

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
March 4, 2014  
1:33 p.m.

[1:33:44 PM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Austerman called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Alan Austerman, Co-Chair  
Representative Mark Neuman, Vice-Chair  
Representative Mia Costello  
Representative Bryce Edgmon  
Representative Les Gara  
Representative David Guttenberg  
Representative Lindsey Holmes  
Representative Cathy Munoz  
Representative Steve Thompson  
Representative Tammie Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair

ALSO PRESENT

Representative Sam Kito; Marianne Mills, President, Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network, Juneau; Jerry Dzugan, Director, Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA), Juneau; Kristi Smith, Career Guide, Alaska Youth First, Juneau; Sariah Wilson, Student, Alaska Youth First, Juneau; Dalton Wells, Student, Alaska Youth First, Juneau; Chris Brennen, Self, Juneau; Carin Smolin, Juneau Schools, Juneau; Dov Gartanberg, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Juneau; Pamela Watts, Executive Director, Juneau Alliance for Mental Health Inc., Juneau; Lilly Killbear, Rainforest Recovery Center, Juneau; Leona Haakanson-Crow, Rainforest Recovery Center, Juneau; Tony See, Self, Juneau; Jessica Dominy, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau; Victoria Daniels, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau; Callie Conerton, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau; Lillian Worl, Self, Juneau; Douglas Pegues, Jr. JobX and Alaska

Youth First, Juneau; Gary Miller, Retired Public Employees of Alaska, Juneau; Emily Coate, Parents as Teachers, Juneau; Kate Prussing, Alaska Youth First, Juneau; Scott Funk, Alaska Youth First, Juneau; Ron Little, REACH Inc., Juneau; Kelly Tousley, REACH, Inc., Juneau; John Pappenheim, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Juneau; Alyson Currey, Public Affairs Field Organizer, Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest, Juneau; Tom Chard, Executive Director Alaska Behavioral Health Association, Juneau; Walter Majoros, Executive Director, Juneau Youth Services, Juneau; Andi Story, Juneau School Board, Juneau; Joy Lyon, Parents as Teachers and Imagination Library, Juneau; Gayle Trivette, Self, Juneau; Denise Daniello, Alaska Commission on Aging, Juneau; Millie Ryan, Executive Director, REACH Inc., Juneau; Heather Schimanski, Juneau Reentry Coalition, Juneau; Penn Lamb, JobX, Juneau; Mary Graham, Self, Juneau; Jennifer Brown, Director, Rainforest Recovery Center, Juneau; Kara Nelson, Co-director, Haven House, Juneau; Jeanette Lacey Dunn, Social Work Case Manager, Bartlett Regional Hospital, Juneau; Brian Holst, Juneau Economic Development Council, Juneau; Jennifer Lindley, Juneau School District Budget Committee, Juneau; Bob Bartholomew, City and Borough of Juneau, Juneau; Xavior Love, Begich Middle School, Anchorage; Representative Andy Josephson.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Dennis Raines, Self, Bethel; Bonnie Woldstad, Self, Fairbanks; Ray Watson, Self, Bethel; Martha Senungetuk, Self, Bethel; Jeremy Osbourne, Yuut Elitnaurviat, Bethel; Ellen Hodges, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, Bethel; Barbara Jacobson, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, Bethel; Jeff Clark, Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, Bethel; Mark Springer, Self, Bethel; Alexis Cooper, Cordova District Fishermen United, Cordova; Paul Swartzbart, Self, Cordova; Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus, Self, Kiana; Anthony Cravalho, Self, Kotzebue; Todd Langley, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Nome; Hollyn Ashe, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Nome; Gail Sheffield, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Marine Advisory Program, Nome; Pauline Doucet, Assistant Administrator, Providence Valdez Medical Center, Valdez; Ruthie Knight, Self, Valdez; Kristie Cranor, Self, Valdez; Cynthia Klemmens, Self, Valdez; Marilyn Mork, Self, Wrangell; Laura Salard, Self, Wrangell; Patrick Cleveland, City of Quinhagak, Quinhagak; Ralph Mackie, Self, Craig; James Berlin, Mayor of Nunatitchuck; Cathy Bishop, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla; Doug Edgar, JobX, Juneau; Hilary Strayer,

Alaska Native Tribal Health, Anchorage; Cathy Bishop, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla; Sophia Jones, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla; Wayne Barras, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla; Bridget Ackerley, Nugen's Ranch, Wasilla; Lucinda Mahoney, CFO, City of Anchorage, Anchorage; Ric Nelson, Governor's Council on Disabilities, Anchorage; Julie Rabeau, Self, Anchorage; Ambrosia Romig, Self, Anchorage; Barbara Brown, Best Beginnings, Anchorage; Deena Mitchell, Self, Anchorage; Alison Arians, Self, Anchorage; Lauren Young, South Central Foundation, Anchorage; Theresa Owens, Anchorage School District, Anchorage; Karin Halpin, Anchorage School District, Anchorage; Kathleen Mclelland, Akeela, Anchorage; Ashley Scott, Stepping Stones and Akeela, Anchorage; Stacy Chuitt, Stepping Stones and Akeela, Anchorage; Julia Ivey, Akeela, Anchorage; Kevin Crosby, Akeela, Anchorage; Zach Johnson, Akeela, Anchorage; Lou Pandolfino, King Career Center, Anchorage; Morgan Christiansen, King Career Center, Anchorage; Christopher Bare, King Career Center, Anchorage; Jenny DiGrappa, Alaska Brain Injury Network, Anchorage; Julie Vincek, King Career Center, Anchorage; Roger Hamacher, Nine Star Alaska, Eagle River; Brenda Bogowith, Alaska Brain Injury Network, Anchorage; Melissa Bassham, Nine Star Alaska, Anchorage; David Alexander, Nine Star Alaska, Anchorage; Adan Acuna, Youth Job Center and Youth First, Anchorage; Javier Acuna, Youth Job Center and Youth First, Anchorage; Steve and BreeAnn Davis, Selves, Anchorage; Rosalie Nadeau, CEO, Akeela, Anchorage; Julian Walker, Akeela, Anchorage; Chelsea Boardman, Head Start and Anchorage School District, Anchorage; Elaine Dahlgren, Volunteers of America, Anchorage; Francine Harbour, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Anchorage; Heather Anderson, Volunteers of America Alaska, Anchorage; Kurt Parkan, Donlin Gold, Anchorage; Jim Vorderstrasse, Self, Anchorage; Michael Owens, Norton Sound Health Corporation, Nome; Nila FankHauser, The Salvation Army, Anchorage; Amanda Merick, Facing Foster Care in Alaska, Anchorage; Kathleen Bugbee, AATCA, Anchorage; Tomara Childs, The Salvation Army, Anchorage; Bryan Goerisu, Self, Anchorage; Julia Jackson, Volunteers of America Adolescent Residential Center, Eagle River; Mary Nanuwak, Self, Chevak; Younger Oliver, University of Alaska, Anchorage; Stacey Lucason, University of Alaska, Anchorage; Andrew Smith, University of Alaska, Anchorage; Beth Snyder, Alaska School District, Anchorage; Polly Smith, Success by Six, Anchorage; Camai Cassey, Self, Anchorage; Janel Walton, Self, Anchorage; Bryce Linguist, Alaska Community Mental Health Services, Anchorage; Melanie

