

OVERVIEW

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AGING

2/13/01

Alaskan Aging
Focusing the Picture

House HESS Committee Briefing
February 13, 2001

Alaska Commission on Aging

Our framework today

- A baseline - results we seek
- Demographics
- Resources, opportunities and challenges
- Progress achieved
- Work underway
- To initiate

 A baseline - results we seek

- *Defined by seniors at the Common Ground II statewide senior leadership conference in January 2000*

Common Ground II

RESULTS DESIRED BY SENIORS

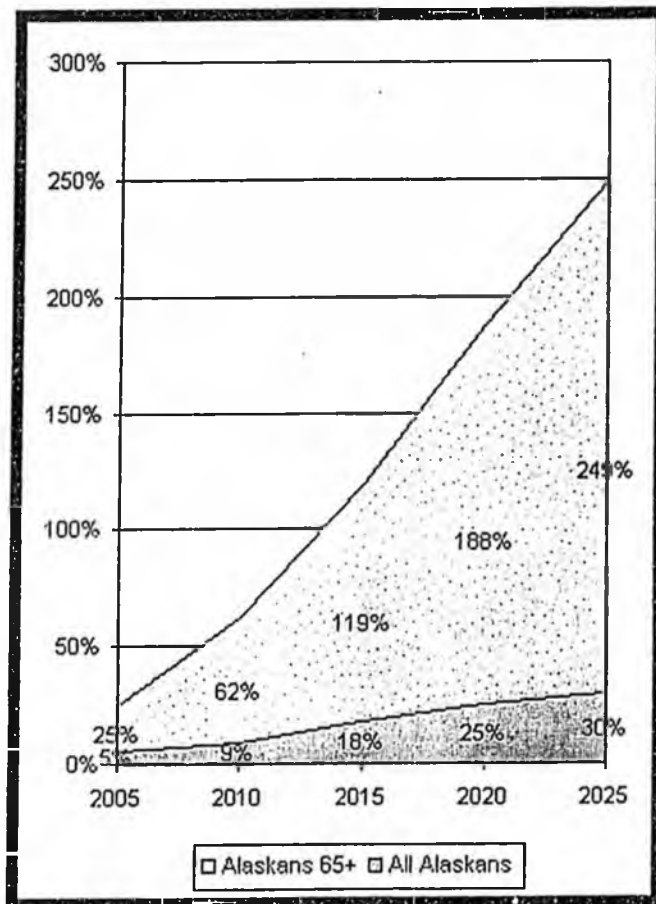
- Being connected socially -- preventing isolation
- Continuing to expand and maintain the highest possible level of independence
- Maintaining financial well-being and self-sufficiency
- Living at home, in one's home community
- Sustaining health - physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally
- Maintaining personal dignity; experiencing respect as valued family and community members
- Being safe at home and in the community



