

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 20, 2014

1:41 p.m.

[1:41:20 PM](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Kelly called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:41 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Pete Kelly, Co-Chair
Senator Kevin Meyer, Co-Chair
Senator Anna Fairclough, Vice-Chair
Senator Mike Dunleavy
Senator Donny Olson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Click Bishop
Senator Lyman Hoffman

ALSO PRESENT

Patrick Marshall, Youth Trainer, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action, Craig; Ron Wilson, Self, Juneau; Elaine Vroman, Self, Juneau; Arlene Ludwig, Self, Anchorage; Michael Mooradian, Substance Abuse Counselor, Chugiak.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Bryce Ward, Self, City of North Pole; Susan Warner, Self, Fairbanks; Darlene Supplee, Member, North Star Counsel on Aging, Fairbanks; Antonio Shumacher, Self, City of Fairbanks; Warren Cummings, Chief, Fairbanks Fire Department, Fairbanks; Terry Solomon, Volunteer, Chena Gold Stream Fire and Rescue, Fairbanks; Bonnie Woldstad, Self, Fairbanks; Melanie Lindholm, Volunteer, Planned Parenthood, Fairbanks; Gerald Brown, Pharmacist, Fairbanks; Virgie Thompson, Mayor, City of Houston; Doug Griffin, City Manager, City of Palmer; John Cannon, Self, Wasilla; Rachel Greenberg, Deputy Director, Mat-Su Senior Services, Mat-Su; Robin Minard, Director, Public Affairs, Mat-Su Health Foundation, Mat-Su; Chuck Foster, Assistant Executive

Director, Wasilla Area Seniors Coalition, Mat-Su; Diane Hutchison, Assembly Member, Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly, Fairbanks; Jon Zasada, Health Care Provider, Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, Anchorage; Michelle Baker, Operations Director, South Central Behavioral Health Foundation; Christopher Truitt, Self, Anchorage; Joshua Franks, Manager, South Central Foundation, Anchorage; Linda Conover, Co-Chair, Imagination Library, Wasilla; Karl Garber, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Resource Alaska, Anchorage; Tammy Williamson, Self, Anchorage; Kime McClintock, Self, Anchorage; Jessica Cler, Alaska Public Affairs Manager, Alaska Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest, Anchorage; Abbe Hensley, Self, Best Beginnings, Anchorage; Karin Schaff, Vice-President, Treatment Services, Volunteers of America Alaska, Anchorage; Douglas Pace, Self, Talkeetna; Leeanne Carrothers, President, Alaska Physical Therapy Association, Anchorage; Patricia Senner, Nurse, Alaska Nurses Association, Anchorage; Shirley Marquardt, Mayor, City of Unalaska; Elaine Dahlgren, Chief Executive Officer, Volunteers of Alaska, Anchorage; Angela Doroff, Employee, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, Homer; George Matz, Chairman, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve Council, Fritz Creek; Jill Lush, Executive Director, Sprout Family Services, Homer; Katie Koester, Self, City of Homer; Stacey Buckelew, Employee, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, Homer; Bryan Zak, Self, Homer; Maria Calhoun, Coordinator, Parents as Teachers, Sprout Family Services, Homer; Jim Hornaday, Member, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve Council, Homer.

SUMMARY

CSHB 266(FIN)

APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS

CSHB 266(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

CSHB 267(FIN)

APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

CSHB 267(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

FAIRBANKS, MAT-SU
ANCHORAGE, UNALASKA

GLENNALLEN, SEWARD, HOMER

#hb266

#hb267

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 266(FIN)

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

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 267(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."

[1:41:33 PM](#)

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: FAIRBANKS, MAT-SU

[1:41:33 PM](#)

BRYCE WARD, SELF, CITY OF NORTH POLE (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). He announced that a reduction in revenue sharing in North Pole would be equal to approximately \$33,200. He furthered that an increase in the PERS from 22 percent to 24 percent was \$5,800. He stressed that the revenue sharing and effect on PERS would result in an \$81,000 budget deficit for the City of North Pole, including losing one full-time employee. He stressed that the City of North Pole used revenue sharing to offset operational expenses and taxes that were otherwise paid for by residents and businesses. He remarked that the revenue sharing in North Pole equaled approximately 0.5 percent in sales tax.