Bartoff, Mental Health Trust, Girdwood; Jennifer Kotyk, Self, Anchorage; Randi Sweet, Sharp Advisory Council, Anchorage; Marge Stoneking, American Lung Association, Anchorage; Aleesha Towns Bain, Anchorage Imagination Library, Anchorage; Chris Turletes, Self, Anchorage; Demetrius Williams, Youth First, Anchorage; Ken Miller, Self, Anchorage; Kelly Wylie, The Salvation Army, Anchorage.

SUMMARY

HB 266      APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

HB 266 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 267      APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

HB 267 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

JUNEAU  
BETHEL,      CORDOVA,      KOTZEBUE,      NOME,      VALDEZ,  
WRANGELL, OFFNET  
ANCHORAGE

#hb266

#hb267

HOUSE BILL NO. 266

"An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs, capitalizing funds, and making reappropriations; making appropriations under art. IX, sec. 17(c), Constitution of the State of Alaska, from the constitutional budget reserve fund."

HOUSE BILL NO. 267

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

[1:33:53 PM](#)

Co-Chair Austerman discussed the agenda for the afternoon.

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: JUNEAU

MARIANNE MILLS, PRESIDENT, ALASKA GERIATRIC EXCHANGE NETWORK, JUNEAU testified on behalf of vulnerable and aging adults. She joined the Alaska Commission on Aging in asking the committee to invest in the family caregiver support program and the nutrition transportation and support (NTS) grants, which prevented or delayed costly institutional care for older Alaskans. She shared that family members most frequently provided long-term care for older Alaskans; the goal was to provide support to those family members. She noted the neglect of caregiver's own health. The caregiver support program offered training on caregiver skills, respite care, and minor home modifications. She explained \$325 thousand for the program would go to non-profit agencies around the state. She noted \$545 thousand was requested for the NTS program. The NTS grant program served an increasing amount of seniors. She cited research showing that states that invested in home delivered meal programs saw greater reductions in nursing home placements. She explained the benefits of the grants program including the financial savings to the state.

1:39:00 PM

JERRY DZUGAN, DIRECTOR, ALASKA MARINE SAFETY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (AMSEA), JUNEAU, testified in support of funding base funding totaling \$196,900 and for the \$48,000 increase in the FY 15 budget to help meet required and desired training demands for commercial fishermen. He asked that the funding remain in the operating budget. He stated a proposal of 25 percent reduction in a prior committee with the goal of eliminating the program. He spoke to the benefits of the program including and decrease of fishing fatalities. He noted that some communities depended on the training. A loss of funds would mean Alaskans would need to travel out of state to take the one or two-day training course.

1:42:16 PM

KRISTI SMITH, CAREER GUIDE, ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, stated that she served approximately 150 students per year. She noted that the funding allowed for dual enrollment with

the University of Alaska Southeast. She stated that the funding for the grant allowed career opportunities.

[1:44:03 PM](#)

SARIAH WILSON, STUDENT, ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, benefited from the Alaska Youth First Grant. She stated that the grant allowed her to learn how to write a resume and cover letter.

[1:44:52 PM](#)

DALTON WELLS, STUDENT, ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, testified in support of the Alaska Youth First Grant. He stated that he benefitted directly from the program.

[1:46:24 PM](#)

CHRIS BRENNEN, SELF, JUNEAU, testified that he was an advocate for people with disabilities. He stated that he benefitted from the funding. He believed that funding for behavioral health was important.

[1:47:54 PM](#)

CARIN SMOLIN, JUNEAU SCHOOLS, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of the Alaska Youth First Grant program. She noted the elimination of councilors in the high schools, which left a part-time career specialist to serve over 1600 students. She felt that the Youth First program was critical to providing the career guidance and planning for high-risk high schools.

[1:49:02 PM](#)

DOV GARTANBERG, NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL, JUNEAU, testified with concern regarding the \$2 million cut to the residential substance abuse treatment programs. He stated that people with mental illness tended toward problems with substance abuse. He stated that the overall treatment was undermined by the cut. He hoped to maintain the support services. He discussed the substance abuse treatment center in Juneau.

[1:51:13 PM](#)

PAMELA WATTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUNEAU ALLIANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH INC., JUNEAU, testified on behalf of funding for the SHARP II loan repayment program and residential substance use disorder treatment. As the director of JAMI, she was responsible for providing services with flat funding. The SHARP II loan repayment program was helpful in recruiting staff.

[1:54:45 PM](#)

LILLY KILLBEAR, RAINFOREST RECOVERY CENTER, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of reinstating funds for residential substance abuse treatment programs. She spoke about her personal benefit from such services.

[1:56:10 PM](#)

LEONA HAAKANSON-CROW, RAINFOREST RECOVERY CENTER, JUNEAU, testified that she benefitted from her time at the Rainforest Recover center. She stated that she waited two months for residential substance abuse treatment. She urged an increase in funding for such treatment centers.

[1:58:34 PM](#)

TONY SEE, SELF, JUNEAU, testified that he resided at the Rainforest Recovery Center and benefitted immensely from the service. He urged the committee to reinstate funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs.

[1:59:28 PM](#)

JESSICA DOMINY, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of her academic advisor at the University of Alaska Southeast. She spoke to the benefit of the advisor services. The academic advisor programs directly affected her and other students' ability to continue their higher education.

[2:02:09 PM](#)

VICTORIA DANIELS, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of the university's advisors. She stated that could provide a comparison as she attended school in the Lower 48 prior to her time at the University of Alaska. She appreciated the work of the university subcommittee.

[2:03:52 PM](#)

CALLIE CONERTON, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, testified in support of the university and the advisor program. She stated that she was a member of student government. She urged committee members to view students as Alaska's future. She recommended consideration of the subcommittee recommendations.

[2:05:58 PM](#)

LILLIAN WORL, SELF, JUNEAU, spoke in support of base funding for the school district. She stressed that the cuts to the state's operating budget affected students. She spoke to the benefits of the Homebridge program. She discussed the variety of education options in the state. She discussed the successes of the district.

