the \$2 million for additional school district Pre-K programs. She encouraged the committee to consider an increment that would support parents and their role in preparing their children for success in school. She explained that the PAT program was a highly effective, evidence-based early childhood education and family support program that had a successful track-record in Alaska. She noted that there were several families on the PAT wait-list that could begin receiving services at a very modest cost. She explained that the PAT program provided two personal visits and one group socialization opportunity per month for 92 children and their families in Anchorage, Ketchikan, Seward, Tanacross, and Tok.

1:24:26 PM

PATRICE GRIFFIN, DIRECTOR, HEAD START, RURAL CAP, EAGLE RIVER (via teleconference), testified in support of funding

for all Alaska Head Start. She thanked the committee for the \$2 million that was currently allotted for DEED that supported Head Start programs. She explained that there were currently 1,000 children on the wait list for Head Start services in Alaska. She asserted that Head Start was facing the possibility of decreased funding, because of flat-line funding. She encouraged the committee to increase funding for PAT and Head Start programs.

[1:25:25 PM](#)

ALLEN M. BAILEY, FAMILY LAWYER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged support of funding for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation. He explained that the entity provided help to many vulnerable Alaskans. He stressed that the only way for the courts to provide domestic violence protection, was to provide the victim with convenient legal services. He pointed out that most family court cases were related to domestic violence or sexual abuse.

[1:27:26 PM](#)

ZOYA X. PONOMAREVA, VOLUNTEER, AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY, CANCER ACTION NETWORK, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of tobacco-use prevention funding. She thanked the committee for prior funding for tobacco-use prevention in the past. She remarked that tobacco-use directly caused cancer, obesity, and other severe health problems.

[1:28:33 PM](#)

RICK ADAMS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA EXTENSION, KENAI (via teleconference), testified in support of \$469,000 for the UAA Process Technology Jobs for Resource Development program. He specifically urged support of the funding for the Anchorage Expansion Site in Kenai River location. He stated that with the addition of another staff member, classes could be offered every semester, and elective courses could be available.

[1:30:59 PM](#)

JENNIFER CHARVET, RESOURCE NAVIGATOR, ALASKA BRAIN INJURY NETWORK, PALMER (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to

the Mental Health budget. She encouraged support of funding the treatment for those with brain injuries. She remarked that those who did not receive the proper treatment for brain injuries often end up in jail or homeless.

Vice-Chair McGuire passed the gavel to Senator Ellis.

[1:33:27 PM](#)

KAMAREE ALTAFFER, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. She stated that she had worked with adults who had chronic behavior disorders. She noted that young children with behavioral issues and seniors with Alzheimer's were often institutionalized, with a high cost to the state. She felt that the Complex Behavioral Collaborative could provide local, helpful, and appropriate treatments.

[1:35:17 PM](#)

PAT FERUCCI, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. She explained that her husband was a resident of the Anchorage Pioneer Home. She expressed gratitude of the capable care-givers at the Anchorage Pioneer Home, but felt that her husband was not receiving consistent treatment and care. She continued to share various incidents about her husband's care at the Anchorage Pioneer Home, and felt that the Complex Behavioral Collaborative could provide appropriate education and support for Alzheimer's patients' care-givers.

REPRESENTATIVE BILL THOMAS, entered the room.

[1:38:59 PM](#)

AMANDA METIVIER, FACING FOSTER CARE IN ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding foster care programs in Alaska. She urged the addition of \$250,000 for the Education and Training Voucher Fund. She explained that children who transition out of the state foster care system were at risk of homeless, early pregnancy, and moving into the criminal justice system. She explained that the Education and Training Voucher Fund was funded by a federal grant, but there were restrictions on

the federal money. She felt that the additional funds from the state would provide more flexibility for young people in rural areas who might not have access to accredited programs.

1:40:30 PM

JONATHAN TEETERS, BEST BEGINNINGS, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged continued support for Best Beginnings. He supported an additional request of \$500,000 to the Best Beginnings program. He stated that Best Beginnings was a public/private partnership, who currently received significant funding from the state. He felt that Best Beginnings had a significant impact in rural and urban areas of Alaska. He reported that there was a video and book produced by Best Beginnings entitled, "Babies on Track" that was intended for parents of children ages zero to 2-years-old. He stated that the video highlighted techniques for parents to prepare their children for school.

