

**HB 65 /**

**HB 66**

**PUBLIC**

**TESTIMONY**

**(FILE 1)**

<TARGET><BILL>HB 65</BILL><SUBJECT>HB 65-HB 66 PUBLIC  
TESTIMONY (FILE 1)</SUBJECT><COMM>HFIN28</COMM></TARGET>

FY2014  
HB65 OPERATING BUDGET  
HB66 MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

MINUTES

# TESTIMONY

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jim Beck <jbeck@accessalaska.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:52 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Funding Issues

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Jim Beck and I am the Executive Director of Access Alaska.

Thank you all for your service to the residents of Alaska. You find yourselves in the unenviable position of prioritizing expenses against shrinking revenues and overwhelming needs throughout the state. You probably ask yourselves - How can we allow the budget to grow when revenue is shrinking?

The unfortunate reality is that regardless of shrinking revenues, Alaska's population is growing along with the social issues that accompany any population. Simply cutting funding is not a sustainable long-term approach to meeting the growing issues in Alaska – especially in rural Alaska.

The Governor supports our vision for Independent Living (IL) in rural Alaska. I believe he understands that investing in IL now saves healthcare and other dollars in the future. The Governor has been investing in IL so that we can push these services into rural areas of the State. As a program we are approximately 20% State-funded. That means we will bring another approximate \$500,000 in services to the table, to complement the State's funding. That's an awful lot of leverage for such a small amount of State General Funds.

I strongly urge the Finance Committee to put the Governor's \$100,000 increment back into the Labor budget for IL.

I also strongly urge the Finance Committee to restore the behavioral health funding cut by the HSS Finance Subcommittee. While this funding will not likely have a dramatic impact on the organization for which I work, it will likely have devastating effect for many of the people we serve who rely on services from other organizations to complement those we provide at Access Alaska. We have seen these organizations struggle with flat or reduced funding for years, while their expenses increase continuously.

Two other important initiatives I hope you will support include The Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury (TABI) increment. As I am sure you know, Alaska has an exceptionally high rate of incidence of TABI, especially in rural Alaska. The TABI case management program has been very successful in Anchorage and Fairbanks. The increment will take this successful program from the urban areas into rural Alaska, where the services are desperately needed - but that increment needs to be fully funded.

Last but not least, please reconsider adding funds to continue the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative. This program now has several months under its belt and early data shows that not only is it meeting the needs of Alaska families, it is extremely cost-effective.

And once again – please restore the Governor’s increment for Independent Living.

Respectfully,

Jim Beck

**J I M B E C K**

Executive Director

Access Alaska, Inc.

907.248.4777 - main

907.263.1907 - direct

907.748.4777 - cell

<http://www.accessalaska.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/AccessAlaska>

Access Alaska is Moving To Its New Location - March 25<sup>th</sup> 2013

1217 East 10th Avenue

Anchorage AK 99501

Corner of 10th and LaTouche

(The former Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** cloudy@acsalaska.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:45 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Best Beginnings and PAT Funds

Rep. Austerman,

I coordinate Imagination Libraries across the state for Best Beginnings. In 2009, six communities had Imagination Library delivering books to their children; today, that number is 103. Akiachak has just come on board, and Cordova is next in the hopper. More than 20,000 children receive a book in the mail every month.

But this is the smallest part of the story. If this were just a matter of dumping books on little kids, I wouldn't be doing it. We say our way of doing Imagination Library is more than a book delivery program; it's a Get-the-Whole-Community-Involved-in-Reading-to-Kids Program. Behind each child getting a book is a community that decided they wanted to bring books to their children. A parent can't just sign up their child; the community has to sign up all their children.

This is why our Imagination Library network has attracted national and international attention (from Canada). This is how books have been introduced to communities without libraries or bookstores. This is why our Imagination Libraries are slowly building towards sustainability. This is the help, coaching, support, and training your funds to Best Beginnings have made possible.

And the funds you take away will interrupt this process.

In Brevig Mission, one boy's books stopped because he turned 5. "Why," he said, "did you tell them my birthday?! I don't want my books to stop."

Neither do 20,000 other children around the state.

Please restore the funds to Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.

Thank you.

Barbara Brown

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jodie Llamas <jkllamos@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Budget Cuts on Social Services\_Jodie Llamas

I cannot fathom how this state can even consider cutting finances towards the social well being of the people of Alaska. Our family recently moved here from Michigan and daily it confuses me why there is not more financing towards mental health, substance abuse, and for the youth who are suffering from past traumas. This state needs to recognize that unless the people of Alaska are mentally and physically healthy this state will not be able to prosper. Isn't that what you ultimately want? A state that is full of prosperity and life abundantly? We need to the unique simplicity of this state so others are drawn to the benefits of this state.

I was actually suppose to meet with you last week, but my flight got cancelled twice out of Kodiak for weather.

I was going to speak to you about the necessity of more finances needed for social services here on the island of Kodiak. (including the villages) There is desperate need for the youth of this community to have hope for a productive, healthy future instead of one that is one of substance abuse and lack of education.

This cannot happen. There cannot be a cut in finances to social services, but rather there NEEDS to be an increase in finances for the well-being of ALL the citizens of Alaska.

Please stop and think of the long term effects. I am a survivor of mental illness because I came from a state that took social services as a main priority in the state. I am stable and now a productive, healthy citizen...now being able to help others do the same for their lives.

Thank you for your consideration and have a blessed day!

Jodie Llamas

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Philip Somervell <pdsomervell@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:09 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgman@akleg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; steve.thompson@akleg.gov; tammie.wilson@akleg.gov  
**Subject:** Behavioral health services funding

I am writing to ask that you not implement the cuts being considered to behavioral health services funding. I gather that a reduction of over eight million dollars in general funds is being considered. This would be terribly harmful to many of our most vulnerable people.

I'm an intern working with teens who have addiction problems and often have serious mental health problems as well. Many of them need all kinds of help just to get by at all, much less "make it" in life. The last thing we need as a state is to make it even harder for them and their families (if they even have any) to get treatment and services. I have also seen how hard it can be for adults to get any help when they have serious mental health problems (they usually don't have the kind of money, or health insurance, that would help.)

The agencies that help with these things are generally hard pressed already. I imagine some of them would simply go under if these cuts were implemented. In any case, I'm sure more of their clients would end up on the streets. I don't think that is what any of us want.

Thanks for listening.

Sincerely,

Phil Somervell  
Anchorage

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** mmq@coppercenterak.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 3:02 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Dept of Public Safety Budget

Hi,

My name is Mike McQueen and my wife and I reside year round near Copper Center, Alaska. I am contacting you in regards to reports that the committee on which you serve is contemplating significant cuts in the Governor's proposed budget for the Department of Public Safety. I am concerned that budget cuts could impact the ability of the State Trooper post in Glennallen to respond effectively to motor vehicle accidents and criminal activity in our unincorporated area. The Troopers serve a vast area here stretching hundreds of miles along the Glenn, Richardson, and Tok highways. The Troopers are obviously understaffed in that they often end up responding to events and disturbances in remote locations with no back-up. This is not acceptable.

Although this entire area is only home to a few thousand individuals the population explodes in the summer as tourist from all over the lower 48 and even the world descend on this area for the fishing and scenery. Subsistence fishing and the personal use fishery draw crowds to the area from Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, and Fairbanks. The Princess Lodge draws thousands from the lower 48. My point is that the Troopers are our sole source for law enforcement in this area and their ability to respond to events and emergencies is critical to maintaining order.

In my role as Chairman of the Copper River Emergency Medical Services, I ask that you consider the fact that State EMS protocols require that we determine that a scene be "safe" before EMS personnel are allowed to enter and treat injured patients. In many cases the presence of the Troopers is required to be able make the determination that a scene is "safe". If Trooper response to accidents and events are delayed patients are likely to suffer and even die as a result. In my capacity as Chairman of Copper River EMS I ask you to fully fund the Governor's budget request for the Department of Public Safety.

Sincerely,  
Mike McQueen  
Copper Center, Alaska

Sent from my iPad

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Eugene S. Avey <gavey@aisdk12.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** House Finance Committee

Rep. Austerman: On behalf of the Annette Island School District, I would like to reinforce some areas in the Governor's budget and oppose other legislative bills that are not supportive of public education.

First, the major maintenance projects for education are areas of need for schools that have been neglected too long. Further delays in remodels or repairs further hinders maintenance expenses for districts. This allow us to refrain from placing resources and personnel needlessly into keeping unfit building up to safety and code requirements that are extremely challenging with no increase to the BSA in the past four years. I do want to add that our District has benefited well by the willingness to identify our needs for upgrading our buildings, however our RJ Elementary in dire need of bringing it up to code and replacing worn out mechanical and leaking issues we are experiencing in our roof and siding. In times of high poverty and over 50% unemployment it will be a welcome relief to have local residents be involved in this needed project.

Secondly, The Governor budget for implementation of digital learning should be paramount to meeting the needs of students future education endeavors. Technology development for college readiness and work preparation is essential for our student's future. We will short change our kids if we do not provide quality professional development to implement the many changes in distant learning, e-books, and digital learning that is upon us. I strongly urge that you keep all of the Governor's allocation for this needed area. It will push teachers to prepare students for the 21st Century.

Thirdly, I would like to vehemently oppose HJR 1 and SJR 9 bills that publicize private and religious education in the State of Alaska.

It may appear that the separation of church and state is quickly becoming something of the past. We are bounding down a dangerous path as we continue to indirectly and directly fund religious institutions as these bills aspire to support. Do all in your power to keep separation of "church and state" a priority as stated by our US Constitution. We cannot continue to believe that private and religious education will deliver the same programs under the same regulations as these two bills allege.

Finally, HB 151, the "scarlet letter bill" to assign and display letter measurements to school buildings is demeaning way of labeling schools. In place now under NCLB is a grading system and we don't need another grading system to take its place. This is a knee jerk way to identify schools in a dehumanizing manner.

Thank you for hearing my concerns,

--

Eugene S. Avey II  
Superintendent Annette Islands School District  
PO Box 7  
Metlakatla, AK 99926  
907-886-6332 (O)  
907-886-6021 (F)

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**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Poms@akleg.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:52 PM  
**To:** Astrid Rose  
**Subject:** New Pom:Education

Joseph Delia  
12110 Bells Flats Rd

Kodiak 99615,  
[bookmatch@acsalaska.net](mailto:bookmatch@acsalaska.net)

907-487-2799

Please consider full funding (\$761,000) for the OWL Project Broadband support to public libraries and the Live Homework Help database on SLED (\$138,000) as both of these initiatives support education throughout the state. It would be very helpful if funding could be permanently inserted into the state budget.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Sean P. Rice <sprice@ci.fairbanks.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:48 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Consideration for funding our schools

I would like to thank you, for your time and your commitment for your service. I appreciate all you do for the State of Alaska and to your district.

I am contacting you today to encourage you to support and fund our schools and districts in the State of Alaska. I am concerned that here at the Fairbanks North Star Borough we are increasing our class sizes in our elementary schools, middle schools, and our senior schools. Not only this but we as a district are facing a 3.5 million cut this year and are looking layoff employee's.

As a district there has been cuts made of about 9 million over the last few years. The cuts were away from the class room as much as possible. We have been making success in our schools. In our SMART program this year we have graduated two students. Our SMART program is where our children go when they have been expelled for longer than 10 days. This gives them a chance to keep up with school work so they do not fall behind. With our late graduation when we first started we only had a few students graduate, I believe last year we had another 63 students walking.

Once again I would like to encourage you to fund the education system, not just for our district but state wide.

Thank you

Sean Rice

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Janice Hamrick <janice\_hamrick2003@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:45 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Alaska is #!

Dear Honorable Alan Austerman,

Please think about the people in Alaska and the difficulty with access to care for mental health and substance abuse making such large cuts will only increase our numbers in so many of the areas that we do not want to be #1!

As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker of 30+ years and 7 years here in Alaska working in the bush and in Southeast the need for the services in our villages is crucial for the health of the people in this state.

Tribal behavioral services is of up-most importance it is challenging enough to provide services please consider the lives' that will be lost and the rise in statics that will come from reductions in mental health and substance abuse services.