[2:09:40 PM](#)

DOUGLAS PEGUES, JR. JOBX AND ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, testified in support of the JobX program, which helped him learn to compose a resume and apply for a job. He stated that the funding allowed him to find a job that he enjoys.

[2:11:17 PM](#)

GARY MILLER, RETIRED PUBLIC EMPLOYEES OF ALASKA, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of Retired Public Employees of Alaska. He noted that he had worked for the state for many years. He expressed concern about the state's unfunded liability.

[2:13:43 PM](#)

EMILY COATE, PARENTS AS TEACHERS, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of Parents as Teachers.

[2:14:26 PM](#)

KATE PRUSSING, ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of the JobX grant. She stated that the program provided individualized services. The program allowed youth to achieve the employable skills necessary to gain employment.

SCOTT FUNK, ALASKA YOUTH FIRST, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of Alaska Youth First program. He stated that the program was beneficial to him in the process of achieving both a job and a career. He agreed that Alaska youth was Alaska's future. He stated that he achieved a job with the help of the program. He implored reconsideration of the cuts.

[2:18:32 PM](#)

RON LITTLE, REACH INC., JUNEAU, testified on behalf of autism funding. He read a letter about a family suffering from autism and benefitting from the employees at REACH. He spoke in favor of funding for the complex behavior collaborative program.

KELLY TOUSLEY, REACH, INC., JUNEAU, testified on behalf of funding for the complex behavioral collaborative program. She noted the improvements with an autistic client as a result of the program. She urged the committee to continue funding the program.

[2:24:45 PM](#)

JOHN PAPPENHEIM, NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL, JUNEAU, testified in support of residential substance abuse treatment. He noted that the funding was an investment in Alaska. He stressed that money saved on cuts for the substance abuse treatment would be spent otherwise.

[2:26:20 PM](#)

ALYSON CURREY, PUBLIC AFFAIRS FIELD ORGANIZER, PLANNED PARENTHOOD VOTES NORTHWEST, JUNEAU, thanked the Department of Health and Social Services subcommittee for extending the council on domestic violence and sexual assault and for increased funding for expanding shelter programs for children exposed to violence. She testified in opposition to the removal of funding for abortion services from the Department of Health and Social Services budget. She noted that the Alaska Supreme Court ordered the department and the state to pay for the services. She spoke in support of a Medicaid women's health program.

[2:28:30 PM](#)

TOM CHARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ALASKA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION, JUNEAU, testified in opposition to reductions

for behavioral health. He urged the committee to reinstate funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs.

[2:32:02 PM](#)

WALTER MAJOROS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUNEAU YOUTH SERVICES, JUNEAU, spoke in support of funds for residential services and outpatient services for youths. He spoke to the Raven's Way program in Sitka and programs in other locations. He communicated that residential and substance abuse treatment helped to prevent suicide. He stated that the cuts might eliminate some of the strides made by the Bring the Kids Home Program. He urged restoration of the funding.

[2:35:42 PM](#)

ANDI STORY, JUNEAU SCHOOL BOARD, JUNEAU, testified in support of funding for education. She stated that graduation rates had risen for multiple years in a row. She added that the Alaska Youth First Grant was valuable to youth in the state.

[2:38:20 PM](#)

JOY LYON, PARENTS AS TEACHERS AND IMAGINATION LIBRARY, JUNEAU, thanked the committee for the investment in early learning. She spoke in favor of increased funding for the Imagination Library. She noted that the reading allowed young children to come into kindergarten with great skills.

[2:40:27 PM](#)

GAYLE TRIVETTE, SELF, JUNEAU, testified in support of increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA). She valued the public education that she benefitted from.

[2:41:23 PM](#)

DENISE DANIELLO, ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING, JUNEAU, testified in support of funding for the senior community based grant services. She believed that the funding allowed for the reduction of Medicaid growth. She stated that the services helped a caregiver to provide quality care. She spoke in support of funding for the NTS program. The services benefitted senior citizens. She mentioned that the services were important to seniors.

[2:44:53 PM](#)

MILLIE RYAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REACH INC., JUNEAU, testified in support of the Complex Behavior Collaborative. She shared a story where the behavior of an autistic child prevented the child from flourishing.

[2:46:29 PM](#)

HEATHER SCHIMANSKI, JUNEAU REENTRY COALITION, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that she benefitted greatly from the program. She believed that the service was essential.

[2:47:58 PM](#)

PENN LAMB, JOBX, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of Alaska Youth First Grant. She stated that she found means of employment with the help of the program. She explained that she was able to live on her own and owned a car as a result of her employment. She stressed the importance of the grant.

[2:49:38 PM](#)

MARY GRAHAM, SELF, JUNEAU, expressed distress that the governor's request for \$3 billion infusion into the PERS and TRS funds was removed from the operating budget.

Co-Chair Austerman stated that the issue regarding PERS, TRS and the unfunded liability was part of a separate bill.

Ms. Graham stated that the needs of retirees were important for the state. She stated that the payments for the states and municipalities were taken care of.

[2:51:20 PM](#)

JENNIFER BROWN, DIRECTOR, RAINFOREST RECOVERY CENTER, JUNEAU testified on behalf of the substance use treatment. She testified in support of the reinstatement of funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that individuals seeking help were evaluated by the addiction guidelines. She stated that FY 13 Rainforest Recovery served many with inpatient services. She spoke to the shortage of available treatment beds.

[2:54:18 PM](#)

KARA NELSON, CO-DIRECTOR, HAVEN HOUSE, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of a full restoration of funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that addiction was a disease in the same way that cancer and diabetes were. She stated that her life was normal prior to drug addiction.

[2:56:45 PM](#)

JEANETTE LACEY DUNN, SOCIAL WORK CASE MANAGER, BARTLETT REGIONAL HOSPITAL, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of funding for the residential substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that Bartlett Regional Hospital developed an outpatient case management program to serve patients who were frequently in the emergency room. She noted that patients must have visited the emergency room 10 or more times in the last year to be considered for the program.

[2:59:44 PM](#)

BRIAN HOLST, JUNEAU ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, JUNEAU, testified on behalf of early childhood education. He stated that education was an investment that provided for the future. He stated that the educated workforce allowed for a healthy economy. He stated that schools help to attract talent to the state. He stated that budget cuts could lead to a loss of 32 positions.

Co-Chair Austerman stated that the Base Student Allocation (BSA) was not included.