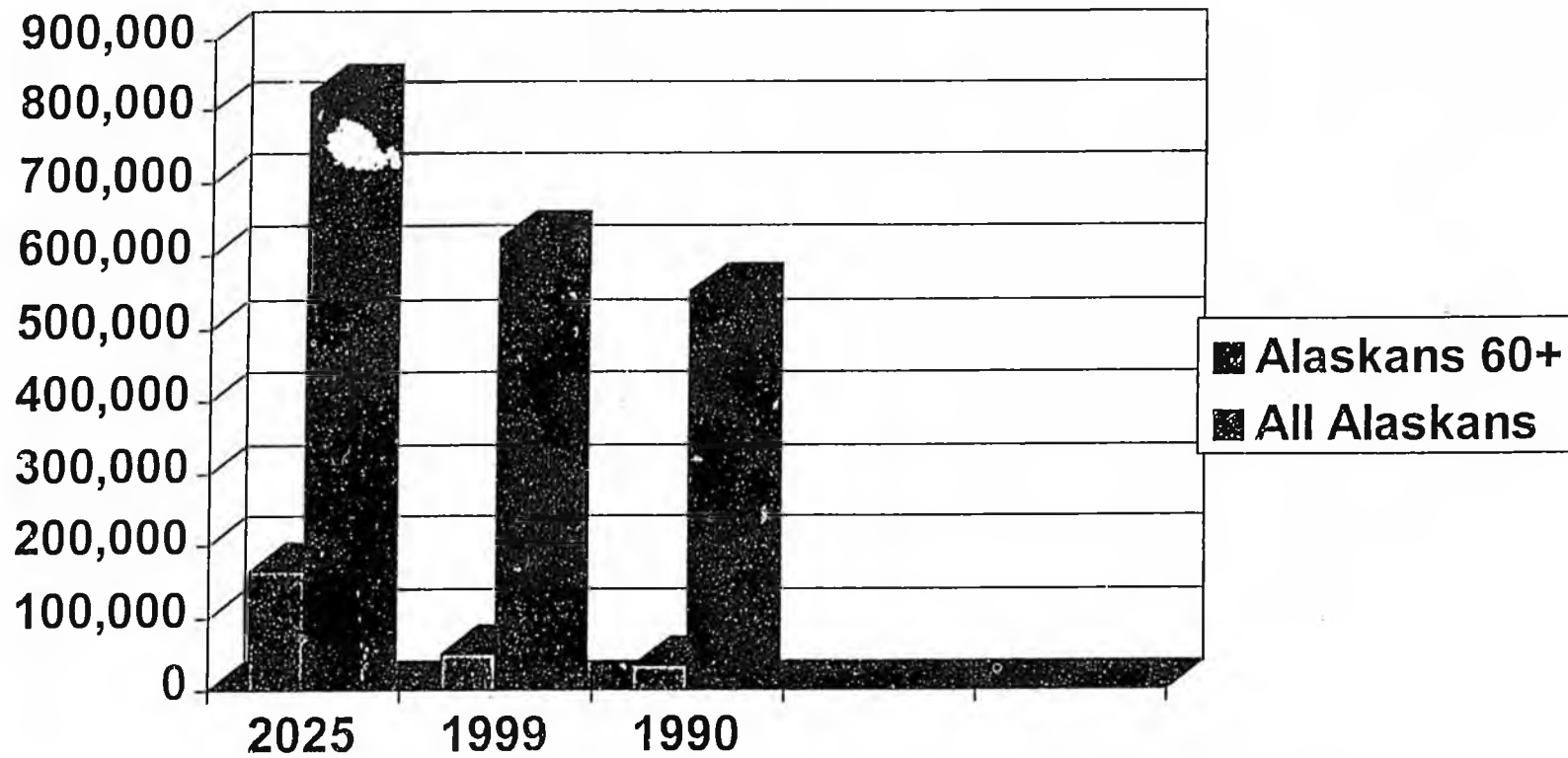
Demographics

<u>Age</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>% growth</u>
Alaskans 60+	50,631	34,908	45%
Alaskans 65+	33,641	22,095	52.3%
Total Population (all ages)	622,000	550,043	13.1%

Alaska's Projected Population Growth



Proportional growth in number of Alaskans age 60+



How does this compare with other states?

- Proportionately, the Alaskan senior population is growing more rapidly than in any other state.

Why the rapid growth?

- Improved health -> greater survival into later years
- Fewer Alaskans leaving the state to retire

Why the rapid growth?

- Impact of baby boomers staying here at retirement
- Some middle aged children now bring their parents to Alaska rather than leave the state