Thank you for the work you do and for your consideration of this request! Please know when cutting tribal behavioral health that the next person who dies from alcoholism, suicide, murder it will come back to behavioral health the funding is crucial. It will come back to you asking what you doing.

Sincerely,  
Janice Hamrick, LCSW, BHP  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker & Behavioral Health Practitioner

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Glenn StorageAbles <bables@cvinternet.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; rep.bill.stoltz@akleg.gov; Sen. Click Bishop; Rep. Eric Feige; Glennallen\_LIO@legis.state.ak.us; Southwick, Shane B (EED); Sue Sherif; Bonnie; Cynthia; Nora; Victoria  
**Subject:** Governor's proposed budget for EED

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltz:

My name is Sharron Ables and I am a volunteer/OWL IT aide for the Copper Valley Community Library. I am writing in support of the OWL Project and Live Homework Help.

As you well know we are a small diverse community that struggles to stay afloat. As diverse as we are, we have a passion to educate our young. The OWL program (broadband support and the video conference network) has provided amazing tools to help us in that endeavor. It's been documented that kids who do poorly in school are typically exposed to about 60,000 words prior to kindergarten whereas successful kids, are typically exposed to 3 million words plus prior to kindergarten. Point being, exposure to communications is critical.

Videoconferencing networks and after school support programs such as Live Homework Help are making great strides in our rural Alaskan villages. These programs can and will make a significant difference.

The United States was built on its human capital and it is no secret that we are losing our edge. We need skilled/educated people.

A permanent addition to the operating budget (with periodical reviews) was recommended by Governor Parnell with his staff verifying that the OWL Project and Live Homework Help was actually doing the job they set out to do. Please - I am among those asking you to restore the Governors recommendations.

Thank you for your time!

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Colleen Endres <cgendres@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 2:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Support the Governor's Public Safety Budget

Dear Representative Austerman,

I support the Governor's public safety budget. We need the additional troopers he has proposed and I hope you will support this vital need for the safety of all Alaskans.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Colleen Endres  
PO Box 557  
Glennallen, AK 99588

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Robyn Priest <dir@akpeersupport.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:54 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioural Health Budget and Therapeutic Courts  
**Attachments:** Behavioral Health Budget and Therapeutic Courts March 2013.pdf

Please find attached a letter requesting reconsideration of these budget items

Thank you

Robyn Priest

Executive Director

Alaska Peer Support Consortium

[dir@akpeersupport.org](mailto:dir@akpeersupport.org)

Ph: 907-351-6890

[www.akpeersupport.org](http://www.akpeersupport.org)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** tytigner@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:35 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** 2013 Budget  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

Your position and hard work is really appreciated. It is clear that hard choices have to be made. This email is to strongly encourage you to reconsider cutting the budget in regards to treatment and recovery. I reside at 360 North Pine Ridge Loop, Wasilla, Alaska and work in Fairbanks, Alaska. Our communities are seriously struggling with dysfunction and trauma. Cutting the budget will only cause more harm than good. We as a society know that if we do not take care of problems with youth now as they grow older we will pay for high cost of care in Adult Corrections. Prevention does make a clear difference.

We have also seen on a national level recently that if we don't provide good treatment it can have huge ramifications. Cutting more than 8 million in the Health and Social Service Budget is a mistake. Take time and go visit the treatment facilities and get a clearer understanding of what they do. The State of Alaska is actually getting quality services at a reasonable rate. Thanks for your time.

Ty Tigner

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kelly Shanklin <kellys@fcbhc.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:27 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** FW: Say NO to Cuts Targeting Alaska's Most Vulnerable!

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good afternoon,

### **ACTION ALERT**

The House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for **CRITICAL** Behavioral Health Services.

These local, community-based services include:

- \* mental health treatment
- \* substance abuse treatment
- \* detox services
- \* services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- \* supported housing
- \* peer support services
- \* suicide prevention
- \* tribal behavioral health services
- \* services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
- \* parent and peer navigation
- \* services related to domestic violence and sexual assault

\* prevention and early intervention

\* programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring

disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

· Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

· By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

· Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

· Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a healthy workforce and promote a strong economy. For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services

is **2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.**

Behavioral Health services are invaluable in our community. Costs of providing care continue to rise and there are static and dwindling resources available to pay for these services. Please support maintaining current funding

levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter.

Kelly Shanklin, M.A., CDCI

Executive Director

Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center

(907) 455-5307

The mission of the Fairbanks Community Behavioral Health Center is to provide quality behavioral health services that support consumer choice, cultural diversity, and clinical excellence.

Our Core Values are effective:

Stewardship

Collaboration

Leadership

Compassion

Perfection is something we never reach, but like the North Star, it serves as a beacon to guide us...

We seek perfection by focusing on measurable improvement in all areas, including best practices of care. Every day, we strive to be even better than before. Our dedicated caregivers should seek to attain it; our patients and families deserve it.

-Blair L. Sadler

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Stephanie Allen <sallen@unitedwaymatsu.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:20 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** House Finance Committee: Budget  
**Importance:** High  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Members,

Thrive Mat-Su (formerly the Mat-Su Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition) has taken the lead in bringing together substance abuse prevention coalitions and health promotion organizations from across Alaska to form the Alaska Wellness Coalition--a statewide partnership that works together to improve the health in communities across the state of Alaska. That coalition includes representatives from various regions across the state and is working to create changes in businesses, government, schools and neighborhoods to improve the health of Alaskans. Current emphasis is on substance abuse prevention, obesity prevention, injury prevention, suicide prevention, positive community norms, domestic violence prevention, and youth leadership development. **I am writing to you on behalf of Thrive Mat-Su and the Alaska Wellness Coalition to ask for your support in keeping DHSS/DBH funds to support innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention projects across the state.**

The Alaska Wellness Coalition serves to facilitate information sharing on state and local data, evidenced-based programming, best practices, strategic prevention, current health trends, statewide advocacy for health promotion, sharing funding opportunities and developing plans for statewide engagement to improve the health of Alaskans. The overall focus is to improve community wellness and reduce health disparities among the children and families of Alaska. As a coalition of public health agencies, local governments, school districts, health care organizations and professionals, and community-based organizations, we promote policies, physical environments, and systems-changes that create safe, healthy, and equitable communities. Members are representative of communities from Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau, Kenai, Kodiak, Palmer, Seward, Sitka, Valdez, Wasilla and Yakutat bringing a diverse group of urban, rural, native and non-native communities together. We are stronger when we work together and seek to work to create a cooperative environment within the coalition that includes seeking joint funding and collaborating to sustain the work of coalition organizations.

In Alaska, there is a clear need for coordinated efforts to reduce underage drinking. Communities across Alaska are bombarded with a quagmire of different laws, advocacy efforts, and media messages that range from extremely permissive attitudes about youth and alcohol use to the elimination of alcohol in communities altogether. The cacophony of competing attitudes, values, and beliefs that plays out in our State lead to a weak common understanding of factual information regarding alcohol and its effect on both youth and the community. Glamorization of alcohol use in the entertainment industry, alcohol advertising and retailing

strategies, and by outdated social norms toward youth use of alcohol as a rite of passage only exacerbate the problem.

Efforts to address underage drinking happen at a number of levels including neighborhoods, schools, tribal entities and organizations, and through youth serving organizations, as well as local, state, and federal government. The sheer number of individuals and organizations involved is quite impressive, as is the funding spent nationally every year to address underage drinking. Unfortunately, too often these efforts are not coordinated with each other. Their respective messages do not end up having the reach originally planned, and duplication of effort wastes the resources currently available to address the problem.

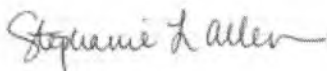
The Alaska Wellness Coalition Media Campaign project was recently awarded from the DHSS/DBH funding targeting substance abuse prevention and intervention. This project is to conduct a *coordinated* campaign to reduce underage drinking that accounts for messages and efforts at the local, state, and federal level. The Campaign will focus on evidence-based environmental prevention strategies to change social norms regarding youth alcohol. By using this approach the Coalition will maximize communication, outcomes, and economic use of resources at the same time duplicate and ineffective approaches are reduced.

To prevent underage drinking, the Media Campaign will employ a strengths-based approach utilizing the *positive community norms* model. It will begin a long-term dialogue with the public that increases parent and youth understanding of the social norms surrounding underage drinking as well as educate both youth and adults across the Alaska, cultivating a culture that decreases underage drinking and delays the early onset of alcohol use. The Alaska Wellness Coalition plans to launch the campaign in 2013 and continue community conversations and the media campaign for a minimum of three years.

The project will fulfill one of the strategies outlined in the Alaska Statewide Plan to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking and other state level and regional plans. **We ask for your support in preserving DHSS/DBH funding in the budget to be allocated towards innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention projects.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stephanie L. Allen

Stephanie L. Allen

Executive Director

United Way of Mat-Su

550 S. Alaska Street, Suite 205

Palmer, AK 99645

P: 907.745.5821

F: 907.745.0635

<http://www.unitedwaymatsu.org>

GIVE. | ADVOCATE. | VOLUNTEER. | **LIVE UNITED™**

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** mbyer <mbyer@hbsd.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:16 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; rep.linsey.holmes@akleg.gov; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. David Guttenberg  
**Subject:** Budget Testimony

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Member of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Michael Byer and I'm the Superintendent of the Haines Borough School District where I've served for six years. I am in my 25<sup>th</sup> year of a career in education. I started as a special education aide, became a teacher, both in K-12 and university, then a principal and now I'm here. I believe passionately that the education of our children is the most powerful investment we can make in the future of our state and country. We will soon enough depend on the innovative thinking of the young Alaskans who are currently in or will be entering our schools. They will be the ones to take the lead in reinventing and maintaining a healthy economy for future generations.

Education is in a time of great transition. Standards are being raised to make sure our students are Career and College ready. Technology is transforming the classroom. Research into learning continues to indicate how important early childhood experiences are to success in school and beyond.

I believe that now is the time we must all come together to insure we wisely nurture programs that recognize these trends. Now is when we should be making the investment in our young children. The proposals within the Governor's budget will help that to occur.

I'd like to speak directly to Digital Learning and Distance Learning found within that budget. We have many students who are in rural schools without the capacity to provide all the classes necessary to qualify for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The Alaska Learning Network is a great solution to that problem. It has support from School districts. It has highly qualified teachers, teaching Alaskan students. It has a 90% completion rate.

Two Haines students and a teacher made a presentation to Senate Education yesterday on how AKLN has worked for them. I would recommend watching it on "Gavel to Gavel." It is very compelling testimony. We need to prepare our students for a future not yet comprehended. We do know one thing, technology will be part of that future and our student's ability to use technology to learn and to work will be a great key to their success.

I'd also like to say that for a small district like Haines, getting support from DEED is extremely important. Our district office is composed of myself with a secretary and a bookkeeper. We need DEED to be a partner in helping districts like Haines to work through issues like the upcoming change to the teacher evaluation regulations just passed by the State board.

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*Michael Byer, Superintendent  
Haines Borough School District  
Office: (907) 766-6725  
Fax: (907) 766-6794*

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Tiffany McCormack <tamccormack@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:06 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Operating Budget  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

6 March 2013

Tiffany McCormack  
1830 Pandora Drive  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
(907) 687-8493

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

I do not envy you the position of managing and making cuts to the Operating Budget that funds many important services throughout our state. As a Fairbanks resident, I have recently discovered that the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million reduction to critical Behavioral Health Services that would immensely impact our most vulnerable populations. I can only imagine the ways in which the cut to these services would end up impacting future costs in negative ways through the inevitable, exponential increased need for mental health, education, violence prevention, and health care services, not to mention the cost to the young people on an individual level and to the community as a whole that would lose out on numerous successful, engaged citizens.

Our state has a high incidence of domestic and sexual abuse, children born with a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and suicide. These challenges present many unforeseen consequences that are addressed through behavioral health services. I implore you, members of the House Finance Committee, to look for different means to balance the Operating Budget other than cutting the funding to behavioral health services.

Thank you for your time and attention in reading this.