1:42:41 PM

MIKE TUCKER, ALASKA WORKS PARTNERSHIP, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding the Rural Apprenticeship Outreach program and Alaska weatherization training. He stated that he was an apprentice during the building of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction, and was currently a carpenter. He pointed out that he was a lead-instructor in rural Alaska for Alaska Works Partnership, which had been funded primarily by the Denali Commission. He remarked that Denali Commission funds were declining, and stressed that rural job training needed to continue with state funds.

1:45:04 PM

HEIDI FROST, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of \$250,000 for independent living programs, and encouraged the committee to provide an additional \$250,000 for assisted living centers. She explained that independent living centers were different from assisted living centers. Independent living centers provided information, technical assistance, and nursing home transition for people with disabilities regardless of age or disability. Assisted living homes were progressive centers of care for

individuals, elders, and individuals with disabilities regardless of age, that provided varying levels of care at varying levels of costs.

[1:47:03 PM](#)

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of \$175,000 for Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association (AMIPA). She explained that there was a large archive of video and archive in the consortium library. She encouraged continued support of AMIPA. She felt that there was good cooperation with the University of Alaska and AMIPA, and the program should continue with additional funding.

[1:48:39 PM](#)

SHEILA BARRETT, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged continued support for Best Beginnings. She stated that Best Beginnings was a good program, and encouraged the committee to listen to the former testifiers who also supported Best Beginnings. She stressed that it was very important for young people to enter kindergarten prepared for school.

[1:51:03 PM](#)

MELINDA MYERS, THREAD ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of early childhood education funding. She encouraged funding for PAT. She referred to a document entitled, "Investing in Alaska's Young Children" (copy on file), which outlined items that would help young children and families across Alaska. She stated that the items would support community engagement and early literacy efforts by adding \$500,000 for Best Beginnings.

[1:52:36 PM](#)

REGINA MANTEUFEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BACK TO WORK NETWORK, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for programs encouraging disenfranchised women to enter the workforce. She explained that there was a correlation between adequate drug and alcohol counseling and proper workforce reentry. She remarked that adequate clothing should be available to those women who were entering the workforce.

[1:55:56 PM](#)

KAREN MATTHIAS, VOLUNTEER, ANCHORAGE IMAGINATION LIBRARY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged continued support for Best Beginnings. She highlighted the extraordinary work the Best Beginnings provided across the state. She noted that the program provided educational tools at an early age. She felt that the Anchorage Imagination Library was a valuable program, to help children become readers and feel passionate about learning and reading.

[1:57:51 PM](#)

DANNY GRAY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ALASKA ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE AGENCY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged support of funding for the Alaska Alzheimer's Resource Agency. He noted that the program funding was not yet in the budget, but there was an SBS increase of 10 percent over 20 years. He encouraged the addition of \$250,000 for the Alzheimer's Education Network to the operating budget.

[2:00:14 PM](#)

AT EASE

[2:14:11 PM](#)

RECONVENED

BARBARA CLEARY, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of increasing funding from \$250,00 to \$360,000 for sexually transmitted disease (STD) testing and education. She explained the chlamydia could lead to infertility and inflammation issues.

[2:16:11 PM](#)

JACKIE BRUNTON, BOARD MEMBER, ALASKA ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE AGENCY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), encouraged funding for education and support of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. She remarked that her mother suffered from Alzheimer's for many years, and appreciated the education that she received from the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. She stressed the imperative nature of additional funding, so the education can continue to expand across the state.

[2:19:20 PM](#)

Acting Chair Ellis handed the gavel to Co-Chair Hoffman.

Co-Chair Hoffman discussed the agenda.