Life expectancy

- 79 for women
- 74 for men

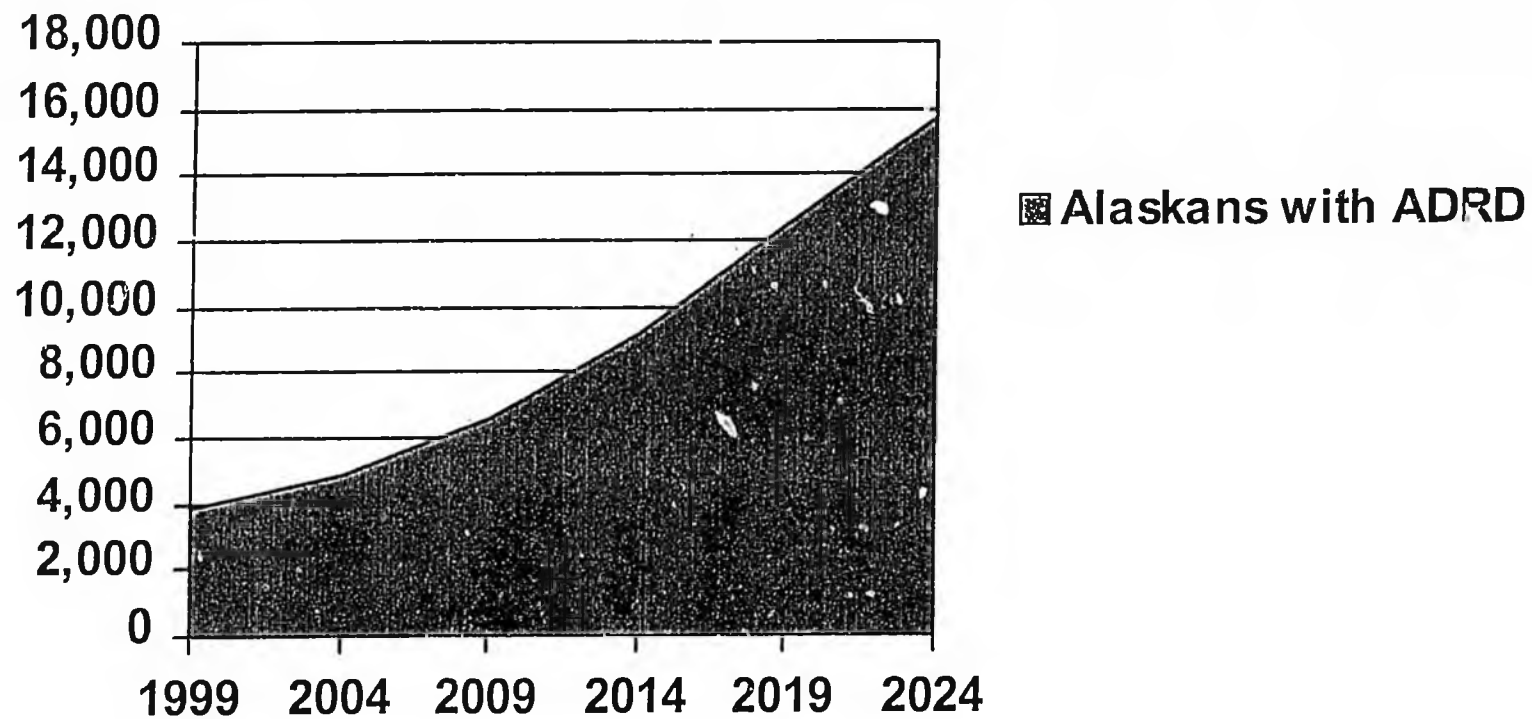
Leading causes of death in Alaskans 65+

- Cancer @ 30.4% of deaths
- Heart disease @ 26%

Cost of health care as we age

- For Americans age 65+, 12% of their annual expenditures are for health care. This *three times* the proportion spent by younger people. For older Americans:
 - Insurance 53%
 - Drugs 22%
 - Medical services 19%
 - Medical supplies 5%