[3:03:10 PM](#)

JENNIFER LINDLEY, JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET COMMITTEE, JUNEAU, testified in support of education funding. She informed the committee that she was the mother of three teenage children in the Juneau School District. She spoke in support of the Common Core. She urged an increase in education funding. She stated that the district required new curriculum and teacher retention, neither of which could be provided with budget cuts.

[3:05:20 PM](#)

BOB BARTHOLOMEW, CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, JUNEAU testified in favor of funding for community revenue sharing. He understood the need to reduce budgets, but he encouraged a look at priorities. He noted that the loss for Juneau affected deferred road maintenance. He added his concerns with the unfunded liability program. He pointed out that an infusion to the PERS and TRS unfunded liability would help to reduce the liability and control the future. He pointed out that the liability affected both the state and the municipalities.

Co-Chair Austerman noted that a bill regarding the unfunded liability would be heard in the near future.

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RECONVENED

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: BETHEL, CORDOVA, KOTZEBUE, NOME, VALDEZ, WRANGELL, OFFNET

DENNIS RAINES, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), spoke against budget cuts for residential treatment programs. He worked in a substance abuse treatment center where he witness lives that were transformed due to treatment. He spoke to the successes of the program and the benefits offered to individuals and families. He stressed that the cuts would impact lives. He pointed to federal government statistics related to alcohol and drug abuse and violent crimes. He read that 34 percent of all crimes involved drug and/or alcohol abuse. He shared that 12 percent of all Alaskans reported drug use; the national average was 8 percent. He stated that Alaska was ranked number one in suicide.

[3:16:04 PM](#)

BONNIE WOLDSTAD, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), requested additional funds for the Department of Public Safety budget related to the retrofit of the Woldstad patrol vessel. She believed it was imperative that the state fund the additional \$1.3 million to \$1.6 million for the vessel. She spoke to additional pressures on coastal villages and natural resources and stressed the importance of maintaining the state's two high-endurance patrol

vessels. The state's fisheries would continue to evolve and enforcement had changed, but it was important to prepare for any enforcement needs. She urged enforcement needs related to Arctic fisheries. She discussed the patrolling of waters in the region. She asked for funding of the position for the Woldstad captain.

RAY WATSON, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of funds for alcohol treatment programs. He shared a personal story related to his former alcohol abuse; he had been sober for a lengthy time period. He would not have survived an outpatient program due to alcohol cravings. He advocated for the health and wellbeing of other Alaskans. He stressed that the cuts would present a step backwards in successes related to alcohol treatment.

[3:21:51 PM](#)

MARTHA SENUNGETUK, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), voiced opposition to \$2 million in cuts for residential treatment programs. She discussed negative impacts facing Alaskan villages due to loss of land and resources. She observed direct results that pathologies mentioned by prior testifier Dennis Raines [drugs and alcohol] had on individuals. She believed money needed to be funded to keep the programs going. She stressed the importance of listening to Alaskan residents.

[3:24:30 PM](#)

JEREMY OSBOURNE, YUUT ELITNAURVIAT, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified against cuts to the Alaska Youth First program. He shared that the school employed two career guides through the program; the guides had traveled to 17 different villages in the current fiscal year to work with youths. The guides raised career and opportunity awareness, provided driver training, and proctored the Division of Motor Vehicles written test. The guides had served 347 individuals in FY 14. He discussed the successes of the program and impacts on village residents. He urged the committee to reconsider the cuts.

[3:25:36 PM](#)

ELLEN HODGES, YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION, BETHEL (via teleconference), spoke in support of the \$1.2 million for the SHARP loan repayment program. She communicated that

the program assisted in the recruitment and retention of rural healthcare professionals; the location of rural Alaskan villages made recruitment challenging. Bethel was currently experiencing a severe shortage of physicians and other healthcare providers. She spoke to the importance of attracting qualified medical professionals.

[3:26:37 PM](#)

BARBARA JACOBSON, YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION, BETHEL (via teleconference), spoke against cuts to the trauma center funding and SHARP loan repayment program. She spoke to a shortage of nurses and relayed that the SHARP program could be used as an incentive to attract qualified nurses. She shared information about the facility. The trauma funds allowed the facility to increase education and allowed for the purchase of equipment. Funds had enabled the center to comply with the trauma registry.

[3:28:20 PM](#)

JEFF CLARK, YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION, BETHEL (via teleconference), spoke in support of the trauma registry. The funds would enable providers to get into advanced trauma life-support to improve the quality of care. Funds also helped nurses access educational programs locally. The funds would help with quality assurance in the emergency room and would enable for the implementation of injury prevention plans. The plans and actions were needed in the community. He stated that the Department of Health and Social Services used the trauma registry data to improve quality throughout the state.

[3:30:24 PM](#)

MARK SPRINGER, SELF, BETHEL (via teleconference), testified in support of community revenue sharing and for Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) funds.

Co-Chair Austerman informed the testifier that the PERS and Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) funding was not on schedule for the day. Mr. Springer understood that there may have been a \$10 million reduction to revenue sharing.

Co-Chair Austerman affirmed that the revenue sharing would be paid in full for FY 15, but would be decreased by \$10 million per year following FY 15. Mr. Springer expressed

concerns about the decreases in the future budgets related to revenue sharing. He pointed out that the funding was extremely important to small areas in the state.

[3:33:17 PM](#)

ALEXIS COOPER, CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED, CORDOVA (via teleconference), testified against proposed budget cuts to the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA) program. She relayed that the commercial fleet used Cordova as a home port to access various fishing grounds. The fleet depended on access to local training for safety courses provided by AMSEA. She spoke to her personal training experience provided by the program.

[3:35:08 PM](#)

PAUL SWARTZBART, SELF, CORDOVA (via teleconference), encouraged funding for the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association program at the requested level. He shared that when he had begun commercial fishing in the 1970s that fatalities had been commonplace. The program had significantly reduced fatality number.

[3:36:07 PM](#)

JEANNE GERHARDT-CYRUS, SELF, KIANA (via teleconference), spoke in support of \$500,025 for the Complex Behavior Collaborative. She shared a personal story related to challenges her daughter had experienced at home and in school. She wanted her daughter to be at home. She shared that her family had been involved in the CBC program since the prior April. Her daughter was currently enrolled in high school and was experiencing success. She stressed the importance of access to the program in rural communities. She discussed costs with comparative services that did not meet her daughter's needs.

[3:39:22 PM](#)

ANTHONY CRAVALHO, SELF, KOTZEBUE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Complex Behavior Collaborative. He stressed that the program brought training to villages and provided children and adults with needed services. He asked for support for residential substance abuse treatment programs. He stressed that people needing treatment already

struggled to get into programs in the region; cuts to the programs would make access to treatment more challenging.