[2:19:26 PM](#)

RECESSED

[2:33:07 PM](#)

RECONVENED

FAIRBANKS

[2:33:44 PM](#)

NANCY K. HOLTRY, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of increased funding for the Alaska Legal Services Corporation (ALSC). She related that ALSC had helped her with a domestic violence protective order, litigation of custody issues, and divorce proceedings. She referenced a sample study that polled 100 women in Fairbanks and stated that out of those women, 57 percent were either physically or sexually assaulted.

JUDITH RAMOS, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), urged support for the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Resilience and Adaptation Program (RAP) and the Indigenous Studies program and shared that she was currently pursuing a PHD in indigenous studies. She related her thankfulness for the RAP's funding; furthermore, the program gave students the opportunity to collaborate with their peers from other disciplines and had graduated about 21 PHD and 15 master's students. She discussed the Indigenous Studies program's overcrowding issue and related that the funding would be used to increase staff and faculty for the program.

[2:36:27 PM](#)

TODD BRINKMAN, RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), expressed his support for RAP and stated that it was an internationally recognized program that trained students to contribute to the social, ecological, and economic well-being of Alaska. He shared that RAP had supported the completion of his degree in wildlife biology and warned that the program was in jeopardy. He further explained that the funding for RAP would sunset this year and urged for the passage of the proposed funding for RAP in the FY 13 operating budget. He pointed out that 90 percent of RAP

graduates stayed in Alaska. He furthered that RAP was an established and successful program and that "pulling the plug" on it would be a huge blow to the state.

[2:38:34 PM](#)

KEVIN HILLMER-PEGGRAM, STUDENT, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of continued funding for RAP and shared that he was currently a PHD student in the program. He related that the program was focused specifically on Alaska and that it was producing cutting edge science aimed at achieving sustainable solutions to real world problems. He concluded that the program had been vetted by the National Science Foundation for the past decade and had a strong student and faculty leadership.

[2:40:43 PM](#)

TABER REHBAUM, ARCTIC ALLIANCE FOR PEOPLE, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), expressed support of increasing funding for the Human Services Community Matching Grants and the Community Initiative Grants and explained that the grant funds were a vital resource for important state programs. She furthered that the grant programs were community driven and allowed recipient agencies to leverage additional funds. She pointed that in FY 11, state funding of \$350,510 to Fairbanks had resulted in \$6 million of leveraged funds. She concluded that the grant programs were efficient, accountable, saved the state money, and improved the quality of life in Alaskan communities.

[2:42:33 PM](#)

LINDA HAPSMITH, ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of the \$600,000 in funding for increasing graduation rates at the University of Alaska. She explained that the increment would focus on helping students who were most at risk for graduating and stated that the funding would be used to improve services to students. She pointed out that students who received specialized advising services were more likely to graduate and be successful.

[2:44:02 PM](#)

SEAN TOPKOK, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), expressed support of funding for the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN) and the Indigenous Studies program. He stated that ANKN was at the top of the webpage when someone looked up "Alaska Native" on Google and related that the network received 2 million "hits" on its website each month. He noted that ANKN worked to bring native ways of learning and teaching into schools. He shared that the program had been grant funded in the past and that it was seeking funding from the university for the first time. He stated that the Indigenous Studies program was the only one of its kind in the U.S. and that it was garnering interest worldwide; it had graduated three PHD students in the last two years.

[2:46:17 PM](#)

GINNY REDMOND, DIRECTOR, STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of including new initiatives to improve graduation rates at the University of Alaska. She related that the funding would provide comprehensive advising, improve student retention, and increase graduation rates for limited income students, students whose parents did not have college degrees, and students with disabilities. She furthered that the funding would with enable the university to reach more students and pointed out that it was an economic investment that would benefit state.

[2:47:54 PM](#)

SARA SMITH, ACADEMIC COORDINATOR, STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), expressed support of including new initiatives to improve graduation rates at the University of Alaska. She stated that an investment in disadvantaged or at risk students would also be an investment in national security and Alaska's future. She explained that the U.S. would be more competitive globally if its educated workforce came from within. She discussed the values of the STEM initiative and stated that funding would draw off the strengths of existing programs and infrastructure. She noted that Alaska needed to have its "best and brightest" leading the way to developing and managing resources. She concluded that many students would not have been able to

graduate or attend college without the critical support that school advisors provided.