Projected Increase in Alaskans with Alzheimer's Disease

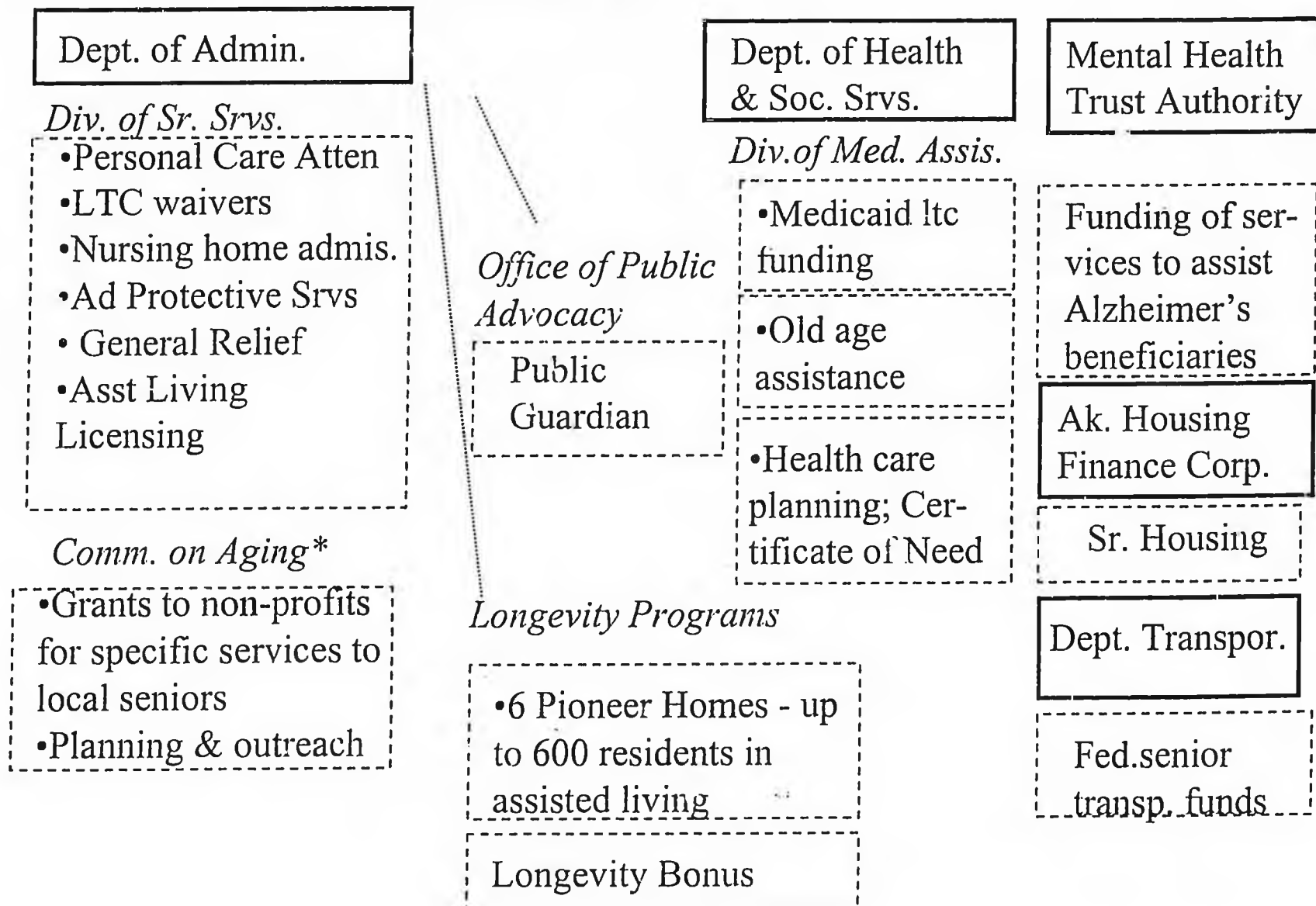




Resources, opportunities & challenges

- Economic impacts
 - Income that stays and is spent within Alaska
- Social impacts
 - Volunteering
 - Caregiving across the generations

Organizational overview of services & funding targeted to meet older Alaskans' needs



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DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
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COPIES

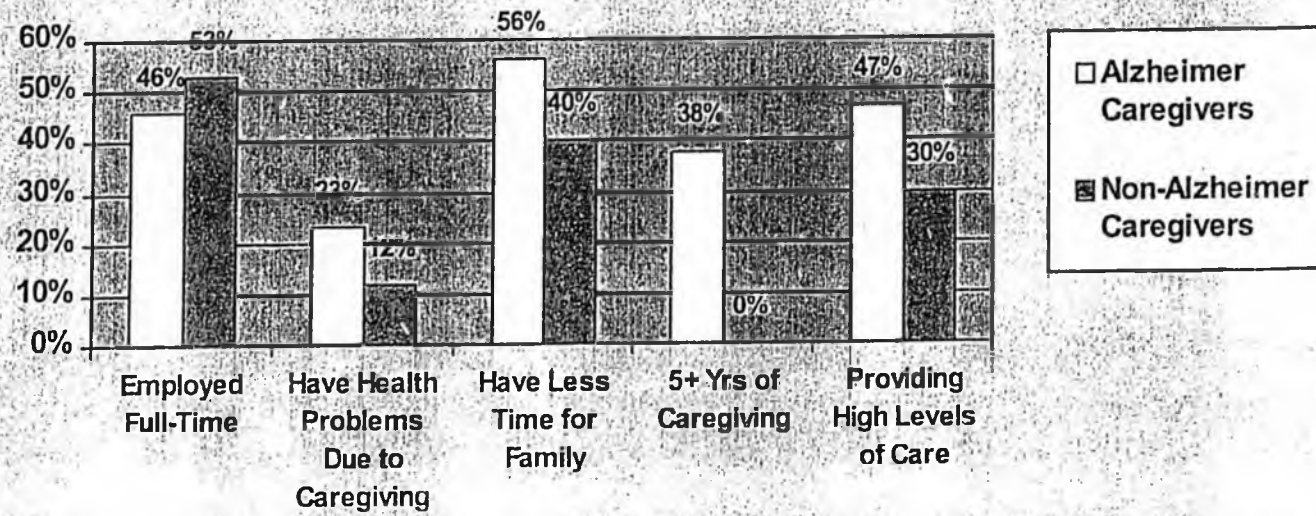
Consequences of ADRI

- Poor judgement/ need for supervision
- inability to perform routine activities of daily living
- mental health problems
- preventable health problems
- significant impact on caregivers