Sincerely,

Tiffany McCormack

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** berens@mtaonline.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:59 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health Services

I oppose the \$8.3 million cuts for Behavioral Health Services. These services are important to our consumers in the community. Without services and supports our most vulnerable population would be homeless. I know many people who benefit from services in our community. Taking away their life line would affect their safety and life style.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Lauren Rice <lrice@covenanthouseak.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Cc:** Alison Kear; Diana Bline  
**Subject:** CHA Response to Proposed BHS Cuts  
**Attachments:** BHS Cuts- CHA Response House Finance.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I hope this finds well. Please find the attached letter from Covenant House Alaska on the proposed Behavioral Health Services cuts. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Alison Kear at 907.339.4203 if you have any questions. Thank you and take care!

*Lauren Rice*

*Director of Public Affairs and Advocacy*

*(w) 907.339.4224*

*(c) 907.351.8005*



**Pick.Click.Give.**

*Please consider a gift to the kids of Covenant House Alaska with your 2013 Permanent Fund Dividend. Thank you!*

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Hannah Ragland <hbragland@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:25 PM  
**To:** David Guttenberg; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze  
**Cc:** Meredith Cameron  
**Subject:** support for the Alaska Farm to School Program

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Representatives-

I am writing in support of the Alaska Farm to School program, and the funding that is needed to continue with the benefits this program provides. As an employee in the Denali Borough School District, and an active volunteer within the District and in the preschool and daycare setting, I have worked to support Alaskan food with our young people. I have worked to educate them about local food that is available, and work to increase their appreciation for Alaska Grown. The Alaska Farm to School program has supported my efforts immensely, both through direct funding under the Alaska Farm to School grant program, and indirectly through support by staff with the Division of Agriculture/Farm to School program.

This fall, with funds from a small grant (just \$500), elementary students at our school were able to visit a local farm, harvest produce, host a local farmers market (where they selected and prepared healthy snacks, and food for a cafeteria meal), then prepared a school meal for all students, served up in our cafeteria. It was an exciting few weeks, and data we collected from the students showed that their knowledge of Alaska Grown food increased greatly as a result of this project. Our project later won second place in the Alaska Farm to School challenge, winning an indoor gardening set that Middle School students are currently using as they explore indoor gardening. This project provided a solid base for our school's efforts to support Alaska Grown food as we later utilized money provided by the legislature under the Nutritional Alaska Food in Schools funding, and we currently offer Alaska Grown meals in our cafeteria once a week (Farm Fridays). I also support continued funding for that program.

Staff with the Division of Agriculture/Farm to School program have been instrumental in connecting us with local farmers, and providing the resources we need to share information and appreciation of Alaska Grown foods with our local youth. Please support the program by providing the funding it needs to continue with their efforts!

Hannah Ragland

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Maggie Lush <admin@havenhousealaska.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:21 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki  
**Subject:** Funding Cuts!!!

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Really? Our most prized possessions? Please think twice about cutting the funds that help our most vulnerable population. Early childhood development is critical and a very important component to aid our moms in crisis that we see here at Haven House, the women's shelter of Homer. Children don't understand trauma and it is "played" out in very negative forms when we are talking about domestic violence. Sprout, is the name of the agency in Homer that sends in specialists to assist our children. It is imperative that this alliance between our shelter and their agency -Sprout, continues. Without funding it looks like it won't. Please, please see that this doesn't happen! Many thanks for looking out for our best interest in this challenging time of need! Maggie Lush

--

Maggie Lush  
South Peninsula Haven House  
3776 Lake Street, Homer Alaska 99603  
907-235-7712 Fax: 907-235-2733  
[admin@havenhousealaska.org](mailto:admin@havenhousealaska.org)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Donna Nelson <dnelson@AccessAlaska.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:11 PM  
**To:** Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg  
**Cc:** Donna Nelson  
**Subject:** HB 65 Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living

**Importance:** High

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative,

**Please restore the \$100,000 increment in the Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living, also known as CILs.**

**Section 702 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 established Centers for Independent Living as consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agencies designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities to provide an array of independent living services.**

CILs provided itinerant services to **over 45 rural communities last year**, but enormous areas of Alaska remain underserved. CILs need more money, not less.

Access Alaska has seen the unmet needs but limited funds make it difficult to adequately address those substantial needs. **Rural Alaskans have limited options; those options are even more restricted for seniors and individuals experiencing disability**, whether it is cognitive, mental or physical in nature.

**If you want functional, productive citizens and reduced costs then you must fund services which make that possible!**

Without the support of a CIL, many Alaskans are forced into expensive long-term care away from family or they live dependent and isolated lives. On the North Slope alone there are more than 60 individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who are in need of supportive services in order to live independently, yet these services are pitifully lacking! Without the services these individuals end up homeless in the most extreme environments of the state, are sent to other areas of the state away from their culture and support network or even outside of Alaska altogether.



**Home and Community Based Services are proven effective and cost efficient, reducing overall system costs substantially.** I encourage you to do your homework as you make budget decisions.

CILs are located in the Dept. of Labor budget because the **federal government requires CILs to be in the same department as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.**

I know that times are tough and hard decisions must be made. I know there are no easy solutions. However, reducing the budget at the expense of our most vulnerable populations is not the right solution. Refusal to invest in these populations will ultimately further the costs deferred to state and federal sources.

**Please restore the \$100,000 increment in the Governor's Dept. of Labor budget for Centers for Independent Living.**

Thank you,



Donna Nelson

Independent Living Advocate

Access Alaska



## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** bill heiberger <bill.heiberger@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:05 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Support Cleaning our Beaches

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman:

Please support legislation to support and fund the cleanup of our Alaskan beaches of the Japanese Tsunami Debris that has and will continue to make landfall. Not doing so, is apt to harm our wildlife and to adversely affect our tourism.

Best Regards,

Bill Heiberger (An Anchorage Resident)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Pamela Fredrick <plf@sphosp.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 12:04 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson  
**Subject:** Comments regarding 2014 Trauma Fund Recapitalization  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Dear Representatives Austerman and Stoltze and Members of the State Finance Committee,**

We at South Peninsula Hospital are very much in support of continued funding for Trauma Care in the State of Alaska.

South Peninsula Hospital has made a commitment to improving the trauma care at our community hospital, and was granted Level IV Trauma Designation early 2012. This involved additional and continued education of all Emergency Department medical staff, both physicians and nurses, as well as instituting new Policies and Procedures to standardize and optimize patient care.

The State Trauma funding allowed a number of our Physicians to complete Advanced Trauma Life support, a course designed for Emergency Department physicians by the American College of Surgeons.

South Peninsula Hospital also made a monetary commitment to encourage Emergency Room nurses to become Board Certified in Emergency Nursing. Three nurses were Board Certified prior to our Level IV designation, two more have completed the Certification, and two others are in the process. In addition, 11 of the 14 ER nurses have become certified in Procedural Sedation, often used in the Emergency department. Our Anesthesia department worked with the ER nurses to standardize procedures for Rapid Sequence Intubation.

The trauma funds have been invaluable, for items this small community hospital could not afford. The ER purchased a Glide Scope for difficult emergency intubations. This piece of equipment was used on two patients in the first week we had it. We were able to purchase improved lighting for the Operating Room. We have upgraded our audio EMS system and State EMS communication system.

Included in our commitment for improving trauma care, South Peninsula Hospital recently appointed a part-time Trauma Coordinator. An Alaskan nurse for 34 years (the last seven in Homer), she is one of our ER nurses with long experience in the Trauma systems of Alaska. She has been involved in Disaster planning, deeply involved in EMS, and traveled State-wide teaching trauma courses to both EMT's and nurses. We are very excited to have her in this position.

South Peninsula Hospital is a small community hospital, and we are proud of the progress we have made in improving trauma care. The hospital has made major monetary commitments, but the State Trauma funding has been invaluable in assisting us in this endeavor.

We would encourage you to keep the trauma care funding in place for 2014.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, if we can be of any assistance to you in your deliberations.

Rebecca Lundqvist, R.N. CEN Emergency Room Trauma Coordinator for South Peninsula Hospital

Pamela Fredrick, RN, BSN, Emergency Room & Outpatient Services Manager for South Peninsula Hospital

907-235-0533 Office

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Ray Friedlander <ray@sitkawild.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:59 AM  
**To:** Marie Murray  
**Cc:** Tully McLoughlin; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for Farm to School  
**Attachments:** Housefinancecommittee\_farmtoschool.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Marie, please find my letter of support attached for the Farm to School program. Thanks!

ray

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Torgeson, Mary Jo. <TorgesonMJ@ci.anchorage.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:57 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** State support for OWL and Live Homework Help

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

I am very concerned that two initiatives were taken out of the Governor's budget: OWL and Live Homework Help.

1. **Live Homework Help:** Let me start with the effectiveness of Live Homework Help, provided throughout the state through libraries. This is a service that started in FY2008 with 5073 using the services. In the last 5 years the service has increased to 18,065 students using the service which is a 300% increase of use from when it began. We need to be a state that helps students to succeed and this is a program that does it at very little cost, \$7.63 a use. I had one mother tell me that her child would not have gotten into college without the math help provided by this program. This was a single mother that did not have the needed math skills to help her child.

At the Anchorage Public Library, our Young Adult Vista volunteer says this:  
"Live Homework Help is an important part of the Homework Help program that is offered to Middle and High School students in Teen Underground on Mondays and Thursday. The volunteers that help the students use Live Homework Help during every session. This valuable service enables volunteers to help students in a range of subjects, augmenting their personal academic skills and enabling them to be more effective as tutors. Without Live Homework Help, there would be times when we would have to turn away students, not having the tools or knowledge to help them. We depend on this resource. It is frequent to see a university student working alongside a younger student with a laptop open to Live Homework Help participating in a conversation with an online tutor. We provide the positive adult mentors and in person help while Live Homework help provides the expertise." In 2012, over 800 users accessed this service.

I am recommending that this service continue to be supported by State dollars and returned to the Governor's budget. We do not have sufficient municipal support to pay for this database.

2. **OWL:** While you have kept \$461K in the Governor's recommended budget for the OWL project, I am requested that you return the \$150K that was cut. The Anchorage Public Library plays a key role in providing a mechanism and meeting room space in sending educational programs throughout the state. We City of Anchorage does not have the dollars to allocate to the Broadband project. There are 97 communities, some of them in schools, where the additional broadband is important and adds additional resources to students during the day. OWL's high speed broadband allows us to offer a program in Anchorage to village communities. Likewise, village communities can provide educational programs to Natives cut off from village life. I urge you to return the \$150K back to the OWL broad project.

Feel free to call me with any questions if further clarification is needed. I would also appreciate a response, as time allows.

Mary Jo Torgeson  
Anchorage Public Library Director  
3600 Denali Street  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 343-2892  
[www.anchoragelibrary.org](http://www.anchoragelibrary.org)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Susan Ohmer (raincountry) <susanohmer@raincountry.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:44 AM  
**To:** Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Treadwell, Lt. Governor (GOV sponsored); Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Cc:** Stone, Melissa W (HSS); Streur, William J (HSS); Judy Ohmer  
**Subject:** Communities in Crisis

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To Our Representatives and Senators:

I am writing to express dismay about the proposed cut of \$8.3 million in behavioral health services. At a time when our communities most need treatment, support, and violence intervention, this action will not keep Alaskans safe, nor will it save money. It will increase costs as emergency rooms, hospitals, and jails take on those who cannot cope without support.

We are experiencing a behavioral health and substance abuse crisis. Since 2005 Petersburg (pop 2,965) has had three homicides. Our violent death rate has in some years exceeded *33 per 100,000* (over *eight times* the state rate). An overall seven year average is still 14 per 100,000 (over *three times* the state rate).

There have been five suicides, including three in one year. Our average greatly exceeds the state rate, which is itself the second highest in the nation.

We had 32 suicide attempts, four drug-related deaths and multiple lockdowns of the school and other sites due to credible death/mass murder threats. In 2012 alone, three lockdowns (of the school, a bar and the entire city) occurred.

Domestic assaults are more frequent and serious, almost doubling since 2005, and we had 20 documented alcohol and drug overdoses needing emergency medical attention.