[2:49:39 PM](#)

DANA KINZY, INTENSIVE ADVISOR, STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), urged support for including new initiatives to improve graduation rates at the University of Alaska and pointed out that she would not have completed her degree without the help of a good counselor. She stated that Alaska ranked last in the nation in sending its low income, Pell grant eligible students to college. She mentioned that 83 percent of students who attended college in Alaska stayed in the state and that the initiative would provide incentives in the form of financial, motivational, and advising assistance. She offered that sometimes the most significant factor in student retention was a close relationship with an advisor.

[2:51:48 PM](#)

ELSIE VENT, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF HUSLIA, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), urged the passage of SB 97 and expressed her support for the inclusion of state revenue sharing in the proposed budget. She pointed out that energy costs were going up dramatically in the villages.

[2:52:37 PM](#)

EMILY VOCKEROTH, IMAGINATION LIBRARY, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of increasing the base funding for Best Beginnings by \$500,000. She stated that Best Beginnings provided financial, technical, and moral support to communities. She shared that the Imagination Library in Fairbanks had supported new play groups, developed a family friendly website, hosted a health and resource fair, and had grown its membership to almost 3,500 children.

[2:53:37 PM](#)

GARA BRIDWELL, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), expressed support of adding \$500,000 in funding to the Best Beginnings program and also supported the \$250,000 increment for the Parents as Teachers program.

[2:54:31 PM](#)

NELLE ANDREWS, PROGRAM MANAGER, RURAL APPRENTICESHIP OUTREACH PROGRAM, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for the Rural Apprenticeship Outreach Program. She stated that the Denali Commission had funded the program in the past, but that budget cuts would result in a loss of funding and an end to the outreach program in 2013. She explained that the program worked with young rural Alaskans to overcome the barriers of rural life. She furthered that the program provided people with traveling assistance, job training, jobs references, employment information, help with remote accessibility issues, and job interview assistance.

[2:57:45 PM](#)

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of adding \$500,000 for the Best Beginnings program in the proposed budget and also supported the \$250,000 for the Parents as Teachers program. She observed that the two programs promoted the importance of early learning, family engagement, and literacy. She referenced the Babies on Track DVD and Baby Board Book Sets that Best Beginnings had produced and shared that parents were expressing interest in both products. She related the effectiveness of the Parents as Teachers program and shared that it received a lot of letters from parents who were grateful for its services. She offered that children were "our" future and that Best Beginnings was doing great things for early childhood development.

[3:01:06 PM](#)

AT EASE

[3:17:35 PM](#)

RECONVENED

[3:17:55 PM](#)

LUKE HOPKINS, MAYOR, FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH (via teleconference), testified in support of the operating budget, state revenue sharing, and the Division of Human Services' Community Matching Block Grant. He explained that Fairbanks was struggling with the high costs of energy and was experiencing a strain on its social service programs as

a result. He hoped that revenue sharing could help to address increasing energy costs in schools, government, and other. He vocalized support for the university budget; he pointed to UAF research that could help with economic development statewide.

[3:21:02 PM](#)

RECESSED

[3:39:11 PM](#)

RECONVENED

KETCHIKAN, SITKA, WRANGELL, PETERSBURG, HOMER, DILLINGHAM, CORDOVA

[3:40:16 PM](#)

RICHARD CARLSON, SUPERINTENDENT, KLAWOCK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (via teleconference), testified in support of the Parents as Teacher's program, which has helped both children and parents at young ages with language skills, social development, and other cognitive abilities. He maintained that a small investment could render huge results.

MICHELLE BRICKER, SELF, SITKA (via teleconference), testified in support of the Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL) program. She noted that SAIL helped her live on her own.

[3:43:12 PM](#)

NAOMI MICHALSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WOMEN IN SAFE HOMES, KETCHIKAN (via teleconference), expressed support of fully funding the governor's increase for domestic violence and sexual assault programs. She observed that their program was at capacity and there was a struggle to keep up with building maintenance and health care costs. There was an increase to over 5,000 shelter nights. She noted that the program served 4,700 to 5,500 meals.