[3:41:34 PM](#)

TODD LANGLEY, NORTON SOUND HEALTH CORPORATION, NOME (via teleconference), spoke in support of the trauma care fund. The funds had been instrumental in preventing deaths from trauma; without the funding lives would be lost. He shared that patients had a 25 percent reduced risk of death when treated at a designated trauma facility. He stated that without the funding facilities currently in pursuit of the trauma designation would not continue towards the designation. He pointed to hazmat training provided to employees. He urged the committee to reconsider funding the program.

[3:44:20 PM](#)

HOLLYN ASHE, NORTON SOUND HEALTH CORPORATION, NOME (via teleconference), testified in support of the trauma care fund. Due to the funds the corporation had brought in health aides from all 15 nearby villages for training in trauma care. She stated that additional trauma care centers were needed. The corporation had trained its own instructors for hospital support in order to better care for trauma patients. There was a great deal more to be taught and much more equipment needed to care for patients. She stressed that people deserved access to care.

[3:46:22 PM](#)

GAIL SHEFFIELD, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, MARINE ADVISORY PROGRAM, NOME (via teleconference), spoke in support of the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association program in the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development operating budget. She spoke against moving funding to the capital budget. She stated that the program was revenue neutral; a percentage of boating registration fees and crew member licenses contributed to the state's general fund. She stressed that access to safety training was essential. The program had a positive track record and was a good use of state funds.

[3:48:04 PM](#)

PAULINE DOUCET, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, PROVIDENCE VALDEZ MEDICAL CENTER, VALDEZ (via teleconference), spoke in support of trauma care funds. The funding for the trauma level 4 program had allowed the center to fund its trauma coordinator position; the position had enabled the center to enhance its level of care, improve protocol, and to acquire the best practice equipment. The funding had also helped significantly with education training for staff. The training enabled the staff to provide care to trauma patients.

[3:50:11 PM](#)

RUTHIE KNIGHT, SELF, VALDEZ (via teleconference), testified in support for \$3 billion for Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) and Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

[3:51:18 PM](#)

KRISTIE CRANOR, SELF, VALDEZ (via teleconference), spoke in support for \$3 billion for Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) and Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

[3:51:45 PM](#)

CYNTHIA KLEMMENS, SELF, PROVIDENCE VALDEZ MEDICAL CENTER, VALDEZ (via teleconference), encouraged support for trauma care funds. She shared that Alaska had the third highest injury rate in the nation. She spoke to the importance of an increased level of patient care. Increasing the level of care meant there was a need for increased training and equipment. Without the funding the goals would be unattainable and resources would be lacking.

[3:54:53 PM](#)

MARILYN MORK, SELF, WRANGELL (via teleconference), spoke in favor of restored funding for the trauma care fund. She pointed to Wrangell's remote location. The funds were needed to enable the local medical center to work towards the level 4 trauma designation.

[3:55:45 PM](#)

LAURA SALARD, SELF, WRANGELL (via teleconference), asked for the reinstatement of the trauma care funding. She is a registered nurse and trauma coordinator. The fund went

towards education and equipment needed to care for trauma patients. She stressed that providing patients with a higher level of care required medevac services. The funds were needed to maintain staff education and equipment. She wanted to keep hospitals and staff in state.

[3:58:06 PM](#)

PATRICK CLEVELAND, CITY OF QUINHAGAK, QUINHAGAK (via teleconference), testified in support of community revenue sharing. He stated that the elimination of funds would be detrimental to the city's ability to provide essential services to residents; the funds accounted for 39 percent of the city's operating budget. The elimination of funding would mean job cuts in the city. He shared that commercial fishery opportunities had been reduced in recent years and would decrease local income.

[4:00:18 PM](#)

RALPH MACKIE, SELF, CRAIG (via teleconference), spoke against cuts to the behavioral health budget. He spoke to devastating results of the pervasive nature of behavioral health issues. He stated that behavioral health issues were chronically unattended and underfunded. He wondered why. He stated that the largest priority in life was the well-being of a person's loved ones. He stressed that energy and resources should be poured into the behavioral health epidemic. He urged a restoration of full funding to behavioral health programs.

[4:02:31 PM](#)

JAMES BERLIN, MAYOR OF NUNATITCHUCK (via teleconference), spoke in support of community revenue sharing and thanked the legislature for its past support. He relayed that the services were very important to the city's budget. The city depended on the funds for life and daily jobs.

[4:04:44 PM](#)

CATHY BISHOP, NUGEN'S RANCH, WASILLA (via teleconference), spoke against cuts to funds for residential treatment programs. [Testimony was cut off and heard in full at 4:17:09 p.m.]

[4:05:38 PM](#)

DOUG EDGAR, JOBX, JUNEAU (via teleconference), spoke against cutting funds for Alaska Youth First programs. He shared his personal experience with JobX; the program had helped him find a job and subsequently he had been able to remain in Juneau. He stressed that cutting the funding would force youths to move out of state to look for jobs. He emphasized the importance of keeping youths in Juneau to live and work in Alaska.

[4:07:16 PM](#)

HILARY STRAYER, ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for trauma care. She stated that injury was the leading cause of death for Natives. She stated that the Alaska Trauma Registry was the only statewide injury data source in the state; the registry provided vital data to individuals working in risk reduction and injury prevention. The data allowed the determination of baseline rates for injury comparisons, identified disparities, and helped determine if prevention efforts were cost-effective. She shared that 23 of the 24 hospitals in Alaska would be designated as trauma centers in the future; however, without the funds the designation would not occur. She stated that without the funds Alaska's rural hospitals would lack the support to provide the data needed. A loss of funds would limit services for rural populations with higher risk of injury.

[4:10:31 PM](#)

AT EASE

[4:17:09 PM](#)

RECONVENED

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: ANCHORAGE

CATHY BISHOP, NUGEN'S RANCH, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified on behalf of Nugen's Ranch and residential treatment programs. The program provided treatment services for individuals statewide. She believed residential programs in Alaska were already severely underfunded; removing additional funds would increase hardship on Alaskan residents. She regularly received calls from families seeking residential beds and treatment.

[4:18:48 PM](#)

SOPHIA JONES, NUGEN'S RANCH, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified in support for residential treatment programs. She herself benefitted from the program. She stated that the efforts allowed for a reduced chance of relapse. She stated that she was learning to be accountable for her behavior. She noted that addiction affected the entire family.

[4:20:21 PM](#)

WAYNE BARRAS, NUGEN'S RANCH, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified in support for the residential treatment programs. He was a beneficiary of Nugen's Ranch. He stated that budget cuts to treatment programs would mean increased recidivism rates. He stated that he required long-term treatment for alcoholism; long-term treatment allowed residents to move through withdrawal symptoms and to learn necessary tools to live productively in society. He requested additional funding for the programs.