[1:42:34 PM](#)

SUSAN WARNER, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), urged the committee to halt spending, specifically related to road development near the Chena Small Tracks Road in Fairbanks. She encouraged the committee to focus on

savings. She shared that there was a proposed road project that may be an attractive nuisance to small children in her community to bodily injury, drowning, and death. She felt that there was a "shovel ready" alternative already existed across the street from the project. She stated that Fairbanks Natural Gas had scheduled to excavate the south side of Chena Small Tracks Road in the upcoming June. They had surveyed for the project, and felt that the proposal should return to its original form as a shoulder expansion. She felt that combining the proposal with the Fairbanks Natural Gas project would save the state \$1 million.

[1:44:53 PM](#)

DARLENE SUPPLEE, MEMBER, NORTH STAR COUNSEL ON AGING, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), voiced support for the Community Health Aide Program (CHAP). She stated that the program was able to aid an elderly couple, who were each diagnosed with cancer at the age of 84. The Meals on Wheels Program assisted the couple with the needed nutrition while undergoing treatment. She shared that the couple recently passed away in their home, and due to the daily interaction of the driver, CHAP was able to notify the family of their passing. She stressed that the program provided comfort and peace of mind for both the seniors and the seniors' families.

[1:46:25 PM](#)

ANTONIO SHUMACHER, SELF, CITY OF FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. He echoed the comments of Mr. Ward from North Pole. He stated that for every \$100,000 increase in expenses, there was approximately 1 percent increase in PERS for the City of Fairbanks for its police and fire departments. He remarked that the City of Fairbanks could lose the equivalent of approximately one full-time position. He stated that an increase from 22 to 24 percent contribution to PERS would result in losing two full-time positions in Fairbanks' public safety department. He stressed that there would be a decrease in the services for the community. He stated that a \$10 million reduction would equate to approximately \$85,000 in reductions to the City of Fairbanks.

[1:49:00 PM](#)

WARREN CUMMINGS, CHIEF, FAIRBANKS FIRE DEPARTMENT, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. He stated that increasing the PERS contribution from 22 percent to 24 percent would equal one fire-fighter position and one police officer position eliminated. He pointed out that it would be difficult for the City of Fairbanks to increase revenue, because of the tax gap. He stated that the Anchorage Fire Department was approximately eight times the size of the Fairbanks Fire Department, so the impact on Anchorage was a reduction of eight beginning fire-fighters. He felt it was his obligation to support the maintenance of the 22 percent contribution to PERS.

[1:50:51 PM](#)

PATRICK MARSHALL, YOUTH TRAINER, ALASKA YOUTH FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION, CRAIG, testified in support of the Farm School Budget Item. He stressed that the Farm School program provided needed to schools across the state. He felt that focusing on nutrition lifestyle in schools, would result in positive effects in the classroom.

[1:52:14 PM](#)

AT EASE

[1:52:27 PM](#)

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[1:52:31 PM](#)

TERRY SOLOMON, VOLUNTEER, CHENA GOLD STREAM FIRE AND RESCUE, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), urged support of funding for state wild fire crews. She stated that she specialized in structure fires, but remarked that the wild land fire fighters were used as back up support for structure firefighting. She shared that the local, highly trained attack crews were essential in preventing damage to homes and businesses in the community. She shared that importing crews from the lower 48 was expensive and time-consuming.