CAROLINE SMITH, MAYOR, CITY OF ALEKNAGIK (via teleconference), testified in support of state revenue sharing and SB 97 funding. She stressed that energy costs was the number one priority of the city; 80 percent of their budgeted funds for the year had already been spent.

3:49:01

DESERIE BOND, SELF, DILLINGHAM (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Legal Services, which helped her with domestic violence and child custody issues. She maintained that without the services she would not be free from domestic violence.

KEN BERGMAN, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), urged continued support for Best Beginnings and early childhood education. He stressed that children are "our greatest resource and early education would help children become valuable members of the Alaskan society.

3:51:49 PM

KATY ADAMS, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of the \$200 thousand in the governor's budget for independent living services. She asked the committee to consider increasing the program by another \$200 thousand. She recounted personal experiences.

VAL ANGASAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, BRISTOL BAY HOUSING AUTHORITY, DILLINGHAM (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the rural job training program and Alaska Works Partnership. He observed that the partnership helped train weatherization inspectors and raters throughout the state. Trainees maintained, renovated, built and weatherized homes and public facilities. Training was mobile and could be held anywhere in the state. He emphasized that the Denali Commission no longer received federal funds for training. The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation trained between 100 to 200 people in Bristol Bay since 2008.

3:55:10 PM

JANETTE BURNHOFF, SELF, SITKA (via teleconference), testified in support of Southeast Alaska Independent Living program. She noted that she had gone from being a consumer to being an advocate and asked that funding be increased so that more people could be helped.

JAMES SWIFT, COMMERCIAL FISHERMAN, SITKA (via teleconference), urged an increase in Alaska Maritime Safety Education Association (AMSEA) funding and related that commercial fishing safety in Alaska had improved over

the years. He stated that the improved safety in Alaska's commercial fishing industry was a result of AMSEA's efforts and stressed that AMSEA was the only program training fishermen. He maintained that AMSEA was responsible for a decrease in fatalities.

[3:57:38 PM](#)

LISA BUSCH, DIRECTOR, SITKA SOUND SCIENCE CENTER, SITKA (via teleconference), spoke in support of the proposed increase for the marine transportation and fisheries technology faculty positions [University of Alaska, Southeast's Marine Transportation Department]. She observed that the program provided training for hatcheries and fisheries management. The program was diversifying economies, building on strong existing economies, and was using partnerships with industries and non-profit organizations to leverage their services. The department also worked in partnership with federal and state agencies. Over a million dollars had been raised. She indicated that there was a need for the program in other parts of the state. There was demand for the program in western communities that they were unable to meet due a lack of funding. She asked for the funding increase to be raised to \$250,000.

[4:00:27 PM](#)

JERRY DZUGAN, ALASKA MARINE SAFETY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, SITKA (via teleconference), supported the increased funding for the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association's request of \$60,000. Further training could not be offered at the current funding level. Since 1985, AMSEA had provided needed and required training to over 80 communities in Alaska. The training they provided was shown to be partially responsible for the four fold decrease in commercial fishing fatalities in Alaska since the 1980's. He maintained that funding was available through boat registration receipts and the interest from the Fisherman's Fund.

TOMI MARSH, SELF, SITKA (via teleconference), urged support for the Southeast Alaska University's Marine Transportation Department. She stressed the importance of the facility for allowing her pursuit of a pilot's license. The facility allowed her to practice important skills on a simulator. The program included classes that allowed mariners to

upgrade license and gain endorsements, and increased the ability of students to gain employment on ferries, tugs and commercial craft in Alaska. She also supported the increased funding for the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association program.

[4:04:11 PM](#)

TAHNEE CURRAN, SELF, SITKA (via teleconference), recounted her lifelong experience in Alaska's fishing industry and urged support of the Southeast Alaska University's Marine Transportation Department. She pointed to the advantages of an in-state educational program.

[4:05:41 PM](#)

ROBERT PURVIS, BOARD MEMBER, SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, SITKA (via teleconference), testified in support of the governor's \$200,000 for independent living. The Southeast Alaska Independent Living program helped him become independent.