[4:21:36 PM](#)

BRIDGET ACKERLEY, NUGEN'S RANCH, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified in support for the residential treatment programs. She herself was living in a treatment facility. The program had provided her with skills necessary to succeed in a life of recovery. She stated that she had frequently been a part of the legal system; the program had taken her out of that cycle. The facility had eight beds for women. She wished others could have the same opportunity.

[4:22:50 PM](#)

XAVIOR LOVE, BEGICH MIDDLE SCHOOL, ANCHORAGE, testified for support in education funding. He had gathered a petition that was presented to the committee. He stated that the program Destination 2020 helped students make various sets of goals for his generation. He stated the proficiency guidelines that were compromised by the lack of funding. He stated that students cared about the public funding. He expressed passion for his cause. He stated that the current students deserved the best education possible and were the future of the country.

[4:26:35 PM](#)

LUCINDA MAHONEY, CFO, CITY OF ANCHORAGE, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), supported the \$3 billion contribution from the Constitutional Budget Reserve to the PERS and TRS. She pointed to the importance of dealing with the unfunded liability. She stated that the increased schedule would address the significant liability. She mentioned the contribution levels for Anchorage, which had been reduced significantly. She appreciated funding above 22 percent. She noted the efficiencies found in the recent past regarding revenue sharing.

[4:30:24 PM](#)

Co-Chair Austerman stated that without revenue, it was difficult to share. He recognized Representative Andy Josephson.

[4:30:55 PM](#)

RIC NELSON, GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of the council's complex behavioral collaborative. The collaborative provided intensive support for disabled individuals at risk of being institutionalized. He stated that the CBC services included assistance with behavior and its function, training for family and providers, development and implementation of the behavior intervention plan, data collection, ongoing consultation, and results-based evaluation. He stated that he had data that 76 percent of participants avoid institutional care and many remain in their own communities. He stated that the state saves substantially every day that individuals are not in API.

[4:34:53 PM](#)

JULIE RABEAU, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of reinstatement of the trauma care fund. She shared that trauma was the number one cause of death and disability in Alaska for ages 1 to 44. She stated that the number of trauma centers had tripled in the state since the inception of the fund. She discussed disaster preparedness. She predicted that several thousand people could be treated in higher level trauma centers. She mentioned the Division of Public Health strategic plan and the dependence on services in the all trauma centers

throughout the state. She requested the reinstatement to the fund in the operation budget.

4:38:00 PM

AMBROSIA ROMIG, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of reinstatement of the trauma care fund. She relayed that the fund supported personnel, education, equipment, and the Alaska Trauma Registry. The fund supported evaluation and prevention of injury and allowed for quality improvement statewide. She noted that unintentional injury was the highest cause of death in the state. Currently only 55 percent of the state was within 60 minutes of a level 2 trauma center. She noted that serious injury prevention programs required continued funding.

4:39:18 PM

BARBARA BROWN, BEST BEGINNINGS, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Imagination Library. She highlighted the advantages of reading and noted the number of children receiving their books in the mail. She stated that the program got the community excited about providing books to the children. She shared that research showed children receiving books were more prepared for Kindergarten. Currently the program was not able to admit all interested children/families. She encouraged an increase in funding.

4:41:48 PM

DEENA MITCHELL, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of funding for early childhood education and Best Beginnings. She believed that the earlier children were started on the path to academic success the better off the state would be. She stated strongly that children were the state's most valuable natural resource. Continued cuts to counselors, teachers, libraries, and support staff would decrease recent gains. She stressed that education should be the state's top priority.

4:43:31 PM

ALISON ARIANS, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of increased funding for education. She shared information about her daughter's classroom. She

estimated that 5th grade classrooms would contain 35 children. She provided data regarding education funding and increased graduation rates. She implored the committee to increase funds for education.

[4:45:28 PM](#)

LAUREEN YOUNG, SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of residential treatment programs including Dena A Coy. She relayed that Dena A Coy had been established in 1992 and was the first residential program in the U.S. to allow pregnant women to receive treatment before and after giving birth. She stated that the facilities required state funds for continued survival. She stated that children were born with a reduced risk of living a life compromised by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) because they spent time in treatment. She shared statistics related to FASD.

[4:48:30 PM](#)

THERESA OWENS, ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged continued funding for Kids Core Head Start and Anchorage School district partnership. She noted an increase in readiness if a student participated in the collaborative preschool. Families without the necessary foundation to build healthy relationships with public schools were provided the opportunity to develop the skills within the preschool setting. She noted that additional skills require funding. She noted that the Base Student Allocation (BSA) required an increase.

[4:50:23 PM](#)

KARIN HALPIN, ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of Pre-K education funding. She stressed that children and parents had benefitted greatly by the state funded Pre-K program. She noted that the programs provided many advantages for the young children involved. She urged continued funding.

[4:51:49 PM](#)

KAITLYN MCLELLAND, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified against budget cuts for residential treatment facilities. She stressed that clients using the treatment facilities were often homeless, had Office of Children

Services involvement, came from broken homes, experienced untreated mental health disorders, and were dealing with significant amounts of trauma. She noted that a person's independence was promoted by the programs and facilities. She stated that budget cuts would cost some Alaskans the opportunity to live a healthy life with their family.

[4:53:32 PM](#)

ASHLEY SCOTT, STEPPING STONES AND AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified as a resident of Stepping Stones treatment center. She stated that the program offered her an option to be a successful mother in recovery. She hoped that the opportunity would be available to other women. She stressed that without the program she would either be using or in jail.

[4:54:45 PM](#)

STACY CHUITT, STEPPING STONES AND AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of residential treatment center funding. She noted that the courage to be independent was available to her with the help of the treatment facility. She stated that parenting classes were available in the program. She stated that without the opportunity she and her daughter would not have a future.

[4:56:19 PM](#)

JULIA LOUIE, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified that the Akeela residential recovery center had made a very large difference in her situation. She discussed prior failed attempts at outpatient recovery. She stated that she was able to build a commitment to a life in recovery after six months in the treatment center. She was taught to make amends to people she affected in her addiction process. She relayed that choosing to enroll in the Akeela center was the best decision she had ever made.

[4:59:58 PM](#)

KEVIN CROSBY, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of reinstatement of funding for residential recovery centers. He shared a personal story about his struggle with substance abuse. He stated that he benefitted from the center and was in a transitional housing option. He stressed that people were literally

dying while waiting to get into the facilities. He mentioned the delays faced by beneficiaries in need of treatment. He emphasized that budget cuts would make the situation worse.