Impact on Alzheimer Caregivers

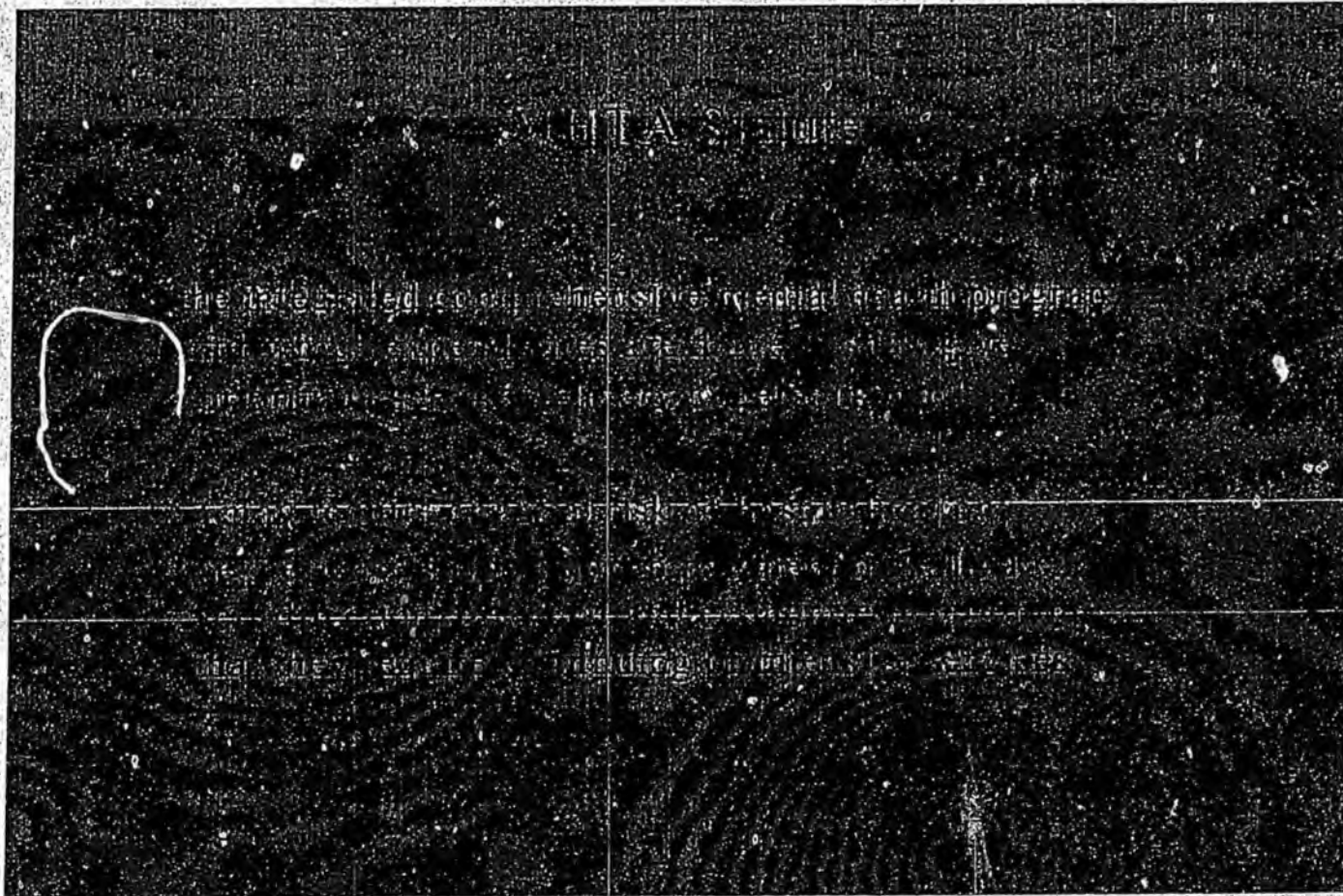
- 1 in 8 become ill or injured
- 1 in 3 use medication for problems related to caregiving
- Higher levels of financial strain
- Twice as likely as other caregivers to be providing the highest level of care
- Seriously affects employment status

Profile of Alzheimer Caregivers



Source: *Who Cares? Families Caring for Persons with Alzheimer's Disease*, February 1999

*THESE ARE Alaska Mental Health Trust
Authority CORE BENEFICIARIES*





Progress achieved

- 2000: Increase in state rates for assisted living services to General Relief recipients (SB 73)
- 1999: Certificate of Need (HB 187)
- 1999: Care of vulnerable adults (SB 57)
- 1999: Home health care licensing (SB 56)
- 1999: SCR 8 - Long Term Care Task Force of 1999

Progress achieved

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation

- 2000: small assisted living home low interest financing
- 2000: small grants for accessibility modifications for seniors' homes



Work underway or pending

- Regulation revision
 - State Personal Care Attendant program (Consumer directed program)
 - Assisted living
 - Certificate of Need
 - Home health care licensing
 - Licensing of hospice organizations
- Workforce
 - retention and development
- Establishing rural assisted living in new areas



Legislation underway or pending

- EO 102: Long Term Care Ombudsman transfer to Ak. Mental Health Trust Authority
- HB 18, SB 26 Renter's Tax Equivalency payment
- HB 107, SB 67 Assisted Living
- HB 88, SB 55 Pioneer /Veterans Homes
- Guardianship statute revisions (not yet introduced)



To initiate

- New Legislative Long Term Care Task Force
- Change Alaska's Medicaid long term care eligibility policy to provide coverage for people with the sole diagnosis of ADRD who are income eligible
- Legislation to provide state funding to assist in paying for essential long term care for Alaskan adults unable to fully pay.