EMILY GUTHRIE, SELF, KETCHIKAN (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Legal Services Corporation and the Women in Safe Homes program.

[4:09:36 PM](#)

BETH LACROSSE, SELF, KETCHIKAN (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for independent living centers and the governor's request of \$200 thousand for expansion. She maintained that an additional \$200 thousand was needed for the program to reach outlying areas of the state.

[4:12:15 PM](#)

KEVIN GADSEY, ADVOCATE, SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING, KETCHIKAN (via teleconference), testified in support of the SAIL program. He stressed the need to increase the program to reach more clients. He observed that SAIL had helped clients with housing, social security issues, and adaptive technology. The SAIL program helped individuals with challenges, to find support, and provide them with services that could help them chart a course to a new life.

[4:15:10 PM](#)

BILL AUGER, PRESIDENT, UNITED SOUTHEAST GILLNETTERS ASSOCIATION, KETCHIKAN (via teleconference), testified in support of fisheries programs and thanked the committee for inclusion of funding for the Chilkat Lake fisheries study. He expressed disappointment that funding was not included for the Hugh Smith weir in Southeast. He stressed the importance of stock assessment as the underpinnings of management.

[4:17:30 PM](#)

RECESSED

[4:32:50 PM](#)

RECONVENED

BETHEL, KOTZEBUE, BARROW, NOME, DELTA JUNCTION, UNALASKA, OFFNETS

[4:33:51 PM](#)

MELANIE BAHNKE, VICE-PRESIDENT, KAWERAK, NOME (via teleconference), testified in support \$200,000 for a 50 percent essential air service match to the community of Diomede. She stated that Diomede was one of the most remote communities in the United States. Diomede was located on an island in the Bering Sea, approximately one mile from the Russian border. Diomede did not have a landing strip, but only a landing pad for a helicopter. She stated that she worked for Kawerak, which was a regional non-profit tribal consortium in the Bering Strait region, providing services for 20 tribes in 15 communities.

Co-Chair Hoffman handed the gavel to Senator Olson.

[4:36:36 PM](#)

Acting Chair Olson expressed gratitude for Ms. Bahnke for addressing the Diomede air service funding.

[4:36:52 PM](#)

LILY RAY, UAF RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION PROGRAM, NOME (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Resilience and Adaptation Program at UAF. She stated that she worked in Nome as a social scientist. She felt that the

program was important for Alaskans to understand local problems. She remarked that comparing community issues with communities from across the country were not accurate comparisons. She felt that incorrect information regarding local issues was a problem in rural communities. She explained that if there were not trained Alaskans competing for federal money, the money would go to another part of the country.

[4:39:00 PM](#)

ELIZABETH K. JOHNSON, CHAIR-PERSON, NOME IMAGINATION LIBRARY, NOME (via teleconference), urged continued support and requested an addition of \$500,000 for Best Beginnings. She remarked that the Imagination Library was a program in Best Beginnings, and stressed the importance of early childhood literacy.

[4:41:01 PM](#)

Senator Olson read a statement from Ruth Emmons in Nome. He stated that Ms. Emmons would like to keep \$200,000 for the independent living programs. He stated that she would like to see an additional \$200,000 for the program.

[4:41:21 PM](#)

JUANITA SMITH, NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH HEALTH DEPARTMENT, BARROW (via teleconference), voiced support for mental health programs. She encouraged education and training for mental health care givers. She pointed out that some mental health patients needed to leave the state for proper mental health treatment, which was a high cost to the state.

JOSEPH DINGMAN, SELF, BARROW (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. He remarked that his son had a severe behavioral problem, and felt that proper mental health education was necessary.

Acting Chair Olson handed the gavel to Co-Chair Hoffman.

[4:44:26 PM](#)

SONIA HANDFORTH KOME, UNALASKA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, UNALASKA (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Performance Scholarship. She alleged that Alaska

needed educated and highly competent citizens who were familiar with the particular challenges of working and living in Alaska. She explained that college students were most likely to live where they received their college education.