I've been Petersburg Mental Health's director for nearly 20 years. As cost of living and cost of healthcare have skyrocketed during this time we have not seen an increase in grant funding. We are being asked to do more and more administratively to demonstrate our service's worth. The concept of a cut on top of the burdens we already must adapt to is more than demoralizing, it's frightening.

Cuts like this don't require belt-tightening. They mean hacking off a limb. Please support full funding for behavioral health services. Oppose cuts that guarantee overburdened emergency rooms and jails. Keep your constituents safe! Petersburg Mental Health Services can help if you give us the means to do our jobs.

Sincerely,

Susan Ohmer, LCSW

Director

PMHS, Inc.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Rebecca Howe <rebeccah@searhc.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:32 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Projected 8.3 million in cuts to BH funding

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank you for taking the time to read this e-mail. I would like to advocate that you reconsider making large cuts to the current Behavioral Health budget. I have worked in Behavioral Health for almost 20 years in Alaska, from prevention to intervention, and realize the importance of providing services to our most vulnerable citizens in Alaska. The services that are currently provided for these citizens throughout the State of Alaska helps them to be productive members within our communities, people who can now maintain employment, raise their families in a more positive fashion and help move our communities forward.

Investing in citizens who are having mental health, substance abuse or other issues and helping them to move forward to the best of their abilities is not only cost effective by reducing the amount spent on institutionalization and emergency room visits, it also helps protect the other citizens in Alaska. As we have seen on the national level with a rise in shootings and other tragedies, when Behavioral Health needs are not met, there can be a very high cost associated with this.

Alaska has the chance to keep moving forward in breaking the cycles that create these issues in our citizens in the first place, which will take a commitment of funding and continued efforts of the Behavioral Health workforce. Thank you for taking the time to consider all sides of this issue.

Rebecca Howe

--  
Rebecca Howe, CDC II, MPH  
Program Manager, Yeil Jeeyax, Raven's Way  
907-966-8719

Recovery:

A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Lorie Morris <akfamilies@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:20 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended an \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. Cuts include but not limited to the following services:

- \* Mental health treatment
- \* Services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- \* Programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

I respectfully request the committee restore these funds. Behavioral Health Services support keeping children and adults with mental illness and substance use disorders at home and in their communities close to family and friends. These programs allow us to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time saving the State of Alaska money by avoiding more expensive, higher levels of care.

### **Financial Impact of the Proposed Cuts for the State of Alaska:**

Ø Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

Ø Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

Thank you in Advance for your consideration,

Lorie Morris, MBA

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Sherry Eckrich <sherryeckrich@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:10 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Funding for Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Cutting funding for behavioral health services is short-sighted and cruel. If the people who most need a safety net are not taken care of, we will pay for it financially later down the road, not to mention the immediate social costs. Please fund behavioral health services fully.

Sherry Eckrich  
18514 Olivia Drive  
Eagle River, AK 99577

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Stopha, Mark E (DFG) <mark.stopha@alaska.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 11:03 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Marine Advisory Program

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear. Rep. Austerman:

I attended the first Alaska Seafood Processor Leadership Institute that the University of Alaska Marine Advisory Program put on. I understand that the Alaska Legislature House Finance Committee is taking up the University of Alaska budget this week, and that MAP is requesting \$50,000 to continue this program, and I support that request. The program gathers Alaskans from around the state processing industries, and provided training in HAACP, marketing, and Human Resources. In addition, our program had attendees from Nome, Unalakleet, King Salmon, Kodiak, Homer, Petersburg, Palmer and Juneau, with attendees ranging from owners of small fish marketing and processing plants, to staff of large processors, as well as an owner of a shellfish farm in Kachemak Bay. All attendees paid for the institute (it cost \$2,500 each when we attended), which covered part of the costs. Of course, one of the real benefits was the sharing of ideas and experiences of people who worked in different sized operations and in different capacities from what I was doing. I think it is a vital program for Alaska residents and will help maintain a progressive processing industry in the state.

Sincerely,

Mark Stopha  
Hatchery Evaluation Biologist  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Commercial Fisheries  
P. 907-465-6152  
F. 907-465-4168  
Mark.Stopha@alaska.gov

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Sandy Solenberger <solenberger1@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:57 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Support for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman:

This letter is to request the restoration of funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels - \$937,500 for Best Beginnings and \$1,042,500 for Parents as Teachers.

My name is Sandy Solenberger and I have lived in Barrow for the past seven years and have served as the volunteer chair of the Steering Committee for the North Slope Imagination Library since its establishment in 2009. We now send a free book each month to about 85% of the children aged 0 through 4 living in the North Slope Borough's seven remote villages and Barrow. I am now in my late sixties and after a lifetime of volunteering I must say that I have never worked on a nonprofit program which was so beloved and appreciated.

If you live in a remote village it is very difficult to get books for your very young children – even if they can fit into your budget. By organizing independent Imagination Library programs around the state, Best Beginnings has enabled young parents to take action to improve the learning environment for their infants, toddlers and preschoolers within their homes. The books which we send out are treasured and read again and again; the children themselves ask repeatedly for them to be read and flourish in the warmth of the interaction with parents and caregivers who are doing the reading. The key to the exceptional success of this program in Alaska has been the ongoing organization and training offered to volunteers by Best Beginnings.

Last year Best Beginnings developed and released a dvd entitled "Babies on Track" with two companion board books. The dvd features babies from many locations in Alaska, including Barrow, and demonstrates to parents and caregivers how to help their baby's brain grow during its critical first few years. Our organization held parties with viewings of Babies on Track in all of the NSB's remote villages and at several locations in Barrow. When I returned to three of those villages last summer, I was amazed to see that I could pick out infants and toddlers whose parents had been exposed to the dvd and had used the board books in interacting with their children. When I gathered the parents and kids for story hours, I had children who crawled across the floor to poke through a stack of books to find the Babies on Track books. One father told me that he was convinced his 8-month daughter would learn to read before she could walk – she was so entranced with books.

Please vote to maintain the previous levels of funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.



Sandy Solenberger, Chair

North Slope Imagination Library

Barrow, Alaska

907-852-9323

Solenberger1@gci.net

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Mary Ver Hoef <mary.verhoef@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:45 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Citizen Input on Proposed State Budget Cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Representatives:

I wanted to write and urge you to NOT enact the severe budget cuts that have been proposed, specifically the \$8.3 million cuts to Health and Social Services.

With the gridlock at the National level, and the Sequester cuts in place, these VITAL social services are already compromised - to hit them with these additional deep cuts at the state level will really hurt Alaska. Whencour residents are not mentally healthy or lacking the emotional and behavior support they need, we ALL suffer. The shootings at Newtown are just one manifestation of some of this kind of unsupported mental health needs.

I am sure none of you want to be responsible in part for any tragedy of this sort.

I would also like to voice my support for two Agricultural programs that you may be considering in the state budget. Please support research for the growing peony industry, and also the very important School Garden and Farm to Table programs. The school garden programs have been highly successful and bring health to the kids involved and the end-product consumers. Seemingly small programs like this can go a long way to developing food security in our Alaskan communities.

Thank you for your work on the State Budget - I urge you again AGAINST DEEP CUTS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES!!!

~Mary Ver Hoef  
3767 Studio Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Dorcas Stein <dstein@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:11 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Cuts to Behavioral Mental Health Budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Legislators:

Like many other concerned Alaskans I too am very concerned about the proposed cuts to the Behavioral Mental Health (BMH) budget. I have seen our current BMH providers in our North Slope region struggle to provide the best services they can with the inadequate budget they have. If there are any further cuts, effective programs will most certainly be eliminated, causing more stress to already overworked staff and more stress to families with relatives with behavioral health problems.

I am particularly concerned that these cuts will affect the Hope Community Services programs in Barrow and other communities in the State. Community members have worked hard the past several years to get a group home established in Barrow and if there are cuts, it may affect this program that was finally becoming a reality.

Please do everything you can to look for cuts elsewhere, but not to the BMH budget. When we have people with good mental health, we have good communities. Thank you for listening.

Dorcas Stein  
PO Box 587  
Barrow, AK 99723  
(907)878-0101 cell

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Mike File <mfile195@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 10:06 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** ADFG cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To Rep. Alan Austerman:

My name is Mike File, I have been comm. fishing in the state of Ak. for over 35 yrs. I have raised my family in Petersburg for the last

18 yrs. I have seen adfg's management style change alot in that time, always in the best interest in the states renewable resource

salmon. Failure to keep funding for aerial surveys and port sampling will devastate the southeast economy! It will at best put

many small operations with a thin bottom line out of business.

As you know stock abundance in streams can change in 24 hours or less, if nobody is keeping track of numbers you can have

a over escapement situation which can be dire for the salmon spawning (overcrowding, lack of water, raising stream temp. all

play into this). If you have a stock die off it can take years, decades for that system to recover. The state of Alaska is known

world wide for it's excellent salmon management always erring on the conservative. I fear that without effective tools to maintain

this practice adfg will have to curtail all salmon fishing to an extreme not having eyes in the sky, or personal in the ports

taking samples.

Alaska has created a market known for its quality and value which A.S.M.I. has helped create. If we don't continue to play

our part the resurgence in farmed salmon could once again plunge our ex-vessel prices literally into the toilet. I went through

a whole decade of that once, I and many others would not make ends meet in this economic climate which is anything but

sure.

The state of Alaska has a law concerning the taking of game, you must not waste any edible part of that animal, it is a crime

if you do! Would allowing poor salmon management practices be any different but in this scenario the crime would be against

the very people sustaining the economy of Alaska.

Thank you for your time.

Mike File

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Mary Corcoran <marycorc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:48 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki  
**Subject:** Best Beginnings Funds  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives,

I sincerely request that you restore funding to at least what Governor Parnell has submitted to Best Beginnings for FY14. I am a Delta Junction grandmother who volunteers for our community's Imagination Library, a non profit affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library that provides (free to families) age appropriate books including suggested activities to children from birth to 5. This consistent introduction and reinforcement to literacy is invaluable to all children and their parents. Our group is run entirely by volunteers and donations. Best Beginnings has been vital in assisting us with startup and continuing the program.

Cutting Best Beginnings will affect our program. Restoring funding will recognize the efforts of scores of people. Send a message of support to our program, its participating children and volunteers, Best Beginnings, and the Dolly Parton national foundation.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely  
Mary Corcoran

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Sandra Hayes <shayes16@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:45 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- *These services affect you personally in that I am a recipient of the services and a peer support specialist. I would be unable to assist clientele that I work with if you cut the funding. Also, I am a senior with co-occurring disorders. To lose service would greatly affect my quality of life. I have been a recipient of services and have gotten better because of it. My daughter is also a recipient of these much needed services.*
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Sandra R. Hayes

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kristopher Staples <KStaples@SEAVIEWSEWARD.ORG>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:39 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Thank you  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee,

Thank you for making some budget cuts, even if they are as tiny as \$100,000 dollars.

I feel, as a mental health provider, and community based provider that a lot of these programs designed to support people are abused. I am tired of seeing it happen in front of my face. I believe that if people are not self-sufficient that are not happy in life.

Because of the temporary short term patches that a lot of community services provide, people become dependent on one patch to the next. It is a crisis management system that does not create independence and growth. This greatly impacts life satisfaction as a demoralizing factor.

I strongly support scaling back social services because it makes people dependent on their victim hood ( as long as they are a victim they get social services).

I simply don't think the Independent Living budge is the social service to take money from. The very purpose of this social services is to buck the trend of system dependence. It gives people independence allows them to grow and develop life satisfaction.

Please reconsider where you decide to cut the budget.

Best wishes, I know that our fate is in good hands.



Keep up the good work, folks!!

Kristopher Staples, MFTT

Behavioral Health Clinician

SeaView Community Services

Phone: 907.224.5251

Fax: 907.224.7081

SeaViewSeward.org

[kstaples@seaviewseward.org](mailto:kstaples@seaviewseward.org)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Laura Lucas <llucas@sailinc.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:40 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Funding for Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am writing in response to the proposed cuts in funding for Behavioral Health Services. As a direct service provider for seniors and persons with disabilities, I believe this direction is shortsighted in respect to the goal of fiscal savings. Behavioral Health Services are guided by the "stitch in time" philosophy. Money spent to help support and educate people at risk while they are in the community prevents exponentially more costly care in our institutions.