[1:54:27 PM](#)

BONNIE WOLDSTAD, SELF, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Woldstad vessel, by including the remaining costs for retrofitting the vessel. She stressed that Alaska was experiencing anticipated pressures on the Arctic coastal villages, so it was imperative that Alaska maintain its two high endurance patrol vessels. She remarked that fisheries were tied to the existence of the state, and the Alaska's constitution was about maintaining control of its natural resources. She felt that there needed to be a clear vision for Alaska's future for the marine section's high endurance vessels. Alaska needed to be competitive and ready for Arctic exploration by being proactive rather than reactive. The proposed replacement for the Woldstad vessel was not a high endurance vessel. The Woldstad was specifically designed and built to provide public safety, and fishery patrol to all Alaskan waters. The vessel was also capable to conduct inshore fishery patrols; search and rescue; firefighting; and resource-user contacts.

[1:57:53 PM](#)

MELANIE LINDHOLM, VOLUNTEER, PLANNED PARENTHOOD, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in support of funding the Chlamydia Campaign. She announced that Alaska claimed the highest chlamydia infections in the U.S. for the seven years prior. She felt that the program must continue to ensure public health and long-term savings. She stressed that the funding was a crucial component to preventing the spread of an easily treatable disease. She stressed that testing for and treating chlamydia had a positive public health impact. She remarked that the high chlamydia rate in Alaska would not change, unless the funding remained intact.

[1:58:53 PM](#)

GERALD BROWN, PHARMACIST, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), testified in favor of full funding for the SHARP I and SHARP II loan repayment programs. He stressed that the funding was vital for the health care services in Alaska's rural areas. He felt that removing the funding would result in loss of valuable health care providers in the state.

Co-Chair Kelly announced that there was a letter from the Health and Social Services subcommittee that recommended

loan repayment for SHARP I and SHARP II in the upcoming fiscal year.

2:00:45 PM

VIRGIE THOMPSON, MAYOR, CITY OF HOUSTON (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. She remarked that the City of Houston had limited revenue from businesses, yet provided services for over 2,000 residents. She stated that the collected property taxes were specifically earmarked for public safety and transportation, to create a healthy community. She announced that the City of Houston would be forced to contribute to the unemployment rate in the state, if the revenue sharing was eliminated in the budget.

2:02:32 PM

DOUG GRIFFIN, CITY MANAGER, CITY OF PALMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. He echoed the remarks of Mayor Thompson from the City of Houston. He stated that the City of Palmer had a small budget, and provided essential services included police, fire, and roads. He remarked that there was focus on value for every tax dollar from every resident in Palmer. He remarked that the Palmer would also experience a negative effect, if the PERS contribution was increased from 22 percent to 24 percent. He expressed thanks for the partnership with the state, because the revenue sharing helped Palmer to provide essential services to Alaskans.

2:04:18 PM

JOHN CANNON, SELF, WASILLA (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). He explained that the CBC provided training for caregivers and providers to serve people with challenging behavior issues, including violent behavior that results in harm to others and harm to self. He recommended fully funding the CBC at \$525,000 for the upcoming fiscal year. He stressed that the CBC was cost-effective, and helped individuals avoid costly institutional placement.

[2:05:52 PM](#)

RACHEL GREENBERG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MAT-SU SENIOR SERVICES, MAT-SU (via teleconference), spoke in favor of funding for the Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network (AgeNet). She stressed that it was important to ensure that the seniors in Alaska remained in Alaska as healthy and independent citizens. She announced that a recent report showed that Alaska seniors contributed \$1.46 billion to Alaska's economy. She remarked that the number was likely to increase, due to the senior population growth. She encouraged the lowest cost method to keep Alaska's seniors in their homes and communities. The low-cost options included stable funding for a state-wide network of aging and disability resource centers. She announced that there were currently some state funds that were directed to the Juneau, Kenai, Anchorage, and Dillingham aging and disability resource centers; and a small amount of federal funds directed to the Mat-Su. She pointed out that there was currently no aging and disability center in Fairbanks, North Pole, Barrow, Bethel, Kodiak, and many other areas of the state. She stated that the funding request would include two long-standing senior grant programs; the nutrition transportation support services; and the family caregiver support program.