[4:45:54 PM](#)

MIA KOMÉ, STUDENT, UNALASKA CITY SCHOOL, UNALASKA (via teleconference), spoke in support of the Alaska Performance Scholarship. She relayed that many of her classmates were working towards receiving the Alaska Performance Scholarship. She reported that these classmates did not have a chance of higher education without the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

[4:46:47 PM](#)

MARYBETH GREEN, EARLY CHILDHOOD COORDINATOR, LOWER KUSKOKWIM SCHOOL DISTRICT (LKSD), BETHEL (via teleconference), urged continued support for the LKSD Preschool Center. She explained that the current year was the last year for all federally funded preschools. She stated that LKSD had historically depended on federal dollars to provide the effective preschool programs. She stated that research showed that students who attended quality preschools scored higher on state tests in third grade, than those students who did not attend preschool. She stressed that early intervention was more economical than mediation.

[4:48:41 PM](#)

APRIL BLEVINS, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding the LKSD Preschool Center. She explained that her children had attended a LKSD preschool program. She remarked that two of her children showed remarkable academic success, which she attributed to their attendance of an LKSD preschool.

[4:50:28 PM](#)

MARY C. PETE, CAMPUS DIRECTOR, KUSKOKWIM CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of University of Alaska programs. She explained that approximately one-half of the Bethel census district population was 25-years-old or younger. She specifically

mentioned the UAF Indigenous Studies Ph.D. program, the Early Childhood Initiative, and the UAA Nursing Program.

[4:51:56 PM](#)

MICHELLE DEWITT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TUNDRA WOMEN'S COALITION (TWC), BETHEL (via teleconference), expressed support of fully funding the governor's increase for domestic violence and sexual assault programs, in the amount of \$475,500. She supported the funding, because there were significant challenges related to utilities and health insurance costs. She stated that the new energy efficient building still faced increased costs, because of the rapid increase in the cost of heating fuel.

[4:53:21 PM](#)

CECILIA MARTZ, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of University of Alaska programs, specifically funding the Indigenous Studies Program at UAF. She stated that the program would assure the future of the native people of Alaska. She stated that the program values the native history, culture, languages, and traditions.

[4:54:36 PM](#)

MONICA CHARLES LEINBERGER, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of early childhood education funding. She remarked that rural Alaska did not have access to many of the benefits that residents in other parts of Alaska received. She explained that her children were able to develop necessary educational and social skills in their preschool, thanks to early childhood education programs.

[4:56:54 PM](#)

ANTHONY CRAVALHO, SELF, KOTZEBUE (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. He stated that he had an autistic son, and remarked that the Collaborative would provide education, treatment, and tools that would support his son's success in the community.

[4:59:20 PM](#)

DEBBY EDWARDSON, PRESIDENT, NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION, BARROW (via teleconference), testified in support of the \$330,000 funding the North Slope Borough School District curriculum alignment integration and mapping project. She specifically thanked Senator Egan for adding the appropriation to the budget. She stated that she had raised seven children in Barrow, and she was passionate about education. She remarked that it was critical to connect the talented and bright students in Barrow that were in need of a connection with academic learning.

[5:01:40 PM](#)

Senator Olson thanked Ms. Edwardson for her service on the North Slope Borough School District Board of Education.

[5:01:45 PM](#)

PEGGY COWAN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT (via teleconference), testified in support of the \$330,000 funding the North Slope Borough School District curriculum alignment integration and mapping project. She urged continued support for Best Beginnings. She spoke in strong support of increased funding for the Base Student Allocation (BSA).

[5:03:04 PM](#)

POLLY TOCKTOO, CHAIRPERSON, BREVIG MISSION IMAGINATION LIBRARY, BREVIG MISSION (via teleconference), urged continued support for Best Beginnings. She furthered that the Imagination Library was an important program for encouraging childhood literacy. She encouraged an addition of \$500,000 to the Best Beginnings program.

[5:04:37 PM](#)

JEANNE GERHARDT-CYRUF, SELF, KAYANA (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. She explained that she was involved in many programs related to mental health issues. She stressed that the Collaborative could build capacity in the rural areas of the state. She explained that she had three children with complex behavioral issues, and pointed out that many people with

behavioral issues were going out of state to seek treatment.