To initiate

- Adoption of the *Five Wishes* format for advance directives
- Incorporate mental health coverage in health insurance policies

Information sources

- *Issues Affecting the Economic Well-Being of Alaskan Seniors*
- *Legislative Long Term Care Task Force Report 1999*
- *Long Term Care Services Survey*
- *Alaskan Seniors - Living Longer: Growing Stronger*
- *Guardianship Study*



Alaska Commission on Aging

Resolution 2001-02

In support of a Legislative Long Term Care Task Force

WHEREAS the Legislative Long Term Care Task Force of 1998 successfully brought together Alaskan consumers, providers, agency personnel and public policy makers to assess and improve the availability of appropriate and responsive long-term care services; and

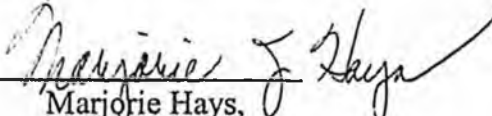
WHEREAS the Legislative Long Term Care Task Force Report (January, 1999) outlined 31 central issues and areas for action to improve the capacity and quality of long-term care services, and associated supportive resources vital to the well-being of Alaskans with disabilities and chronic or long-term illness or frailty; and

WHEREAS Legislative Long Term Care Task Force leadership and guidance on long-term care issues resulted in the passage of vital legislation concerning elder abuse, facility-based long-term care, long-term care services, and assisted living; and

WHEREAS the term of the Legislative Long Term Care Task Force of 1999-2000 concluded with the convening of the Twenty-Second Alaska Legislature;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Alaska Commission on Aging vigorously encourages the Twenty-Second Alaska Legislature to institute a new Long Term Care Task Force. Such a Task Force can serve as a Legislative forum for study and leadership concerning the challenges and opportunities associated with Alaska's rapidly growing senior citizen community, and the long-term care needs any of us may experience at any times in our lives.

Adopted this 13th day of February 2001.


Marjorie Hays,
Chair

Alaskan

Seniors

Living Longer Growing Stronger

from the Alaska Commission on Aging

January 2001

The mission of the Alaska Commission on Aging is to ensure dignity and independence for Alaska's seniors and to assist them, through programs and services funded by the Commission, to lead useful and meaningful lives.



**Alaskan Seniors:
Living Longer,
Growing Stronger**

is a monthly publication of the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA)

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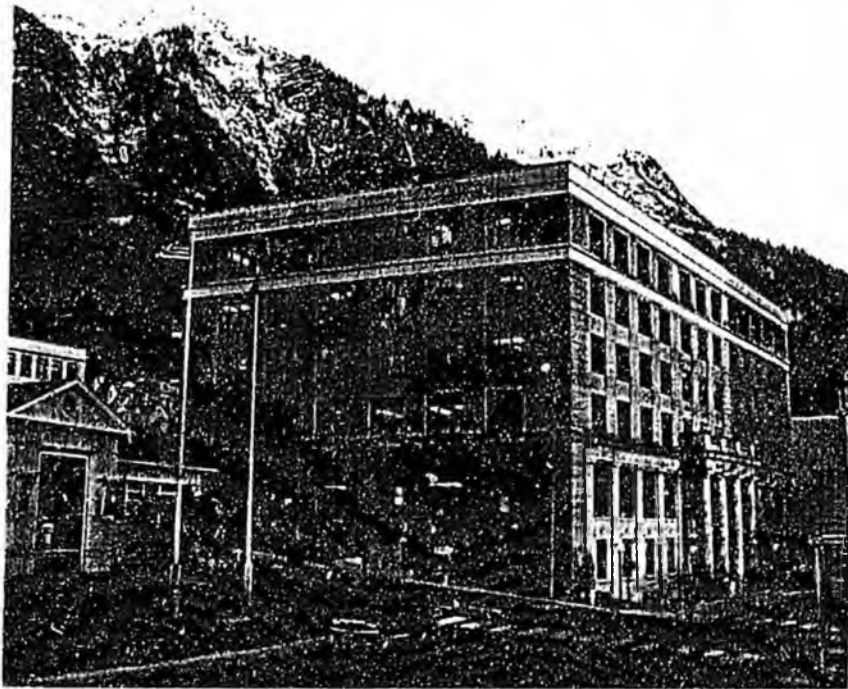
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Alaska's State Capitol building in Juneau.

Senior-Related Legislation for the Current Session

The 22nd Legislature of the State of Alaska began its first session January 8. This is the busy season for advocates seeking to educate policy makers on legislative issues affecting all of us as we age.