The Falls Prevention program is just one simple example: For seniors, falls are the top source of non-fatal hospitalized injuries in Alaska. And falls are expensive: the average hospital bill is \$27,000 and this does not cover a probable nursing home stay for rehabilitation. The impact on caregivers compounds the effect on the economy. Continued support of a program that helps increase public awareness and train both seniors and workers is a sound investment.

This logic is repeated by evidence-based programs throughout the spectrum of community-based services in the State.

**PLEASE DO NOT PERMIT A REDUCTION IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.**

Respectfully  
Laura Lucas LMSW

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Joanne Healy <marshallhealy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:11 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Spend now save in the future

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To the members of the Finance Committee:

In these times of spending cuts it is vital not to cut programs which save money in the long run. Early childhood education is one of the most cost effective programs we have especially for those affected by developmental disabilities (DD) (1 in 6 children is born with a DD). Once they learn a skill they are able to remember it and it makes it easier to learn additional skills. Many students affected by autism (1 in 88 children) have difficulty communicating and understanding social structures, early childhood education is essential for these children. Learning how to function in an educational environment early lays the ground work for students to learn. As a teacher I believe our children are our greatest resource and we need to provide the best education possible to ALL our children. That means fully funding Early Childhood education.

In addition, the cuts to the Traumatic Brain Injury Network would limit their outreach services and trainings. I was lucky enough to attend a training in Juneau last year. I brought that information back to all of my students and made them aware of the resources available. One of my students slipped and fell during our ice storm. She knew she had to see a doctor (even though she thought it was a minor fall), indeed had a concussion and knew she had to rest because of the information I was able to share earlier in the semester. Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) can happen to ANYONE at ANY TIME and unfortunately Alaska is the national leader in TBI. We need to continue to support and train people about TBI, please restore the full funding to this important organization.

The cuts in behavioral health services are also short sighted. They provide the following key services: mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbance, supported housing, peer support services, suicide prevention, tribal behavioral health services, services for seniors with co-occurring disorders, parent and peer navigation, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault, prevention and early intervention, and programs that support reunifying and keeping families together. These services keep our communities supported and without them one would see an increase in punitive practices that are not effective.

Please reconsider these cuts to improve our state's future.

Joanne Healy  
1280 Jones Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709  
907-978-9119

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Cindy Turnbough <cturnbough194@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 9:08 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TESTIMONY FROM CINDY TURNBOUGH/FAIRBANKS  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives,

I am writing you on behalf of those I personally know who receive services that could be cut and for those I do not know.

I try not to write about issues I know nothing about and I have learned there are reasons that are not apparent to myself on why budgets need to be cut in places I cannot understand and yet the fear of losing benefits simply invokes panic which is what is happening now with emails and alarms sounding. As they should be!

I have become friends with folks who receive services from behavioral health and our son works with troubled youth in homes

that receive money from the state. I have been able to hear the beauty of these homes where parents simply open up their lives to five young men or women and they mentor, teach them life skills and prepare them for society. For some, the broken homes and neglect will plague them socially the rest of their lives but this is their final safe haven, these homes. My son has worked there two years now while attending UAF full time. From FAS to abuse and early neglect which could lead to heavy drug abuse risks, these home spend 24/7 shaping lives - and though they have to let them run away by law with proper staffing and people who truly care, hope is offered. Some end up running. I have seen them walking along the road and hanging around downtown by describing the clothing they were wearing. They sleep from house to house. But there are many success stories and lives changed by providing these homes.

Some have severe attention deficit disorder so doing homework each day can be an exhausting challenge. But this is what they do in these homes and these young folks earn reward points or have them taken away. Repetition and this point system work.

If these homes are cut, what will happen to these youth? I cannot answer that but if there are questions you still have before the cuts, please ask. I know your job is not easy.

I write you today on behalf of someone else I know who receives services due to a mental illness that developed at the hands

of family members who cruelly abused her as a little girl. Now she pays dearly with the scars and if she did not have

her counselor to run to on a Monday morning or to call from her home in desperate situations, I fear for her very life. She is a bright and smart woman who gives back to her community, has attended college yet must rely on it's goodness to survive what she never had a choice in as a little girl. She volunteers her time in so many different places in our community. It's difficult for her to get a full time job, transportation and limited bus schedules hinder some jobs she could apply for. Some may say to her just get any job. But they speak from ignorance. I know her and she needs the support and has moved forward only to go two steps back. I know firsthand for I have visited her in the hospital when the depression overcomes her.

Do I know if her services would be cut? No. But I must write just in case - on her behalf. On their behalf.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to share. My heart speaks blindly to the knowledge you have been given these past months for justification for these cuts. I thank you for all you have done for our daughter who has a medicaid waiver - whose disability is so visible. I realize it's not so easy to understand myself the hidden disabilities people live with. I pray you do the right thing. A tough day ahead with testimony. Thank you for taking the time to read this. I am late for work and so I will close now.

Very Sincerely,

Cindy Turnbough  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
There is a JOY in the journey.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** LaDawn Druce <ladawn\_druce@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:43 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson  
**Subject:** Comment on Proposed cuts to state budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing to respectfully ask you not pass the recommended cuts to the state budget which would effect our most valuable and vulnerable resource, our children.

As a mother of three Soldotna High School graduates and a grandmother of a 12 and 2 year old in Anchorage, many of these proposed cuts would have a direct negative impact on our state resources designed to help children. Particularly now with he federal government funding in doubt, these programs are more reliant than ever on state funds. We are fortunate to live in a state with fiscal resources and should not make cuts which would hurt those in the most need.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Sincerely,

LaDawn Druce

P.O. Box 2317

Soldotna, AK 99669

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Art Delaune <adelaune@AccessAlaska.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:40 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Independent Living Center Funding

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Independent Living Centers (CILs) in Alaska are non-institutional, private, non-profit, consumer-controlled, community-based organizations providing services and advocacy by and for seniors and persons with all types of disabilities. The goal of CILs is to assist this vulnerable population to achieve their maximum potential within their families and communities.

Alaska CILs provide people with disabilities and seniors individualized services that are consumer-responsive, cost-effective, and community-based. Alaska CILs served over 4000 Alaskans with disabilities last fiscal year and provided itinerant services to over 45 rural communities last year. Enormous areas of Alaska remain underserved; because of this CILs need more money, not less. CILs that assist rural Alaskans with disabilities and seniors do so on a very limited budget. Considering the distances travelled, the cost of lodging and support to provide IL services "in the bush", the service they provide is substantial, but still falls short of the level needed.

My plea to you is to support CILs and their services by restoring the Governor's \$100K increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor's budget. I am advocating for continued funding for CILs because I am convinced of the great good they provide for our community. I say this as a parent of 2 young men with disabilities needing skills to enter the workforce and have seen how much support my sons have received. I also say this as a son of an elderly parent living independently at Raven's Landing Senior Community because of community based services available in the Fairbanks Community.

Without the support of a CIL, many Alaskans are forced into expensive long-term care away from family or to live dependent and isolated lives. Please don't let that happen in our state; don't let this happen to our seniors and people with disabilities. Please support our effort to restore the Governor's \$100K increment for Independent Living.

Art Delaune

Fairbanks, Alaska

907-479-2838

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Bob Jewell <jewell@ctcak.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 8:30 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Budget cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Representative Austerman,

I am writing to urge you to fully fund both **Behavioral Health** and the **Acquired Traumatic Brain Injury Program**. Both of these programs serve extremely vulnerable children and adults who do not receive support elsewhere.

**The Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury Program** provides access to services, information, advocacy and case management support to those with brain injuries; those whose injuries prevent them from accessing or organizing their own services. Case Management services are a cost effective way to manage care for people who have complex medical and behavioral health needs, reducing inefficiencies in the utilization of public services and prevents further injury and illness. Case Management also assists with access to retraining, employment support and a return to self sufficiency.

The current planned cut to the **Behavioral Health** budget of over 8 million dollars represents a 31% cut in grant dollars to community behavioral health providers. Community behavioral health programs provides services to people who will otherwise not get assistance, many of them children and the seriously mentally ill. These people will not simply stop needing services, they will just have to get them through more expensive methods- the emergency room, inpatient hospitalization, or law enforcement and corrections. In many communities, the behavioral health care provider is the only provider in town-with the potential of leaving entire communities without this necessary service for some of their most vulnerable members.

I understand that money is tight and revenues from traditional sources are down. However, these cuts seem short sighted, costly in the long run and impacting those who can least afford it. I am a Case Manager in a Community Behavioral Health Program; I see these needs every day up close and personal. I have other options for employment. These folks do not have other options for the assistance they need to make it through each day.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,



Barb Jewell

P.O. Box 2173

Cordova Alaska

907-420-3925

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Susan McLane <macsmith869@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:34 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Rep. Bill Stoltze  
**Subject:** Trauma fund

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives Austerman, Stoltze and members of the Finance Committee. As Medical Director of the Emergency Department of South Peninsula Hospital in Homer, I am very interested in 2014 funding for the State Trauma Fund. I have practiced Emergency Medicine in Alaska for 30 years and have witnessed the evolution and improvement in trauma care during that time. Several years ago South Peninsula Hospital went through a very rigorous process to be designated as a Level IV Trauma Facility. We would be glad to forward to the committee the requirements for the designation, however suffice it to say it took a year of preparation and many hours of work by our ER, hospital and Medical Staff. It also required two thorough inspections of our facility and review of our policies. Thanks to that designation we have been recipients of funding that has allowed us to substantially improve our trauma preparedness and delivery of trauma care. The State of Alaska has historically been very supportive of improving medical and trauma care and the in recent years the Trauma Fund has been instrumental in standardizing such care around the state. It would be extremely short sighted to reduce or eliminate such funding at this time. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of any assistance to you in your deliberations. Hal Smith MD, FACEP., 907 235 7073, 299 0327(c).

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** gari@alaska.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 7:01 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Governor Parnell

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please support Governor Parnell's budget for Education and Health and Human Services

Gari Bystedt  
Fairbanks, Alaska

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Ben Endres <benendres@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 06, 2013 1:32 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Public Safety Budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

I'm writing to ask you to support the Governor's public safety budget. In this day of increased domestic violence, school violence, and drug crimes, it is not the time to cut public safety. Alaska State Troopers are spread very thin already. Many communities do not even receive regular patrols by troopers. The citizens of Alaska deserve better. Please support the Governor's public safety budget.

Thank you.

Ben Endres  
PO Box 557  
Glennallen, AK 99588

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Nyia Charest <nyiacharest@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:19 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Honorable Alan Austerman,

It is more viable to allocate funds to Behavioral Health Services than spend \$31,000 per incarcerated person per year. It is imperative that we focus our spending on preventative measures than continue to experience the consequences of what happens when people "fall through the cracks" (i.e. Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook).

Thank you,  
Nyia Charest, LCSW

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Vickie McCubbin <mcc@alaskalife.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:32 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Funding for Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors collaborative

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Representative Austerman,

My name is Vickie McCubbin.

I am writing to all members of the Finance Committee to ask them to fully fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors collaborative at the \$300,000 level. Though you likely do not remember me, or were not on this committee in the past, I have testified on this matter before. It is personally important to me. I have two brothers with Traumatic Brain Injury. Like many other Alaskans with TBI, they acquired their injuries through work related accidents. Their injuries occurred 21 and nearly 7 years ago. Neither of them are able to work and one of them had to travel to the lower 48 for rehab services. Sadly, Alaska does not have facilities to support people with TBI on their road to recovery. They rely on me for assistance with medical appointments, medication reminders, and finances. I am not complaining; they help me in my garden and with other things around the house. We have grown close, but none of our lives have ever been the same. And our family's story is not unique. Alaska has one of the highest rates of TBI in the nation. We have the highest number of veterans per capita of any state and many of these veterans are returning from wars, many of them with mild to serious brain injuries. Fortunately, my husband and I have been able to help my brothers, but at times it has been a difficult learning process and at times I slogged my way through, not knowing how best to help. I know I spent many wasted hours trying to find my way through social service agencies, medical facilities, and government agencies in order to help them.

