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1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 618

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing an Older Alaskans Commission;
7 and providing for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 * Section 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE. (a) The legislature finds that the
10 changing pace of modern life, economic inflation, the infirmities of ad-
11 vancing years, and alterations in the traditions and values of family life
12 have combined to place many older Alaskans in an unenviable position of
13 poverty and dependency that endangers their health, well-being and safety.
14 In keeping with the inherent dignity and respect due the individual in our
15 society, older Alaskans are entitled to secure equal opportunity to the full
16 enjoyment of

17 (1) an adequate income in accordance with a decent standard of
18 living;

19 (2) sound physical and mental health, without regard to economic
20 status or condition;

21 (3) suitable housing, selected, designed and located with refer-
22 ence to the special needs and concerns of older Alaskans at reasonable cost;

23 (4) full restorative health services for those older Alaskans in
24 need of institutional care;

25 (5) opportunity for employment without discrimination based on an
26 individual's age;

27 (6) pursuit of meaningful activity within a wide range of civic,
28 cultural and recreational opportunities;

29 (7) efficient, coordinated in-home care and readily available

1 community social assistance;

2 (8) the benefit of knowledge gained from research which can sus-
3 tain and improve the health and happiness of older Alaskans; and

4 (9) independence and the fullest exercise of individual initiative
5 on the part of older Alaskans in the planning and management of their lives.

6 (b) It is the purpose of this legislation to assure that the years
7 remaining to people over the age of 60 are years of good health, honor, and
8 dignity by

9 (1) providing a full range of social services, health services,
10 employment services, and educational opportunities to older Alaskans;

11 (2) giving special attention to the needs of older Alaskans in the
12 planning and delivery of state and local programs;

13 (3) improving the delivery of all public services essential to the
14 lives of older Alaskans; and

15 (4) requiring that the planning and provision of programs of
16 benefit to older Alaskans will be undertaken with the participation, knowl-
17 edge, advice, and comments of people served.

18 * Sec. 2. AS 44.21 is amended by adding new sections to read:

19 ARTICLE 4. OLDER ALASKANS COMMISSION.

20 Sec. 44.21.200. OLDER ALASKANS COMMISSION. (a) There is estab-
21 lished in the Department of Administration the Older Alaskans Commis-
22 sion. The members of the commission include

23 (1) the commissioner of the Department of Administration, or
24 his designee;

25 (2) the commissioner of the Department of Community and
26 Regional Affairs, or his designee;

27 (3) the commissioner of the Department of Health and Social
28 Services, or his designee;

29 (4) the chairman of the Pioneers' Homes Advisory Board

1 appointed under AS 44.21.100 - 44.21.130; and

2 (5) six Alaskans selected on the basis of their knowledge and
3 demonstrated interest in the concerns of older Alaskans, appointed by
4 the governor in accordance with (b) of this section.

5 (b) After requesting from senior citizens organizations the names
6 of persons who are qualified for and interested in serving on the commis-
7 sion, the governor shall appoint the members of the commission under
8 (a)(5) of this section. Appointments shall be made by the governor to
9 assure representation of low-income persons and minorities, and repre-
10 sentation from rural and urban areas of the state, and to secure state-
11 wide geographical representation on the commission. At least five of
12 the persons appointed by the governor shall be 60 years of age or older.
13 At least two of these persons shall be 65 years of age or older.

14 (c) The persons appointed under (a)(5) of this section serve
15 overlapping four-year terms. A member may be reappointed, but no member
16 appointed under (a)(5) of this section may serve more than two consecu-
17 tive terms or eight consecutive years, whichever is longer.

18 (d) If a person appointed under (a)(5) of this section fails to
19 attend three consecutive meetings of the commission, a majority of the
20 members of the commission shall request the governor to terminate the
21 membership of the member and to fill the vacancy.

22 (e) A vacancy in the membership of persons appointed under (a)(5)
23 of this section shall be filled by appointment by the governor. The
24 person appointed shall serve for the unexpired portion of the term.

25 Sec. 44.21.210. MEETINGS. (a) The commission shall meet at the
26 call of the chairman, at the request of a majority of the members, or at
27 a regularly scheduled time as determined by a majority of the members.
28 The commission shall meet at least six times each year.