This legislative season, the Alaska Commission on Aging has identified the following legislative priorities:

- Establishing a state-funded long-term care program for seniors and adults with long-term care needs whose income and conditions now exclude them from the state's Medicaid long-term care home and community-based services waiver
- Strengthening the state guardianship and conservatorship system
- Strengthening state oversight for assisted living facilities
- Securing inclusion of Alzheimer's and related disorders as an allowable primary diagnosis for coverage under the state Medicaid long-term care waiver for older Alaskans
- Securing passage of budget increments to provide vital assistance to Alaska's rapidly-growing senior community. These increments are found in the budgets of the Division of Senior Services and the Commission, Division of Medical Assistance Medicaid long-term care funding, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Senior Housing Program, Alaska's Pioneers' Homes, and the Office of Public Advocacy Guardianship Program

In this issue of *Alaskan Seniors, Living Longer, Growing Stronger*, we'll look at some of these priorities individually.

Broadening Alaskans' Access to Home and Community-Based Care

Many seniors and adults with disabilities cannot pay for all the long-term care services they need, yet still do not qualify to receive Medicaid benefits. When these moderate income Alaskans don't receive necessary health care services, they often end up requiring more intensive services than they would have needed had they received earlier help to stabilize their situation.

The Legislative Long-Term Care Task Force has proposed that the Department of Administration establish and administer a program of home and community-based support services to address this need. The proposed program would begin to address the long-term care needs of adults of all ages, including significant numbers of older Alaskans, who face the following challenges:

- Income levels that exceed allowable income for participation in Alaska's Medicaid long-term care waiver programs
- Medical, physical, or cognitive impairments that place these Alaskans at greatest risk, or who have already been placed in a more restrictive care setting than they desire or need.

The participants in this program would pay for services they receive on a sliding scale. They would be required to apply for payment from all other sources available to them.

Strengthening Alaska's Guardianship System

With funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, the Division of Senior Services commissioned a review and assessment of Alaska's guardianship system in 1998. The purpose was to take a proactive look at the future of guardianship services in Alaska. The effort to act on the recommendations in this report, mostly involving more funding for guardianship agencies to lighten case loads and providing more support and training to private guardians, began with the release of the report. Legislation is now sought to strengthen Alaska's present statutes concerning guardianship and conservatorship to further assure that the best interests of the ward or respondent (the person being placed in guardianship or conservatorship) are effectively addressed in guardianship cases.

This legislation would serve all individuals for whom a guardianship or conservatorship is being established. This includes significant numbers of older Alaskans. One improvement this legislation would make is to allow a third type of guardianship petition that falls between regular and emergency petitions. This new type would have to be heard by the court sooner than a regular petition, but not in as short a time as an emergency petition is required to be heard.

Strengthening State Oversight of Alaska's Assisted Living Facilities

Across Alaska, the number of assisted living homes now licensed by the Division of Senior Services has grown to 125. This indicates rapid growth in the numbers of older Alaskans choosing to make Alaska their lifelong home. Assisted living offers Alaskans with residential long-term care needs the opportunity to receive that care in home-like settings. After five years under the present assisted living statutes and regulations, more is understood about issues of care, residents' rights, and structures needed to guide providers, the state, clients and their families involved in assisted living. In 1999 and 2000 the state held statewide information and listening forums to gain feedback and perspective on the core issues needing work. Now the state is drafting new regulations and proposed legislation to refine the framework for licensing assisted living. Key areas slated for strengthening:

- Standards and provisions for assisted living employee criminal background checks, and requirements that prohibit facilities from using employees, contractors, or volunteers convicted of offenses listed in regulation.
- Definition of circumstances under which assisted living resident contracts may be terminated, and provisions regarding termination procedures that assure checks and balances for residents and their families.
- Provisions under which the State may revoke an assisted living home's license.

Draft language is expected to include a framework for the state to secure court-ordered temporary administration of an
(Continued on Page 3.)

Medicaid Coverage for Those With Alzheimer's Disease Must Improve

By 2025 an estimated 124,303 Alaskans will be age 65+. Of that population, an estimated 15,700 will be at-risk for Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders (ADRD). As the number of Alaskans ill with Alzheimer's increases, it is vital to include Alzheimer's as an allowable primary diagnosis for Alaskans otherwise eligible for the present Medicaid long-term waiver program. Alaska is one of only two states that exclude seniors with Alzheimer's from Medicaid funded long-term care services if Alzheimer's is their primary diagnosis.

The *Legislative Long-Term Care Task Force Report, 1999* recommends exploring ways to support the long-term care needs of Alaskans whose sole diagnosis is Alzheimer's Disease.

Governor Knowles Introduces Legislation for for Alaska's Senior Veterans

Governor Tony Knowles has introduced legislation expanding the Pioneers' Home system to provide long-term care for veterans. This proposal has been well received by seniors and veterans. House Bill 88 changes the name of the Pioneers' Homes to the "Alaska Pioneers' and Veterans' Homes." It authorizes the Department of Administration to establish, through regulation, an admissions preference that would reserve a designated percentage of beds for veterans.