[2:09:02 PM](#)

ROBIN MINARD, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, MAT-SU HEALTH FOUNDATION, MAT-SU (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). She specifically asked for funding for substance abuse treatment programs. She announced that substance abuse was the number one health issue in the Mat-Su, and was identified in a community health needs assessment that was completed the year prior. She stated that the study interviewed over 500 people at 24 community meetings and online. She stressed that substance abuse was linked to the next four highest ranked problems: childhood trauma; depression and suicide; access to mental health care; and domestic violence and sexual assault.

[2:10:34 PM](#)

CHUCK FOSTER, ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WASILLA AREA SENIORS, MAT-SU (via teleconference), spoke in favor of funding for the Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network (AgeNet).

He echoed the testimony of Ms. Greenburg related to funding to senior grants programs in the state. He referred to a study conducted in the lower 48, which stated that for every additional \$25 that state's spent on home delivered meals each year per person age 55 plus, associated with a decrease in low-care nursing care by 1 percent. He felt that it was reasonable to believe that the benefit to the state was greater than the benefit to the lower 48.

[2:12:21 PM](#)

DIANE HUTCHISON, ASSEMBLY MEMBER, FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH ASSEMBLY, FAIRBANKS (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. She felt that funding was important for long-range budget planning. She stressed that the only people that paid income taxes in the state were the individuals. She pointed out that the municipalities would be forced to increase their already maximum tax caps in order to keep the essential services.

[2:14:11 PM](#)

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: ANCHORAGE, UNALASKA

[2:14:14 PM](#)

JON ZASADA, HEALTH CARE PROVIDER, ANCHORAGE NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH CENTER, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of full funding for the SHARP II loan repayment program. He stated that the loan program gave the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center the ability to provide care for the uninsured and underserved in Anchorage. Prior to the SHARP program, it took almost a year to replace providers in the health center. He announced that the program allowed for the staff members to receive over \$200,000 in loan repayment. The SHARP program lowered the turnover of providers, and allowed for the health center to accept new patients in the community usually within four to six days of their first appointment request. He stated that the health center had recently made an agreement with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to receive overflow from their health facility by adding 2,000 patients. The SHARP II program was essential to ensure that this influx of patients was treated properly.

2:17:00 PM

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MICHELLE BAKER, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, SOUTH CENTRAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FOUNDATION (via teleconference), encouraged funding for substance abuse treatment programs. She also testified in support of funding for the residential substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that the South Central Behavioral Health Foundation provided services to more than 60,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people across the state. She stated that the programs gave the foundation the ability to work to reduce the high rates of alcoholism and substance abuse in the state. She stated that the foundation provided customer-owner services and programs for individuals and families of all ages. The services were integrated with other services on the Alaska Native Health campus, for a whole person care with recognition of the emotional and social dimensions of physical health.

2:38:14 PM

CHRISTOPHER TRUITT, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Anchorage Youth Job Center. He felt that the Job Center was one of the most important resources for teens in Anchorage, because the Anchorage high schools had recently lost their career counselors.

2:39:07 PM

JOSHUA FRANKS, MANAGER, SOUTH CENTRAL FOUNDATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of full funding for the SHARP I and SHARP II loan repayment programs. He stated that the SHARP programs were components of the Alaska care system to provide access to the most vulnerable citizens of the state. He shared the South Central Foundation served more than 60,000 Alaska Natives and American Indians in Alaska. He remarked that the SHARP program allowed the foundation to recruit and retain many of the difficult to fill positions to provide needed services.

2:40:51 PM

LINDA CONOVER, CO-CHAIR, IMAGINATION LIBRARY, WASILLA (via teleconference), spoke in support of funding for the Imagination Library and Best Beginnings. She specifically asked for \$150,000 for early learning programs. She shared a personal story from someone who had expressed gratitude for the Imagination Library. She felt that the program encouraged building oral language skills, listening skills, and the children's eagerness to learn. She stated that the Imagination Library regularly held events across the state that encouraged and promoted child literacy and education.