Acting Chair Olson handed the gavel to Co-Chair Hoffman.

[5:07:42 PM](#)

BRIDGET ALINE, BOARD MEMBER, ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE OF ALASKA, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. She explained that there was a need for education, training, and support for elderly care-givers. She explained that many native elders were aging, and were facing Alzheimer's. She stressed the need for travel money.

[5:10:43 PM](#)

JUDITH JOHNSON, ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. She stated that she currently had Alzheimer's disease. She explained that the program had helped many people, including herself, and hoped that the program would continue to help people.

[5:12:59 PM](#)

SHIRLY MARQUARDT, CITY OF UNALASKA, UNALASKA (via teleconference), testified in support of Revenue Sharing. She spoke in support of SB 97. She felt that the program would ease the cost of energy in her community.

Co-Chair Hoffman handed the gavel to Senator Olson.

[5:14:50 PM](#)

MARJORIE STRAUSS, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Alaska Legal Services Corporation. She also expressed support of fully funding the governor's increase for domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

Co-Chair Hoffman noted that the Senate version of HB 284 included a \$200,000 increase to what the governor had requested for domestic violence and sexual assault programs.

[5:16:17 PM](#)

NICKI SHELTON, TRAINER, PARENTS AS TEACHERS, HOONAH (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Parents as Teachers programs. She stated that children who participated in the Parents as Teachers program achieved success in the kindergarten readiness skills assessments, and the benefits lasted through at least third grade. She relayed a story about a father who noticed that all of the children from the Parents as Teachers program in his son's third grade class received academic awards.

[5:18:55 PM](#)

DAVE TALERICO, MAYER, DENALI BOROUGH, HEALY (via teleconference), spoke in support of Revenue Sharing. He testified in support of SB 97. He asserted that high energy costs were affecting the entire state.

[5:20:18 PM](#)

JEANETTE DAVIS, INDEPENDENT LIVING, HOMER (via teleconference), testified in support of the \$200,000 for the independent living program, she and shared the importance of its services in her life. She was 76-years-old, and felt that the independent living program promoted choices, independence, and a high quality of life. She remarked that the program enabled her to attend college, and provided valuable resources to maintain her health.

[5:22:12 PM](#)

ANITA VAN DYCK, SELF, SITKA (via teleconference), spoke in support of the SAIL services in Sitka. She reported eight years prior, she unexpectedly lost her short-term memory. Thanks to the services that SAIL provided, she was able to live in her home without being a burden on her children. She noted that she volunteers for four different organizations in her community, as a way of expressing her gratitude for the services that SAIL provided.

[5:23:10 PM](#)

ALAVINI LATA, SELF, JUNEAU (via teleconference), voiced support for the Complex Behavioral Collaborative \$650,000 increment to the Mental Health budget. He explained that his disabled son would be able to take advantage of the benefits of the Collaborative. He explained that the

\$650,000 would provide consultation and training services for community providers to serve individuals with disabilities with challenging behaviors such as aggression, inappropriate sexual behaviors, and self-harm. He shared a personal experience about his son's inappropriate behavior during puberty. He concluded that there was previous testimony that echoed his perspective.

5:25:05 PM

RON JOHNSON, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), spoke about the problems with the \$11 billion unfunded liability in the State of Alaska Retirement and Benefits. He felt that a level-dollar pay-down method was the best way to ensure financial success. He felt that in the near future, the focus of the budget would be applying payments to the unfunded liability.

5:26:42 PM

FRANCIS KELLY, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. She stated that the funding would provide education for caregivers, and assistance for families of Alzheimer's patients. She remarked that she was able to care for her father, because of the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska program.

5:28:49 PM

CARROL LYBERGER, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Alzheimer's Disease or Related Disorders (ADRD). She remarked that she had submitted a letter highlighting her perspective and experience (copy on file).

Acting Chair Olsen handed the gavel to Co-Chair Hoffman.

CSHB 284(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in Committee for further consideration.

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ADJOURNMENT

5:30:11 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.