29 (b) The members of the commission listed in AS 44.21.200(a)(1) -

1 (3) may not vote on matters before the commission. A majority of the
2 members of the commission listed in AS 44.21.200(a)(4) and (5) consti-
3 tutes a quorum for conducting business and exercising the powers of the
4 commission.

5 (c) The commission shall elect one of its members as chairman, and
6 may select other officers it considers necessary.

7 Sec. 44.21.220. COMPENSATION. Members of the commission receive
8 no compensation for their services, but are entitled to per diem and
9 travel allowances authorized by law for other boards and commissions.

10 Sec. 44.21.230. POWERS AND DUTIES. (a) The commission shall

11 (1) formulate a comprehensive statewide plan which identifies
12 the concerns and needs of older Alaskans and, with reference to the plan
13 adopted, prepare and submit to the governor and legislature an annual
14 analysis and evaluation of the services which are provided to older
15 Alaskans;

16 (2) make recommendations to the governor and legislature with
17 respect to legislation, regulations, and appropriations for programs or
18 services which benefit older Alaskans;

19 (3) encourage and aid the development of municipal commis-
20 sions serving older Alaskans and community-oriented programs and services
21 for the benefit of older Alaskans;

22 (4) employ an executive director who serves at the pleasure
23 of the commission;

24 (5) administer federal programs relating to older Alaskans
25 requiring state action and which are not specifically assigned to a
26 state agency;

27 (6) help older Alaskans lead dignified, independent and
28 useful lives; and

29 (7) request and receive reports and audits from state

1 agencies and local institutions concerned with the conditions and needs
2 of older Alaskans.

3 (b) To accomplish its duties, the commission may

4 (1) review, evaluate and comment upon state programs con-
5 cerned with the problems and the needs of older Alaskans;

6 (2) collect facts and statistics, and make studies of condi-
7 tions and problems pertaining to the employment, health, financial
8 security, social welfare, and other concerns which bear upon the well-
9 being of older Alaskans;

10 (3) provide information about public programs which would be
11 of interest or benefit to older Alaskans;

12 (4) appoint special committees, which may include persons who
13 are not members of the commission, to complete necessary studies;

14 (5) promote community education efforts regarding the prob-
15 lems and concerns of older Alaskans;

16 (6) apply for and accept grants, contributions, and appropri-
17 ations, including making application for and accepting federal funds
18 provided under the Older Americans Act, P.L. 89-93, as amended;

19 (7) contract for necessary services;

20 (8) consult and cooperate with persons, organizations, and
21 groups interested in or concerned with programs of assistance to older
22 Alaskans;

23 (9) advocate improved programs of benefit to older Alaskans;

24 and

25 (10) set standards for levels of services for older Alaskans
26 for programs administered by the commission.

27 Sec. 44.21.240. DEFINITIONS. In AS 44.21.200 - 44.21.240, "com-
28 mission" means the Older Alaskans Commission.

29 * Sec. 3. AS 44.66.010(a) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

1 (8) Older Alaskans Commission (AS 44.21.200) -- June 30,
2 1984.

3 * Sec. 4. TRANSFER OF PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES. The programs and person-
4 nel of the office on aging in the Department of Health and Social Services
5 and the Governor's Advisory Committee on Aging are transferred to the Older
6 Alaskans Commission in the Department of Administration.

7 * Sec. 5. INITIAL MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING OF COMMISSION. (a) Of the six
8 public members first appointed by the governor to the Older Alaskans Com-
9 mission under AS 44.21.200(a)(5),

10 (1) two shall serve a term of two years;

11 (2) two shall serve a term of three years;

12 (3) two shall serve a term of four years.

13 (b) In making appointments of the initial public members of the Older
14 Alaskans Commission under AS 44.21.200(a)(5), the governor shall designate an
15 expiration date of the terms of members first appointed in accordance with
16 (a) of this section.

17 (c) The governor shall determine the date and place of the first meeting
18 of the Older Alaskans Commission.

19 * Sec. 6. CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION.
20 This Act does not affect the responsibility of the Department of Adminis-
21 tration for the Alaska longevity bonus program (AS 47.45) or the Alaska
22 Pioneers' Homes (AS 44.21.100 - 44.21.130).

23 * Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect July 1, 1980.
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