2:43:18 PM

KARL GARBER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), spoke in favor of funding for the Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network (AgeNet). He stated that the Alzheimer's Resource provided statewide services to improve the quality of life for frail elders and those with Alzheimer's related disorders. He announced that the services included education, support groups, care claiming, and in-home care. He also voiced support of the National Family Caregivers Support program. The program provided respite training and support for family caregivers. He announced that family caregivers provided the majority of in-home care for their loved ones. He stressed that the health of the family caregivers was important to ensure that they could provide the care for their loved ones. He announced that, in Alaska 33,000 caregivers provided 37 million hours of unpaid care to their loved ones, with an estimated value of \$459 million. Alaskan caregivers were more likely experience health issues related to caregiving, and utilized higher levels of health care. The program gave caregivers the information, education, and support needed to maintain care in their home setting for as long as possible. There was a significant body of evidence that demonstrated the effectiveness of the services.

Mr. Garber read a letter from someone who had attended support groups for Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. This person had learned valuable tools to help deal with the effect of Alzheimer's on himself and the person who was afflicted with the disorder.

[2:49:02 PM](#)

TAMMY WILLIAMSON, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Anchorage Job Center. She explained that she had helped youth enter the workforce. She stated that she had worked as a career counselor in the Anchorage Job Center. She remarked that the youth had talent, but needed the skills to enter the workforce. She stressed that without the support, the youth may not be able to enter the workforce. She remarked that the Job Center was there to help youth obtain a job with a living wage.

[2:52:29 PM](#)

RON WILSON, SELF, JUNEAU, testified in support of the therapeutic courts. He stated that he had some substance abuse issues, and the therapeutic courts had helped him become a valuable member of society. He specifically voiced support of substance abuse treatment programs.

[2:54:26 PM](#)

ELAINE VROMAN, SELF, JUNEAU, spoke in support of funding therapeutic courts and substance abuse treatment programs. She stated that she had some substance abuse issues, because of her childhood. She stated that she was able to get help from treatment programs. She asked that the alcohol tax be used for substance abuse treatment.

[2:56:37 PM](#)

ARLENE LUDWIG, SELF, ANCHORAGE, testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). She specifically asked for funding for substance abuse treatment and recovery. She stated that Nome had recently experienced an influx of heroin addiction issues. She shared that she was currently in recovery related to substance abuse.

[2:58:40 PM](#)

MICHAEL MOORADIAN, SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELOR, CHUGIAK, testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). He stated that addiction was the problem and treatment was the solution. He stated that he had also attended the therapeutic court system. He felt

that the program was very effective. He stressed that substance abuse treatment saved lives. He pointed out that funding was necessary to provide treatment.

[3:00:58 PM](#)

KIME MCCLINTOCK, SELF, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of the Chlamydia Campaign. She emphasized that early diagnosis and intervention was imperative to protecting fertility. She stated that symptoms of sexually transmitted infections were often easily treatable, if caught at the early stage. She stressed that without the funding for the Chlamydia Campaign, there could be a widespread health crisis in the state.

[3:03:55 PM](#)

JESSICA CLER, ALASKA PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER, ALASKA PLANNED PARENTHOOD VOTES NORTHWEST, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of reinstating the \$360,000 for the Chlamydia Campaign. She stressed that the targeted program was a proven solution. She felt that the funding was a crucial component for preventing the spread of a treatable disease. She stressed that there were often no symptoms for many sexually transmitted infections, but could result in violent infections and infertility if gone untreated.

[3:06:41 PM](#)

ABBE HENSLEY, SELF, BEST BEGINNINGS, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of early education programs included the Imagination Library and Best Beginnings. She shared that Best Beginnings provided information and resources for families with young children in several ways. She spoke specifically spoke to the positive effect of the Imagination Library, which enabled more than 21,600 children under 5-years-old in 110 communities to receive a free, age appropriate high quality book in the mail each month at no cost to their family. The cost of the program is \$30 per year per child, and was funded through contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, and the state.