[5:02:47 PM](#)

ZACH JOHNSON, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for residential recovery centers. He believed the general public's view was to incarcerate rather than rehabilitate. He stressed the importance of teaching individuals how to live, not how to be better criminals. He stated that his use of hard drugs for over 25 years had ended with his treatment. He stated that cutting funds to treatment centers could be a death sentence to many people.

[5:04:01 PM](#)

LOU PANDOLFINO, KING CAREER CENTER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Youth First grant and for Youth Job Center career guides. He relayed that if the program was decimated it would negatively impact youths and industry leaders in Alaska. Career guides served over 1,000 high school seniors per year at the King Career Center; guides served over 4,000 students statewide. Guides assisted with resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills, and other. He mentioned other program benefits including assistance with post-secondary education training. The guides helped students focus on life after high school. He noted the budgetary constraints and the shrinking public education workforce. The partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development career guides was essential.

[5:05:40 PM](#)

MORGAN CHRISTIANSEN, KING CAREER CENTER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Youth Job Center. He stressed the usefulness of the program; it gave students hope and encouragement for their future. He stated that he opted for a career that was encouraged by the center.

[5:06:53 PM](#)

CHRISTOPHER BARE, KING CAREER CENTER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Youth Job Center. He shared that the center helped students access certifications to get into the workforce. He noted that the centers helped students compose resumes and cover letters in an effort to help them gain employment. He emphasized that he would be lost without the help he had received from the center. He hoped the program would be available to help students going forward. He urged continued funding.

[5:08:03 PM](#)

JENNY DIGRAPPA, ALASKA BRAIN INJURY NETWORK, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Brain Injury Network and the Alaska Trauma Registry. She pointed to 3,353 hospitalizations due to brain injury between 2007 and 2011; 66 percent had been discharged due to the network. She relayed that without the trauma registry the statistics would be unavailable. Funding the trauma registry was necessary in order to maintain the current information database. She urged the committee to reinstate the Trauma Care Fund.

[5:09:12 PM](#)

JULIE VINCEK, KING CAREER CENTER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Youth Job Center career guides funded by the Youth First grant. She stated that a double message was sent with the increase of students. She noted that 1000 students received instruction from the career guide. She noted that the job market was accessed more easily because of the program.

[5:12:01 PM](#)

ROGER HAMACHER, NINE STAR ALASKA, EAGLE RIVER (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Alaska Youth First program. He mentioned the internship and work component of the program.

[5:13:53 PM](#)

BRENDA BOGOWITH, ALASKA BRAIN INJURY NETWORK, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified for funding for the Alaska trauma registry. The funding would support ongoing training and staffing in facilities serving the most seriously

injured patients in Alaska. The existing services required the funding to survive.

[5:16:20 PM](#)

MELISSA BASSHAM, NINE STAR ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for Alaska Youth First program. She noted that the program allowed services for youth who have graduated from high school. Small businesses benefitted from the program's free internship component.

[5:17:27 PM](#)

DAVID ALEXANDER, NINE STAR ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Alaska Youth First program. He stated that the program helped to support small business in Anchorage and Wasilla.

[5:18:20 PM](#)

ADAN ACUNA, YOUTH JOB CENTER AND YOUTH FIRST, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Youth First program. He stated that the employment he sought would help him to collect money for college. He communicated that the youth career center allowed him the opportunity to obtain employment.

[5:19:57 PM](#)

JAVIER ACUNA, YOUTH JOB CENTER AND YOUTH FIRST, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Alaska Youth First program.

[5:20:46 PM](#)

STEVE AND BREEANN DAVIS, SELVES, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the Complex Behavioral Center funding. He shared a personal story about his son. He discussed the challenges they had with their son at school and at home. They had been faced with placing their son in a facility; however, the CBC program saved their son and family. The program transformed their child's life. They urged the committee to fund the program.

[5:24:04 PM](#)

ROSALIE NADEAU, CEO, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), encouraged funding for residential programs. She emphasized that the programs saved costs. She discussed how programs helped mothers to recover and care for their children. She shared that AKEELA had three residential treatment facilities. The organization treated many former inmates. She stressed that keeping individuals out of prison saved the state money. She asked the committee to not target behavioral health funds.

[5:27:37 PM](#)

JULIAN WALKER, AKEELA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in favor of residential treatment center funds. He stated that he had been in and out of jail prior to his time at AKEELA house. He spoke highly of his experience in the residential treatment center. He believed that a cut to the program would compromise the safety of the streets in Anchorage.

[5:29:01 PM](#)

CHELSEA BOARDMAN, HEAD START AND ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of early childhood education. She stated that both children and their parents benefitted greatly from early childhood education.

[5:30:56 PM](#)

ELAINE DAHLGREN, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of residential treatment center funds. She stated that evidence based treatment showed that individuals benefitted immensely from the service. She mentioned the Bring the Kids Home program that helped people remain stable in the community.

[5:33:19 PM](#)

FRANCINE HARBOUR, NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of restoring funding for the residential substance abuse treatment programs.

[5:34:52 PM](#)

HEATHER ANDERSON, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of residential treatment center funds. She stated that Eagle River had 24 beds in their treatment center. The environment allowed people to effectively return to their communities.

[5:36:41 PM](#)

KURT PARKAN, DONLIN GOLD, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of retaining the governor's funding level for Alaska Youth First program and the Teacher Industry Externship program. He stated that the two programs helped prepare Alaska youth for employment.

[5:37:47 PM](#)

JIM VORDERSTRASSE, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified in favor of funding for the Complex Behavior Health Collaborative. He expressed gratitude for the services that allowed people to recover while living independently. He noted that adult onset mental illness was seen as shameful.

[5:40:07 PM](#)

MICHAEL OWENS, NORTON SOUND HEALTH CORPORATION, NOME (via teleconference) testified for funding for trauma care. He stated that the system would save both lives and funds. He stated that a loss of funds would end in a degradation of the services.

[5:41:07 PM](#)

NILA FANKHAUSER, THE SALVATION ARMY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified for the reinstatement of residential treatment center funds. She stated that the current funding levels were not adequate to meet the needs of the people.

[5:43:31 PM](#)

AMANDA MERICK, FACING FOSTER CARE IN ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified for funding for support staff for foster care in the Office of Children's Services. She noted that the state commissioned a recent study and she urged legislators to view it.

[5:45:11 PM](#)

KATHLEEN BUGBEE, AATCA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the Alaska Youth First Grant. She noted interest in an annual event called the Palmer Construction Career Days that was historically successful in the Mat-Su valley.