Thank you for reading my family's story. Please help other Alaskan families by providing full funding. Help them, so through case management families and support services can be better linked, families can have a better understanding of TBI and they can better help the injured individual, so that money can be saved through fewer emergency room visits, so behavior and relearning opportunities of disabled individuals can be better supported and they can fulfill their best potential as Alaskans, hopefully returning to the work force.

I understand you have difficult decisions to make when looking at the budget. I appreciate your efforts in the task you have before you.

Thank you again for considering this important program.

Sincerely,  
Vickie McCubbin  
mcc@alaskalife.net  
District 24, Anchorage, AK

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Carrie Beeman <kcbeeman@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:04 PM  
**Subject:** Restore Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers Funding  
**Attachments:** Carrie Beeman PAT & BB 2013.doc

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Carrie Beeman  
PO Box 808

Tok, AK 99780  
(907) 883-8080

March 5, 2013

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

As a resident of Alaska and a mom, I am writing to ask for you to restore the Governor's funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers in HB65, FY 2014.

I received visits home visit thought the Tok RurAL CAP PAT program until my daughters transitioned into Tok Head Start. I enjoyed these bimonthly times to really focus on my daughters. The Home Visitor brought toys, puzzles, arts & crafts, play dough, books, ETC. and loved me getting down on the floor to play with them. She usually left us with a project or activity to in-between times. There were also the monthly groups socials where I got see my girls interact with other children and I got to meet other parents of young children.

Both of my daughters also loved getting books in the mail each month through the Imagination Library. The first book they received was the Little Engine That Could and the last one was about kindergarten. The biggest gift our family had received from the having these books are the love of reading. In fact, both of my girl's teams came in 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Alaska Gateway School District's Battle of the books: Hannah for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and Holly for kindergarten.

My daughter Holly has been diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis. Speech and language delays have also been identified in approximately 68% of preschool children with this genetic disorder. I believe that Holly is not experienced any learning delays in part because of her access to quality early childhood programs she has had access to here in Tok. Please restore the Governor's funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers.

Sincerely,

Carrie Beeman

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Deb Ward <ward\_deb@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:01 PM  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear State Legislators:

I am concerned that the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended an \$8.3 million reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. As a school psychologist for the Anchorage School District, I have worked in the field of mental health for almost 30 years. I can assure you that mental health needs have increased significantly over time, in both the student and adult populations. I see individuals in need of support on a daily basis in my work.

Cutting funding for community-based services including mental health treatment, substance abuse and detox services, services for youth with severe emotional disturbance, suicide prevention, services related to domestic violence and sexual assault and prevention/early intervention programs will have a significant and negative impact on the well-being of our communities. Prevention and intervention services in the field of behavioral health are already underfunded relative to the need for support. Community safety and quality of life for all Alaska residents is impacted when individuals with serious mental health issues are unable to access the services they require.

Behavioral Health Services support keeps people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities, close to family and friends. Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often, increasing the cost of health care. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to help all Alaskans live meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money. A reduction in funds now will end up costing more in the long-term.

Sincerely,

Deborah Ward, Ed.S., NCSP,

School Psychologist

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Judy <judyrae427@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:48 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Do NOT cut behavioral health services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I have been a behavioral health nurse at a hospital here in Alaska since I arrived 7+ years ago. I have had patients from all over the state. I have had to point out to the insurance companies that we have to do more work inpatient as the patient would have no options once they got home to get the therapy that was needed.

The strain on families and communities for behavioral health issues is enormous and we as a society will pick up much more financially than what your proposed cuts would do. As a very wealthy state (and YES we are) it is unconscionable to not have these services available. Seriously! If there is ANY thought about giving oil companies billions, it is YOUR duty to give it first to the vulnerable citizens of the state who really need it and not some worldwide corporation.

Please do your duty as representatives of the people of Alaska (note that I said people and not corporations).

Sincerely,

Judy Engh, RN

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Eileen Heaston <heastone@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:45 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze  
**Cc:** Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Please do not cut funds to Behavioral Health

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,

I hope you will reconsider the proposed \$8.3 million in cuts to Behavioral Health Services. As a Social Worker who has worked in an institutional like setting and in the community, it is obvious the importance the programs provide to keep individuals in a more familiar, less restrictive setting. The cost to provide supports in the community is less expensive than in an institutional setting such as a nursing home or hospital. Hospitalization is not a long term solution and most larger skilled nursing facilities do not have adequately trained staff to meet the psychological and emotional needs of people with mental illness; therefore, these individuals cycle through hospitals and API at a greater cost financially to the State and the individual possibly exacerbating the illness.

I recently visited with a woman who had lost her son to suicide more than 5 years ago. To this day she mourns the loss of his life and agonized over what could have been done to prevent it. Community supports not only save money, but help prevent the loss of life.

Today I met with a young mother of 2 who is battling severe depression and anxiety. She is working with a local mental health agency in the Mat-Su Valley. If the services were not available, it is possible she would not be able to care for her children thus bringing in OCS involvement and disrupting the family unit. This would greatly impact her small children as well as put an added strain on already overwhelmed child protection department.

It is a shame in the wake of the Newtown shooting and the increased discussion Nationally about access to mental health services that these cuts have even been proposed. Please consider the enormous negative impact these cuts will have on our community.

Thank you for your time,

Eileen Heaston, LCSW

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Patty Mcloughlin <patty99501@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:43 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral health bill

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Alan,

It is a terrible mistake, leading to shortsighted savings with huge long term effects, to cut the behavioral health and mental herb budget. I don't need to elaborate on prevention and early intervention, it is understood by anyone who knows "a stitch in time saves nine". As a nurse practitioner working with teen addicts, I know first hand that the money spent on these children is worth it's weight in gold, cutting down on the myriad of burdens to the society and state as these young people become functioning citizens. Do not cut the budget. It will only shift costs and possibly irreversibly damage lives in the process.

Thanks. Patricia McLoughlin, ANP

Sent from iPhone. Please excuse typing errors.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Nicki Shelton <nicshelt9@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:33 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Parents as Teachers funding

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Co-Chair Austerman,

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today, but it is difficult to convey in 2 minutes how important Parents as Teachers is to Alaskan families with small children under school age.

I was lucky enough to be hired to be the first parent educator when Hoonah began the first Alaskan Parents as Teachers in 1995. It has now been implemented around the state because it is effective! I am currently a National Trainer for Parents as Teachers, and I periodically train new parent educators from across the state.

Parents as Teachers is a **voluntary** home-visiting program for families with children from birth to kindergarten entry. Local residents are trained as parent educators. I have observed phenomenal visits done in Yupik and Tlingit languages with parents who speak those languages at home.

Why Parents as Teachers?...**Because it works for Alaskan families!** The greatest benefits I have seen around the state are:

- **Increased school readiness**
- **Resolving developmental and language delays prior to Kindergarten**
- **Building family strengths for supporting brain development at home**

**All parents want their children to be successful in school.** To enter Kindergarten with the "school readiness skills" for success requires experience during the critical brain development of the first 3 years of life. Parents as Teachers shows families how to provide those experiences with specific parent-child activities that are learned during personal visits. Families continue to practice the activities in the intervals between visits so the skills become permanent learning.

Studies show that children in Parent as Teachers programs are less likely to need Special Education once they enter school. Parent educators conduct consistent screening of developmental skills in young children. Both parents and parent educators observe children's skills on every visit, and weaker areas will be addressed during each subsequent visit. Without Parents as Teachers, many children do not receive developmental screenings until they enter Head Start or Kindergarten. Much critical brain development may have been missed by that time. Of course, villages and smaller communities are critically in need, since local screening is usually not available until Child Find programs after age 3.

**Parents as Teachers is a Win-Win program.** It is a "strengths model" which stresses that parents are the experts of their children, and that **the parents** will determine the specific goals for their family. Parent educators are a resource who offer research-based strategies and options. The parents choose which options are appropriate for their family and circumstances.

Parents as Teachers is based in valid and reliable research and has been named one of the 9 most effective evidence-based home visiting programs eligible for Federal funding through the Federal Home Visiting Initiative. Parents as Teachers National Office received one of the highly coveted "i3 grants," Investing in Innovation, from the US Department of Education to fund tribal grants to provide Parents as Teachers services. Alaska received funding for 2 tribal sites. It is a national model, but a local program which meets the specific needs of the local families.

The No Child Left Behind legislation focused attention on student achievement. At the beginning of the school year, each Alaskan kindergarten teacher assesses every child's skills using the Developmental Profile. The profile includes physical and motor development; approaches to learning; social and emotional development; cognition and general knowledge; as well as communication, language and literacy. **Parents as Teachers children will have skills in all the areas if they have participated in consistent personal visits.** The research indicates two years of Parent as Teachers services is the minimum length for positive child outcomes.

Alaska still has communities with no services for children under Head Start and no access to books for young children. Rather than reducing funding for Parents as Teachers and Best Beginnings, the resources **should be increased** to provide additional Parents as Teachers programs.

I strongly urge the House Finance Committee to pass HB65 with full funding for the Parents as Teachers funding in the Governor's budget. Thank you for accepting testimony on this most important issue.

Sincerely,

Nicki Shelton  
PO Box 101  
Hoonah, AK 99829

(907) 945-3380

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Julie Decker <juliedecker@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:24 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Dennis Egan 'Decker, Julie'  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Support for commercial fishing related budget items  
**Attachments:** Support for funds in ADFG ASMI budgets 030513.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please see the attached letter.

Thank you for consideration,

Julie Decker

P.O. Box 2138

Wrangell, AK 99929

Cell: 907-305-0586

Fax: 907-874-3110

[juliedecker@gci.net](mailto:juliedecker@gci.net)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** donna mills <dwanna420@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:23 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** \$8.3 MILLION REDUCTION TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Alan,

### **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- \* **mental health treatment**
- \* **substance abuse treatment**
- \* **detox services**
- \* **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
- \* **supported housing**
- \* **peer support services**
- \* **suicide prevention**
- \* **tribal behavioral health services**
- \* **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
- \* **parent and peer navigation**
- \* **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
- \* **prevention and early intervention**
- \* **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with

- co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

\*\*\*\*\*

First, I want to say that people whom are using and benefitting from the services are already hurting in one way or another. Besides with all that has gone on in our country the last 10 plus years, there is an even bigger need for the services. There are so many more people, families and children needing these services than ever before in this country. For many it could just temporary and some life long, but if you cut these services the temporary ones will find themselves lost. I believe that if these people don't have support there will be much more crime, abuse, suicides and even homicides.

I personally have used some of these services and without them I can't imagine what would be. I also have a 21 year old son that utilizes some of the services and without them his chances of jail and or suicide are extremely high. The youth is the future of the country!! Please think long and hard before you make your decisions for the cuts. I know our country is in hard times and many will be taking cuts in one way or another, myself included. But with these cuts they will just be all that much more hard, in fact possibly devastated for some!!

Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.

**You can tell a lot from a person, a society, a nation, by how it treats the weak and the helpless: Agree or Disagree?**

Thank you  
Sincerely  
Donna M Mills

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Carrie Macaulay <amac@acsalaska.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 9:09 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker; Sen. Dennis Egan; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Sean.Parnell@alaska.gov  
**Subject:** BSA funding

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,

I attended the Finance Committee hearing today and was signed up to testify regarding education funding, however, time ran out before my name was called to speak, and I was not able to return tonight at 6 p.m. I would like to submit my comments in writing instead. Thank you for your time.

Alaska is the wealthiest state in the nation, yet the funding for the BSA has remained flat since 2009. However, the needs in our schools have continued to grow more complex...from children with severe learning disabilities and special needs, to kids with fragile medical conditions, to students who are living in dysfunctional and even dangerous home environments. Classroom sizes continue to increase, yet our teachers are being asked to serve as counselors, nurses, social workers, behavioral specialists and custodians, all while meeting increasingly higher performance standards. Every year our public schools are being asked to do more with less. The Juneau School District is anticipating cutting 1.7 million from their budget this next fiscal year, following a 4.7 million cut last year.