[3:09:32 PM](#)

KARIN SCHAFF, VICE-PRESIDENT, TREATMENT SERVICES, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). She specifically voiced support of funding for substance abuse treatment programs. She stressed that treatment services were necessary and valuable to the state. Volunteers of America Alaska provided a full continuum of care for outpatient and residential for adolescents ages 13 to 18 with substance use disorders and mental health disorders. She stated that the treatment intensity and level of care was matched to the needs of the individual in order to produce successful outcomes. She stressed that patients had complex mental health issues, often engaged in illegal behaviors, and posed a threat to themselves and others in the community.

[3:11:36 PM](#)

DOUGLAS PACE, SELF, TALKEETNA (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC). He stated that he had a brain injury, and lost his brother to alcoholism.

[3:12:58 PM](#)

LEEANNE CARROTHERS, PRESIDENT, ALASKA PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of full funding for the SHARP II loan repayment program. She also testified in support of funding for physical therapy assistance. She remarked that there were many difficulties related to treating different types of citizens of Alaska. She stressed that physical therapy helped many patients to avoid expensive surgeries and often reduced the need for long-term prescription medication side effects.

[3:16:26 PM](#)

PATRICIA SENNER, NURSE, ALASKA NURSES ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), testified in favor of full funding for the SHARP II loan repayment program. She shared that many of the rural areas of the state depended on others, and many behavior services had trouble maintaining a nursing staff. She stressed that there was a recent nursing overtime crisis, and was appreciative of the SHARP II grants to ensure that the nursing personnel was healthy. She understood that there was some controversy related to

whether or not the SHARP program grants were given to the appropriate providers. She shared that the SHARP I program had 72 percent directed toward rural providers; and the SHARP II program directed 87 percent to rural providers. She shared that the remaining grants went to providers in rural areas that were providing behavioral health services.

[3:17:59 PM](#)

SHIRLEY MARQUARDT, MAYOR, CITY OF UNALASKA (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. She understood that the state was facing a budget crisis, but hoped that the funds would not be removed from the municipalities. She felt that the impact on removing the revenue funding combined with the increase in PERS contribution had too great a negative effect on the municipalities in the state. She encouraged support of the governor's proposal to move \$3 billion to pay down the PERS debt. She stressed that the municipalities were partners with the state, and hoped that there would continue to be a focus on savings, without the burden on the municipalities.

[3:21:07 PM](#)

ELAINE DAHLGREN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, VOLUNTEERS OF ALASKA, ANCHORAGE (via teleconference), urged the committee to restore funding for residential substance abuse treatment programs. She echoed the remarks from earlier testifiers. She stressed that her organization helped youth with substance use and mental health issues with an array of various needs. Volunteers of America Alaska provided a full continuum of care for outpatient and residential for adolescents ages 13 to 18 with substance use disorders and mental health disorders. She stated that the treatment intensity and level of care was matched to the needs of the individual in order to produce successful outcomes. She stressed that patients had complex mental health issues, often engaged in illegal behaviors, and posed a threat to themselves and others in the community.

[3:24:23 PM](#)

AT EASE

[4:02:59 PM](#)

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[4:03:19 PM](#)

^PUBLIC TESTIMONY: GLENNALLEN, SEWARD, HOMER

[4:03:19 PM](#)

ANGELA DOROFF, EMPLOYEE, KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE, HOMER (via teleconference), asked for the reinstatement of funds for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR). She explained that the KBRR consisted of the Ocean, Coastal, and Resource management division of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the state of Alaska, and a council of local community members. She stated that the funds would be matched by a large sustaining grant from NOAA. She stated that the KBRR provided education outreach, and research resolve training. In 2003, the KBRR education program served over 4,000 students, teachers, and visiting public. The KBRR also outreached vital information on harvested species.

[4:05:33 PM](#)

GEORGE MATZ, CHAIRMAN, KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE COUNCIL, FRITZ CREEK (via teleconference), asked for the reinstatement of funds for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR). He echoed the remarks from Ms. Doroff. He stated that the reinstatement of funds would result in a crucial state match for a NOAA grant. He announced that the funding would allow for the awarding of many currently existing grants for the KBRR. He stated that, without the KBRR, the partnership with the Islands and Oceans Visitors Center. He shared that the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) had recently submitted questions to NOAA, which related to the impact of shutting down KBRR. He stated that NOAA responded that there may be an obligation to KBRR by the state to repay for certain programs and buildings.