[5:46:38 PM](#)

TOMARA CHILDS, THE SALVATION ARMY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of residential treatment center funds. She stated that cuts to the program would affect people in compromised positions.

[5:47:51 PM](#)

KELLY WYLIE, THE SALVATION ARMY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of residential treatment center funds. She stated that she was now able to manage her life in a sober way as a result of her time in a residential treatment center. She stated that her life was hopeless until an opportunity became available for treatment in the local residential center.

[5:50:13 PM](#)

BRYAN GOERISU, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified in support of the restoration of residential treatment center funds. He stated that he chose a residential treatment center during a very difficult time in his life. He highlighted that the funding allowed a new start for him after treatment.

[5:52:35 PM](#)

JULIA JACKSON, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA ADOLESCENT RESIDENTIAL CENTER, EAGLE RIVER (via teleconference), testified in support of residential treatment center funding. She stated that the reality of the need for treatment centers should not be ignored. She believed that residential treatment was essential to families and the economy. She believed that the residential method was the most effective treatment option available.

[5:54:54 PM](#)

MARY NANUWAK, SELF, CHEVAK (via teleconference), testified that she sued the state for Mental Health Trust land. She spoke about the injustices to minority groups. She wished for people with alcohol addiction to be included with other mental health patients. She spoke to the needs of many different people.

[5:57:19 PM](#)

YOUNGER OLIVER, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on behalf of funding for the University of Alaska. She spoke to the benefit of the university's advisors and advocated for the reinstatement of state funding.

[5:59:13 PM](#)

STACEY LUCASON, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of high-demand programs in the university budget. She advocated for those programs related to health care.

[6:00:13 PM](#)

ANDREW SMITH, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the university. He spoke to the benefit of a university budget including mandatory advising. He stated that the university system was committed to building Alaska's future. The high-demand programs benefitted the university system and Alaska at every level.

[6:01:02 PM](#)

BETH SNYDER, ALASKA SCHOOL DISTRICT, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of early education funding. She stated that pre-K benefitted many children with their educations. She stated that pre-school students transitioned to kindergarten easily when they had access to programs with pre-K funding.

[6:02:36 PM](#)

POLLY SMITH, SUCCESS BY SIX, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), appreciated the lack of cuts to the funding for early childhood education. She discussed the benefits of the Imagination Library.

6:03:28 PM

CAMAI CASSEY, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference) testified in favor of the Alaska Youth First Grant. She stated that the youth job center benefitted her daughter immensely. She noted that the program's career guides helped students to understand the costs associated with life.

6:05:15 PM

JANEL WALTON, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified on in support of education and behalf of at risk youths. She spoke to a program for at risk youths at Benny Benson Secondary School. She told a story related to at risk youths. She testified that there were no programs available for the specific youth. She spoke to the trickle-down effect of a lack of education funding. At risk youths would end up on the street. She stressed the importance of providing funding for the school budget.

6:07:33 PM

BRUCE LINGUIST, ALASKA COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in support of mental health and substance abuse treatment programs. He rejected the notion that higher levels of treatment were a waste of time and money. He discussed that addiction often involved cycles of relapse and remission. He emphasized that without treatment people could die prematurely; providing treatment services could curtail the problem. He opined that it would be unethical to deny treatment to individuals requiring more than outpatient services.

6:10:16 PM

MELANIE BARTOFF, MENTAL HEALTH TRUST, GIRWOOD (via teleconference), spoke in favor of traumatic brain injury funding. She told a personal story related to her experience with a traumatic brain injury. The Brain Injury Network had helped her get back on track with her life. She was a productive member of society and ran her own business. Without the support of the programs the recovery of people with brain injuries would be hindered.

6:12:16 PM

JENNIFER KOTYK, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), voiced support for traumatic brain injury funding. She shared a story about a friend. She spoke about her personal faith.

[6:14:11 PM](#)

RANDI SWEET, SHARP ADVISORY COUNCIL, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke against a budget decrement of \$1.2 million for the SHARP program. She stressed the cuts could cause vulnerable Alaskans to lose their healthcare providers. She stated that 39 recently selected providers would not receive service agreements; other providers may lose some of their support. The decrement would cause contracts to be 41 percent underfunded. The program had provided healthcare to 156,000 Alaskans. She stressed the importance of continuing care for the individuals. She communicated that organizations had success in stabilizing turnover and creating sustainability.

[6:16:21 PM](#)

MARGE STONEKING, AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified against a \$1.6 million decrement to the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. She believed the decrement had been proposed in the governor's budget in error. She shared that there had been a lack of clarity about the level of funding in the Tobacco-Use Education and Cessation Fund; the issue had been clarified. The payments from the tobacco master settlement agreement would continue in perpetuity to the state. She discussed that given the current numbers there would not be a cash flow issue until FY 19 if funding was maintained. The program was highly effective; there were 35,000 Alaskans alive today because of the program.

[6:18:12 PM](#)

ALEESHA TOWNS BAIN, ANCHORAGE IMAGINATION LIBRARY, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), thanked the committee for Best Beginnings and statewide Imagination Library funding. There were 8,600 children enrolled in Anchorage; every child received one book per month along with ideas to engage in increased literacy. She stressed that exposure to books equated to Kindergarten readiness; this was a predictor of on-time high school graduation. She encouraged

increased funding for Best Beginnings to increase the number of those helped by the program.

[6:19:31 PM](#)

CHRIS TURLETES, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the university operating budget. She relayed that the new university sports facility was scheduled to open in August; the annual maintenance and operating costs would be approximately \$2.72 million. She stated that the governor's budget reduced the amount to \$1.6 million; the reduction meant that necessary maintenance would not be made. The facility would be used by the campus and the community. She discussed various amenities in the facility. She stated that the size and complexity of the facility made it important to not underfund. She thanked the committee for its support.

[6:21:56 PM](#)

DEMETRIUS WILLIAMS, YOUTH FIRST, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Youth First program. He is currently a student at the University of Alaska Anchorage. The youth job center in Anchorage had helped him to find employment. He shared his personal story about employment. He was grateful to the program that helped him find what he wanted to do.

[6:22:55 PM](#)

KEN MILLER, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in favor of funding for substance abuse treatment programs. He spoke about victims of substance abuse. He shared that he had been clean and sober for 10 years. He relayed that inpatient substance abuse treatment had turned his life around. He asked for the continuation of funding for substance abuse treatment.

HB 266 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

HB 267 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

[6:24:55 PM](#)

Co-Chair Austerman thanked the public for its testimony. He discussed the agenda for the following day.

#

ADJOURNMENT

6:26:16 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.