For my own children, this 1.7 million dollar cut means more students in their classes, so they'll receive less individual attention from their teachers. It means that if a student gets sick in class when there is no nurse on site, the teacher will have to disrupt her lessons to assist that ill child. It means fewer paraeducators in the classrooms, so special needs students will not receive all of the services they are entitled to, placing more demands on the classroom teacher. It means that my 4<sup>th</sup> grader won't get to experience Sea Week although we have access to the most amazing outdoor science lab right here in our city. It means my middle schooler won't get to try a new sport or activity because school activity funding will be cut. It means my high schooler won't be able to get help with his college applications because of cuts to the counseling program.

My children are among the more fortunate in the state. They do not have a serious medical condition, they are not living in poverty, they aren't victims of domestic violence or substance abuse, and they do not have severe learning disabilities. But there are thousands of children in our state who are dealing with these issues every day, and the lack of consistent funding hurts those kids the most...those without a voice. Please consider fully funding the BSA so our state can meet the needs of all of our children...our future.



Thank you for your time.

Carrie Macaulay

Juneau

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** gretchen <gilutsik@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 8:04 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Funding cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget!!**

**Cuts will only hurt Alaskan families and create more debt for the patient, the provider and our state!!**

**Sincerely,**  
**Gretchen Ilutsik**

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Peggy <chickadee@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:53 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Operating Budget - Testimony

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

It seems that the legislature has already spent an inordinate amount of time discussing (and passing) absurd and unconstitutional laws to protect all their poor, vulnerable, gun-toting constituents. Despite this insanity, some agree with the NRA and verbally support the need for a better mental health system to curb gun violence. Our current mental health system is poor and many people go without any services now while those that receive some support get it only intermittently and with virtually no continuity. Because there are so few mental health clinicians available, people seldom see the same professional for any extended period of time. It is very difficult for clinicians to accurately assess whether or not a patient is “doing better” on a certain medication regimen if they did not see the patient prior to the initiation of the regimen.

The proposed budget contains serious reductions in funding for mental health services. There are also significant cuts to pre-K and early education programs that are the most cost effective method of giving children a boost to be successful in school and better able to prosper in a complex and stressful society. Cuts in the educational programs will result in an increased need for mental health and detention services in the future. The system today cannot meet the current needs and certainly will not be able to handle an increased need. Please look at the long term consequences of your decisions and find a way to maintain and improve our current level of services in Health and Social Services.

Peggy O’Neal

Fairbanks

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Fr. John Beyers <pbandj@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:24 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Please put back the \$8.3 million dollars back into the Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Because of the LAMB,  
Fr. John Beyers, MDiv.  
Sent from my iPad

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Joni Stamm <joni.stamm@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 7:00 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** So no to cuts targeting Alaska's most vulnerable

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am a UAA student who is currently working towards my Master's in Social Work. I also work with children and youth who are severely emotionally disturbed. Each day I go to work knowing that for many of the youth I work with, that without having access to services, their dreams of gaining the skills they need to be successful in life, would be severely limited.

With the new proposed cuts regarding behavioral health services for Alaska, I am highly concerned at what the result will be and the lives the cuts are "gambling" with. What will Alaska's communities look like with reduced services and what is the hope for those who will no longer have the services that they need? I am a firm believer in people taking responsibility for themselves, in "pulling themselves up by their bootstraps," on striving towards the "American dream." I do however, also recognize that due to difficulties, this is more difficult for some. Hence, I am also a firm believer that for those of us who are able and capable of initiating or aiding in providing support to others, whether it be financially or directly, that this is our ethical responsibility.

I know these are tough times with hard decisions to be made.

Please continue to support Alaska's most vulnerable by ensuring that they receive the services they need to have a good quality of life.

Respectfully,  
Joni Stamm

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Richard Tews <Richard\_Tews@ykhc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:54 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Cc:** Rose Domnick  
**Subject:** Reduced funding for Behavioral Health Programs.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5/2013

Bethel, Alaska

### **TO: HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Thank you for considering my testimony. It is a pleasure to share my concerns for continued funding for programs such as the Bethel Sobering Center.

My name is Richard Tews. I am Program Manager for the Bethel Sobering Center. Two years ago I was hired to design and implement the Sobering Center Program. I've seen it grow from a concept and a building to a program with professional staff providing 24/7 care of intoxicated individuals.

The Sobering Center Program is a joint effort with the Bethel Police Department and the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation. The concept was three-fold: to relieve the chaos and congestion in the Regional Hospital Emergency Department, reduce the Protective Custody census in the already over-crowded Yukon Kuskokwim Correctional Center and to prevent deaths and injuries to a vulnerable segment of the community.

The Program has been successful in accomplishing those goals:

The alcohol related census at the Emergency Department is reduced by 60%,

The Correctional Center Protective Custody census is reduced 84% and

150 sleep-off services are provided each month.

From my personal view, the program is important on several levels:

Safety- the clients we serve are kept safe from the weather and the victimization.

Community safety- intoxicated people are uncomfortable for the public. Inebriated people are often involved in confrontations and illegal activities that they would not normally commit.

Engagement and education- we have a unique opportunity to engage those that are using alcohol at high risk levels in a conversation about those risks and educate them on ways to lessen those risks.

From a pragmatic view the program is a cost savings to the community and state.

Reducing the alcohol related census in the Emergency Department frees providers and staff to treat patients more quickly and with greater satisfaction- both for the patient and staff.

Reducing the Protective Custody census in the Correctional Center reduces the needs for more staffing.

Preventative care and education delivered directly to those that are vulnerable.

Victimization and exposure are costly to mend. The Sobering Center is a preventative measure that goes beyond the “drunk tank” model by helping people see that they have a choice in how they live. Recent studies of the SBIRT protocols the Sobering Center utilizes show that for every dollar invested in the program, there are four dollars in return in more effective health achieved.

Finally, the Sobering Center program is a major shift in thinking for our community. Punishing publically intoxicated people hasn't worked. We've realized that these are our friends and family and we don't want to throw them away by sending them to jail. Providing a safe and respectful alternative is the first step in caring for a difficult and vulnerable segment of our community.

I think our community has taken the next step by establishing the Bethel Homeless Coalition. We conducted our first Point in Time survey. Our January survey identified 100 individuals in our community that were homeless or in imperiled housing.

I urge you to continue funding Behavioral Health programs such as the Sobering Center. These programs make our communities safer and our citizens healthier.

Thank you for your considerations.

Richard Tews

Program Manager

Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation

Richard (Rusty) Tews

YKHC Sobering Center Manager

Office hours: Monday through Friday 9am-5pm

Cell 907 545 5811

Office 907 543 6831

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**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Trevor Storrs <trevor@snowgod.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 6:23 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health Cuts  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives,

It is extremely alarming to see \$8.3 million in potential cuts to Behavioral Health services. Alaska is continually struggling with some of the highest statistics in the nation regarding suicide, substance abuse and mental illness. Without a true investment in these issues, Alaska will continue to see this trend increasing and our state disintegrate.

These services help ensure these individuals receive the support need to remain at home and in their community. Without these supports, these individuals find themselves living on the streets and ultimately costing our state more. The level of investment being asked of the state is small compared to the return on the dollar.

I strongly encourage you to re-examine your suggested cuts and to truly invest in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Trevor Storrs

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Judy Farnham <cranberry@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:46 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Social Services 20% cut  
**Attachments:** To all concerned -State of Alaska.docx

**Importance:** High

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please read attachment.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Steven Fields <feagles@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:43 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** \$8.3 million reduction to CRITICAL Behavioral Health Services  
**Importance:** High  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you all with regards to the proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services.

I was introduced to the behavioral health field in September 2007 when started work at Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. (JAMHI) in an administrative support capacity.

JAMHI is a NON-profit state designated community behavioral health center in Juneau. All clients are accepted for services regardless of ability to pay for services.

I served as the Chief Operations Officer (COO) for JAMHI until Feb. 1st. 2013. I have moved to Anchorage and am now not in the behavioral health field.

During the five and a half years that I spent at JAMHI, a gained intimate knowledge and firsthand experience with regards to vulnerability and needs of the population that we serve.

The **reality** of the situation is that the need for behavioral health services has not ever been greater.

From 2007 to 2012 JAMHI had an increase of 40% with regards to the number of clients served per year.

Please note that from the Census completed for 2010 documented that there was only a 1.8% increase in population from the Census conducted in 2000.

With a population increase of only 1.8% as compared to a client count increase of 40%, it is very clear that the need for services is justified.

JAMHI has only been able to successfully serve this rapid growing population due to having stable funding sources at its disposal. A part of JAMHI's stable funding sources is the state grant.

The grant that would be slashed as part of this reduction is absolutely critical at its current amount for JAMHI to continually serving the ever growing population needs. Any significant decrease of this funding would severely harm JAMHI's ability to continue to provide services. This funding is even more **critical** as it relates to the governor's decision not to expand Medicaid.

Please see the following link: <http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/20130228/parnell-refuses-federal-money-expand-medicaid-alaska>.

If this state grant amount is reduced, the following situations **WILL** happen and the costs for these situations **WILL** increase:

- Increased emergency room visits for mental health reasons
- Increased inpatient hospital commitments (both voluntary and involuntary)
- Increased crime/incarceration of clients suffering from mental health symptoms
- Increased homelessness
- Increased domestic violence incidents

These are issues that JAMHI has been successful in preventing and reducing from happening through the provision of services.

In my opinion, these new costs that will be created will exceed the \$8.3 million that is being cut.

The costs would be realized in other areas such law enforcement, hospital services, corrections, judicial system, etc.

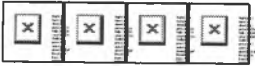
Currently, JAMHI is involved in is the APIC program (reintegration of inmates into society through mental health services) with the State of Alaska and with the Therapeutic Court (Mental Health Court) in Juneau which is a jail diversion program. If you know about these programs or would take the time to look at them, you all will be able to realize the importance of the services that JAMHI is providing and that these services would be reduced.

I implore all of you to please take into consideration my enclosed "testimony" and to make the **RIGHT** decision not to cut behavioral health services.

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Steven Fields



## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Karen Stout <quality.assurance@voaak.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:23 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services- Funding  
**Importance:** High  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. It is my strong belief that this would have an extremely negative impact for all Alaskan's by ultimately lessening of services available to them. Please take the following into consideration before any reduction in funding programs and services that are currently providing these vital services. This doesn't just affect one area in Alaska, as the effects would be across Alaska as a whole. Thank-you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

- Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.
- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.
- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.

· Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.

· For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.<sup>1</sup>

Sincerely,

Karen Stout, CPC

Volunteers of America

Director of Compliance

[quality.assurance@voaak.org](mailto:quality.assurance@voaak.org)

(907) 279-9683

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Ernie Manzie <erniemanzie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:10 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health Grants

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am writing with concerns regarding the proposal by the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee to cut 8.3 million dollars from behavioral health grants.

I have had the opportunity in my 30+ years in Alaska to have been a teacher, principal, district superintendent and currently I work for Family Centered Services of Alaska as the Director of Educational Programs at the residential psychiatric treatment center in Fairbanks. I also am a member of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and Special Education. During my years of service in Alaska I have seen firsthand the benefit that quality behavioral health programs have made in the lives of children. I believe this proposed cut will have significant negative effects on individuals who receive the direct services and their family. There will also undoubtedly be negative effects felt throughout communities in Alaska.

Organizations that address behavioral health concerns in this state have had flat or decreased funding over the past several years. This is due to both an increase in the number of individuals needing services and the ever increasing demands from the federal level. Simply put these organizations have continued to do more with less

If these cuts do take effect many programs that are able to serve individuals in their community will be cut. Without community supports, people with various disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care such as jail, psychiatric institutions and nursing homes. In addition without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care again leading to increased costs. Behavioral health services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-

occurring disorders at home and in their communities close to family and friends. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives at the same time we are saving money.

I appreciate your assistance in helping to reinstate the proposed cuts into the house budget.

