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Referred: Health, Education &
Social Services and Finance

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY MILLER, BUCHHOLDT AND
GRUSSENDORF

2 HOUSE BILL NO. 17

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TWELFTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST 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 initia-
5 tive on the part of older Alaskans in the planning and management of their
6 lives.

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 ARTICLE 4. OLDER ALASKANS COMMISSION.

21 Sec. 44.21.200. OLDER ALASKANS COMMISSION. (a) The Older
22 Alaskans Commission is established in the Department of Administration.
23 The members of the commission include

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

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

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

1 (4) the chairman of the Pioneers' Homes Advisory Board
2 appointed under AS 44.21.100 - 44.21.130; and

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

6 (b) After requesting from senior citizens organizations the names
7 of persons who are qualified for and interested in serving on the
8 commission, the governor shall appoint the members of the commission
9 under (a)(5) of this section. Appointments shall be made by the gover-
10 nor to assure representation of low-income persons and minorities, and
11 representation from rural and urban areas of the state, and to secure
12 statewide geographical representation on the commission. At least five
13 of the persons appointed by the governor shall be 60 years of age or
14 older. At least two of these persons shall be 65 years of age or
15 older.

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

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

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

27 Sec. 44.21.210. MEETINGS. (a) The commission shall meet at the
28 call of the chairman, at the request of a majority of the members, or
29 at a regularly scheduled time as determined by a majority of the

1 members. The commission shall meet at least six times each year.

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

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

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

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

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

18 (2) make recommendations to the governor and legislature
19 with respect to legislation, regulations, and appropriations for pro-
20 grams or services which benefit older Alaskans;

21 (3) encourage and aid the development of municipal commis-
22 sions serving older Alaskans and community-oriented programs and ser-
23 vices for the benefit of older Alaskans;

24 (4) employ an executive director who serves at the pleasure
25 of the commission;

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

29 (6) help older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and

1 useful lives; and

2 (7) request and receive reports and audits from state
3 agencies and local institutions concerned with the conditions and needs
4 of older Alaskans.

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

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

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

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

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

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

18 (6) apply for and accept grants, contributions, and appro-
19 priations, including applying for and accepting federal money provided
20 under the Older Americans Act, P.L. 89-93, as amended;

21 (7) contract for necessary services;

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

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

26 and

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

29 Sec. 44.21.240. DEFINITIONS. In AS 44.21.200 - 44.21.240, "com-

1 mission" means the Older Alaskans Commission.

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

3 (10) Older Alaskans Commission (AS 44.21.200) -- June 30,
4 1985.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 * Sec. 6. CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION.
22 This Act does not affect the responsibility of the Department of Adminis-
23 tration for the Alaska longevity bonus program (AS 47.45) or the Alaska
24 Pioneers' Homes (AS 44.21.100 - 44.21.130). Notwithstanding any provisions
25 of this Act, the Older Alaskans Commission has no authority over, or respon-
26 sibility for, the Alaska longevity bonus program or the Alaska Pioneers'
27 Homes.

28 * Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect July 1, 1981.

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