This bill and the accompanying FY 02 budget request will simultaneously increase the Homes' staffing to provide long-term care to older Alaskans, and enable more aging veterans to receive long-term care in the six Pioneer Homes across the state. The funding includes nearly \$2.5 million in general funds and another \$2.6 million in receipt authority. Receipts include fees paid by residents, and potential payments for veterans' care through the federal Veterans Administration.

The proposal also requests \$200,000 to survey veterans' housing and health needs to help guide the state in future planning for the Homes. The state will ask the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to examine the possibility of placing VA clinics at the Homes.

A companion bill would establish the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council. It would make recommendations concerning veterans' priority service needs, develop public and private partnerships to meet those needs, and provide coordination of information regarding veterans' benefits and services around the state. The chair of the council would serve on the renamed Alaska Pioneers' and Veterans' Home Advisory Board.

Alaska Commission on Aging Will Meet in February

The Alaska Commission on Aging will hold its quarterly meeting February 13-15. The meeting will be held in Juneau at Centennial Hall.

Among the issues to be addressed, the Commissioners plan to review the Seniors' Economic Impact Study commissioned last year, assess the impact of the reauthorization provisions of the Older Americans Act, and finalize the timeframe for new fiscal year extensions of grants, and awards of new grants. The Commission will also adopt a timeframe and process for completing its "Interim State Plan" to guide its programs supported with Older Americans Act funding. Time will be scheduled for discussion with local senior advocacy organizations, and meetings with legislators.

Those wishing to offer public comment on issues pertinent to the wellbeing of older Alaskans are invited to attend the Commission meeting at Centennial Hall. The meeting schedule is now being finalized.

Assisted Living (continued from page 2.)

assisted living facility if that facility operates without a license, the health, safety or welfare of residents were jeopardized, or if a pattern of statute, regulation or local ordinance violation had occurred. Also anticipated are specific training requirements for assisted living administrators.

Stay Informed of Senior-Related Legislation Through Statewide Teleconferences

Keep up with legislation affecting us as we age by participating in statewide teleconferences on the subject. These include the Senior Advocacy Coalition's monthly teleconferences (see box below) and the Alaska Commission on Aging legislative teleconference.

ACoA's Legislative Teleconferences are every other Tuesday. The dates are **February 6th & 20th; March 6th & 20th**. Beginning **April 3rd** the meetings will be held every Tuesday until the end of the Legislative session. The time will be from **9:30 to 11:00 AM**.

Public sites include:

Anchorage	Anchorage Senior Center, 1300 E. 19 th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501
Barrow	North Slope Borough Senior Center, Barrow, AK 99723
Bethel	City of Bethel Senior Services, 127 Atsaq Street, Bethel, AK 99559
Chugiak	Chugiak Senior Center, 22424 N. Birchwood Loop Rd., Chugiak, AK 99567
Fairbanks	North Star Council on Aging, 1424 Moore St., Fairbanks, AK 99701
Homer	Homer Senior Citizens, Inc., 3935 Svedlund, Homer, AK 99603
Juneau	Alaska Commission on Aging, State Office Bldg., Room 757, Juneau, AK 99801
Ketchikan	Ketchikan Pioneers' Home, 141 Bryant Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
Kodiak	Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc., 302 Erskine, Kodiak, AK 99615
Nenana	Nenana Tortella Council on Aging, 116 E. 4 th Street, Nenana, AK 99760
Sitka	Center for Community, 700 Katlian, Suite B, Sitka, AK 99835
Soldotna	Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc., 197 W. Park Avenue, Soldotna, AK 99669
Sterling	Sterling Area Senior Citizens, Inc., 34453 Sterling Highway, Sterling, AK 99472
Wasilla	Wasilla Area Services, 1301 Century Circle, Wasilla, AK 99654

Anyone requiring assistance or information or special devices and equipment to participate in the meetings must contact Lillian Bradley at 465-3250 (Fax: 465-1398) no later than the Thursday before each teleconference to make necessary arrangements. Agendas are available after 3:00 PM on the day prior to the scheduled teleconference at the ACoA Website, www.AlaskaAging.org. Click on the "Legislative Teleconference" button on the left side of the screen.

Senior Advocacy Coalition Holds Monthly Teleconferences

The Senior Advocacy Coalition meets by teleconference from 9:30 to 11:30 AM on the second Friday of every month to address issues affecting Alaska's seniors. The teleconference originates at the Anchorage Senior Center.

For more information on joining a meeting, contact Sue Samet, 261-4140, Lila Berry, 261-4848, or Brenda Brown, 338-6492 in Anchorage; Fred Lau 235-7355 in Homer; or Rosemary Hagevig 463-6153 in Juneau.

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You can read *Alaskan Seniors: Living Longer, Growing Stronger* on line at [www.AlaskaAging.org](http://www.AlaskaAging.org). To receive email notification when a new issue is on line, contact:

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