[4:08:57 PM](#)

JILL LUSH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SPROUT FAMILY SERVICES, HOMER (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings Imagination Library. She pointed out that the program evaluation outcomes showed marked changes, leading to an increase in family strength areas. She stated that nurturing a positive discipline to the child and child safety by parents

increased by 18 percent. She also stated that obtaining health and medical care of the child had increased by 29 percent. She announced that the parents and families who participated in the program reported that their perceived parental knowledge increased by 25 percent.

[4:11:03 PM](#)

KATIE KOESTER, SELF, CITY OF HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. She also expressed support for the reinstatement of funds for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR). She stressed that the City of Homer joined with many municipalities across the state in advocating for fully funding for revenue sharing. The City of Homer used the funding for basic operations. She remarked that the City of Homer was appreciative of the funding that the state had contributed to help municipalities with the staggering costs of PERS obligations.

[4:12:12 PM](#)

STACEY BUCKELEW, EMPLOYEE, KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE HOMER (via teleconference), asked for the reinstatement of funds for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR). She announced that the KBRR was the furthest north national estuarine research reserve, so were a leader in climate change research. She stressed that there was a close connection between the work of the reserve and the City Homer's climate change plan as leading researcher on ocean rise, uplift, and erosion. She shared that the KBRR worked and coordinates with numerous agencies with active youth and adult education programs. She felt that the KBRR was an important economic engine, which brought in millions of dollars in wages and grants to the community in Homer.

[4:14:35 PM](#)

BRYAN ZAK, SELF, HOMER (via teleconference), spoke in support of the restoration of \$10 million in revenue sharing and the governor's proposed \$3 billion cash infusion into PERS. He had recently attended the board meeting at the Homer Senior Center, and there was discussion regarding how to increase the rent in order meet the cost associated with running the Homer Senior Center. If the City of Homer did not receive the funding from

revenue sharing, the Homer Senior Center would face greater financial strain than they were currently experiencing. He felt that the committee members' constituencies had similar financial strains on their municipalities.

[4:16:50 PM](#)

MARIA CALHOUN, COORDINATOR, PARENTS AS TEACHERS, SPROUT FAMILY SERVICES, HOMER (via teleconference), testified in support of funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings Imagination Library. She urged the committee to adopt the governor's proposal as written, with full funding for the Parents as Teachers programs in Alaska. She stressed that early learning should be a priority. She pointed out that the program evaluation outcomes showed marked changes, leading to an increase in family strength areas. She stated that nurturing a positive discipline to the child and child safety by parents increased by 18 percent. She also stated that obtaining health and medical care of the child had increased by 29 percent. She announced that the parents and families who participated in the program reported that their perceived parental knowledge increased by 25 percent. She stressed that the program affected key factors that contributed to a decrease of incidents of child abuse and neglect. She stated that, in two years, the increased annual enrollment numbers increased from 12 to 81 children. The forecasted annual enrollment would increase to 90 plus children for the upcoming fiscal year.

[4:19:31 PM](#)

JIM HORNADAY, MEMBER, KACHEMAK BAY RESEARCH RESERVE COUNCIL, HOMER (via teleconference), asked for the reinstatement of funds for the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR). He stated that the research reserve focused on three points: science, economics, and state responsibility. He announced that the KBRR was the furthest north national estuarine research reserve, so were a leader in climate change research. He stressed that there was a close connection between the work of the reserve and the City Homer's climate change plan as leading researcher on ocean rise, uplift, and erosion. He shared that the KBRR worked and coordinates with numerous agencies with active youth and adult education programs. He felt that the KBRR was an important economic engine, which brought in millions of dollars in wages and grants to the community in Homer.

4:21:55 PM

AT EASE

4:30:35 PM

RECONVENED

CSHB 266(FIN) was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

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ADJOURNMENT

4:31:06 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.