Sincerely

Ernie Manzie, Director of Educational Services

Family Centered Services of Alaska

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kathy O'Rear <clerk@ci.petersburg.ak.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Lyman Hoffman  
**Cc:** 'Ray Matiashowski'  
**Subject:** House Subcommittee Proposed FY14 ADFG Budget  
**Attachments:** House Subcommittee Proposed FY14 ADFG Budget.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

*Kathy O'Rear, MMC*

Clerk

Petersburg Borough

907-772-4519 ext 23



*PUBLIC RECORDS LAW DISCLOSURE: This e-mail and responses to this email are subject to provisions of the Alaska Statutes and may be made available to the public upon request.*

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Vicki Blankenship <vicki.blank00@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 5:01 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Please No Cuts to Behavioral Health Grants

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

### Dear Representative Austerman:

I am emailing you in regard to my concerns on the \$8.3 million recommended cuts to behavioral health grants proposed by the House Health & Social Services Finance Subcommittee.

I have worked in the mental health field for over 25 years in Alaska. I truly believe this cut would result in harm to children and families. In the long run, it will result in higher costs to the citizens of Alaska in many ways and through many other venues.

As you may know, grant funding for many providers has remained flat or decreased over the last decade. Behavioral health organizations have been struggling financially for some time. This in large part is due to the increase in the need for services occurring, simply from the population growth in the State and the continuing increase in Federal and State oversight demands that have required the redirection of provider resources. A cut this large would certainly affect the providers and the children and families in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter. I hope you will consider not making any cuts to the house budget for behavioral health grants.

-Vicki Blankenship

[Vicki.blank00@gmail.com](mailto:vicki.blank00@gmail.com)

907-479-9511

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Marita Waddell <maritawaddell@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:39 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Cc:** advocacy.coordinator@mhtrust.org; cpedone@accessalaska.org  
**Subject:** Proposed \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Sir:

I ask that you consider the potentially negative consequences of the proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services.

When a citizen of our community faces Behavioral Health issues; often the loss of place, as a contributing member, is the greater threat to recovery than the mental health issues themselves. When familiar and societal support is withheld, in effect a silent and unacknowledged shunning takes place. The essential human need for kinship is forsworn.

Kinship, place, contribution, accountability, self-sufficiency, and a sense of well being within the community, these are the structures that build mental wellness.

Many Alaskans, myself included, are stuck in the "mental health care system", because rehabilitation (training, coaching, Assistive Technology, and other accommodations that make it possible to reclaim self-sufficiency through employment) are not available, so rather than contributing, we place a further drain on the funds available for services.

May kindness guide your decisions. Please support maintaining the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health Social Services budget.

Sincerely,

Marita Waddell  
[maritawaddell@gmail.com](mailto:maritawaddell@gmail.com)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Judith Jessen <jsjessen2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:38 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Mental Health Cuts  
**Attachments:** Letter to my Representatives.docx  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To my state representatives,

Attached is a letter outlining my concerns about the proposed cut to critical mental health funding that undermines the Alaskan spirit, undermines Alaskan Communities, and devalues vulnerable Alaskans. Thank you for taking the time to read and to hear my concerns. I apologize that I was unable to make the local commentary due to commitments at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.

Sincerely,  
Judith Jessen

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** pamela Kennedy <pkennedy546@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:27 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Please do not cut budgets in the Department of Health and Social Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget

Statewide Community based behavioral health services are the low-cost – high-value option

Current Medicaid rates and grant levels are not enough to maintain current levels of service, much less enough to expand to fit the need particularly with ever increasing administrative requirements.

Community mental health

-reduces the number of “frequent flyers” who cycle in and out of jail or inpatient psychiatric care such as API

-Assists people in achieving **RECOVERY**-reconnecting with families, staying in school, gaining employment, community involvement, living lives of purpose

Therefore, support community behavioral health-it is funding well spent.

Sincerely, Pamela

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Gloria Benson <gbenson@ytttribe.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:13 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Mental Health Services in jeopardy?

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Mr. Austerman,

Thank you for being our representative. We met in Yakutat when you came by in December we sat down and visited at our local coffee house. I hope you still remember. We discussed our radio station implementation and funding.

Three weeks ago I went to your office as part of the Alaska Food Coalition organization. We continue to be concerned about high prices of food the way we receive our food along with food security issues for small communities. In our last Tsunami warning we realized we do not have enough food to last more than 2-3 days maximum.

Recently it has come to my attention that **8.3 million** for the State of Alaska could be compromised in Behavioral Health Services. The reason for my concern in this area is for five years now I have been the project coordinator for a SAMHSA grant through the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. We do our best to work in our community through a coalition and through a memorandum of agreement to have a Masters Level mental health specialist come to our community. I recently finished the Rural Human Service program through UAF which focuses on improving the quality of service to small rural communities. I along with 13 other students from rural areas in Alaska attended these classes leaving our community for two weeks at a time over 24 months. We learned about so many issues facing rural Alaska including addictions, mental health and recovery. These areas also included: Fairbanks, Juneau, and Sitka.

We know that *without the services of Behavioral health* we will be lacking support in :

- Mental Health disorders, substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

- Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Yakutat and all of Alaska desperately need their services. Please speak up for us during the next two days of legislative sessions.

Thank you!!

Gloria A. Benson

Project Coordinator

Yakutat Healthy Community Coalition YTT

BBBS Community Contact

Akeela CPO

Yakutat, Alaska 99689

907-784-3368

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Mary C. Burtness <mary.burtness@k12northstar.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:00 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** farm to school

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

We have had a farm to school program at Hunter Elementary here in Fairbanks, Alaska for the last 6 years. It is amazing to see the change in diet of many children and families due to our small garden. It has also been a great source for "in school field trips" and learning where our food comes from. It is a worthwhile project that probably reaps more benefits than the aid to large agricultural corporations in terms of bang for your buck.

It is a long term investment in the health and well being of our nation.

Please do not cut the funding.

--

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

Mary C. Burtness  
Preschool Special Education  
Hunter Elementary School  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
(907) 978-1824 (cell while on sabbatical)  
456-5775 ext 149

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Tari Stage-Harvey <stageharvey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 4:00 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** HB 65  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thank you all for putting in long days especially with the amazing weather. I was not able to testify today, but wanted to speak in favor of increasing the Student Base Allocation, Pre-K funding, and restoring behavioral health funding. Thank you for serving the public and wrestling with many difficult decisions.

I am Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church and parent speaking to increase the Base Student Allocation, funding for Pre-K programs and restored funding for behavioral health. Regular increases in BSA allow schools to plan for the future without the crisis and tension every spring. We have lost some good teachers because they are tired of the uncertainty. Public education is the foundation of our democracy. It is still one of the few places where people from a wide mix of backgrounds gather together to learn together.

I encourage funding of Pre-K programs. In Michigan, where we moved from many years ago and a state that was in great financial trauma, they still had the wisdom to recognize that early preschool programs from 6 months to 4 years old paid off in the long run by reducing prison populations and drop out rates. I saw as a pastor what a huge impact it had on entire families, as little ones learned their parents also received in home visits.

I also want to speak to restoring the funding for behavioral health.

There are so many mentally ill people looking for services and right now when people show up at the church who are severely mentally ill I can contact NAMI and make sure they get the help they need. If you cut services to assist the mentally ill, then I can guarantee that you will need to increase funding for emergency rooms and prisons.

I thank you for your consideration and the tough job that you have ahead of you, but when Jesus says to care for the least of these, children and people with a mental illness should be at the top of the list.

Peace  
Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Velvet Ivers <velveti@yakutatschools.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:57 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Representative.Bill.Stolze@akleg.gov; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Representative.David.Guttenber@akleg.gov; Representative.Tammie.Wilson@ak.leg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Mike Hawker  
**Subject:** SBA for Rural Schools  
**Attachments:** YSD letter.pdf  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To the Honorable Alaska State Representatives,

Attached you will find my letter, addressing Rural School issues.

Thank you for your consideration,

Velvet Ivers  
YSD 4th/5th grade

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Leon Hickok <Hickok@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:56 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Fund Education

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

It's time to put education at the top of the list. That is what built America and it can do it again if we just put the resources into improving the system.

Please pass the education funding increase.

Leon Hickok

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Jeanne Kitayama <jkitayama@hbsd.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:43 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** early childhood support on HB65

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

My name is Jeanne Kitayama. I am speaking as an elementary grade teacher and director of the Children's Reading Foundation of Haines in support of funding for Best Beginnings, Parents As Teachers, and pre-school programs.

My point today is to draw your attention to research that shows that investing in early childhood education is a fiscally responsible way to reduce costs and create economic growth. Just before this teleconference I was on the internet and you'd be surprised to see how very much research there is that points to investment in early childhood education as having the greatest return on human capital – the dividends are impressive.

Many people are turning to James Heckman a Professor of Economics at The University of Chicago, a Nobel Memorial Prize winner in Economics, and an expert in the economics of human development. His groundbreaking work shows that early childhood development heavily influences health, economic and social outcomes for individuals and society. It's a matter of foresight, planning for the future.

Brain development is at a steep upward incline during the first 4 years of life, then levels off quite dramatically to a much more gradual growth. 85% of children's core brain structure is developed by the age of 4. The brain charts align that earliest is prime. These are the prime years to build children's literate and social skills.

These are early childhood, pre-reading skills – talking, singing, reading, with children to expand their vocabularies and social skills. These are the skills they need so that by the time they enter kindergarten they are ready and eager to learn.

I urge you to use *your* foresight to support early childhood education for a healthy future for all of us. Thank you.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kerry Turnbow <kturnbow@accessalaska.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:43 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Funding needs.....

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members,

I am writing to advocate for the ratification of three specific funding sources:

**1. \$300,000 Funding for the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program:** As the director of the program here at Access Alaska, I have personally observed how our case management program has impacted approximately 100 Alaskans diagnosed with an acquired or traumatic brain injury. The funding we have received has been utilized to support these individuals to live productive and independent lives which saves the state several thousands of dollars spent in more expensive institutional settings. Fully funding the program will allow for much broader expansion of the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program thus serving more Alaskans diagnosed with TABIs.

**2. \$100,000 for IL rural outreach:** Having been personally involved in Access Alaska's work in the Barrow region and other regions across the state, I have seen the vast need that exists for IL services. Please keep the \$100,000 in the budget to support rural outreach for IL service expansion into very needy remote areas across the state of Alaska.

**3. \$8.3 million proposed cuts to the Division of Behavioral Health budget:** Having worked in the mental health field for many years in Alaska, I have seen firsthand the need for mental health supportive services in a wide variety of context. From outpatient to residential care which includes substance abuse treatment, the need for mental health services is well documented. Taking \$8.3 million from the budget will only exasperate the cost of covering mental health services for the population that needs them the most: low income families and individuals. Speaking from the standpoint of Access Alaska's Wellness Program (our mental health case management program) receiving DBH funding allows us to provide case management to people coming out of programs like: API and the Anchorage Mental Health Court to help folks with severe mental health diagnosis to live outside of institutions that typically have significantly higher costs.

I trust the committee, upon hearing public testimony and reading all the emails you receive, will consider the needs of vulnerable Alaskans and do what is the morally right thing by keeping the original funding proposals in place. Keeping the needed funding sources in place will insure that programs in place can continue and new programs can be expanded and/or developed assisting our most precious state resource: people.

Sincerely,

Kerry L. Turnbow, D. Min.

Director of Operations



121 West Fireweed, Suite 105

Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2043

907.248.4777 Fax:907.248.0639

**Access Alaska is Moving To Its New Location on March 25, 2013**

1217 East 10th Ave

Anchorage AK 99501

Corner of 10th and LaTouche

(the former Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** j r <icecrystal71@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:28 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral health servies

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am writing to urge you to vote AGAINST the reduction to behavioral health services.

Fairbanks needs MORE services especially for those who are injured in accidents causing Traumatic Brain Injury – there are very few resources here in Fairbanks available to families.

Peter and I had just gotten engaged, had not told anyone yet – and then Peter was driving home to his children February 3, 2011, he lost control of his truck on the icy roads. His truck rolled down the embankment – the ensuing scramble of contacting people and having Peter medevaced to Anchorage, not knowing if he would survive and the trauma that causes family members – The four months he spent in Anchorage trying to survive and then being released back to Fairbanks with Nothing, no help, no referral to doctors, no help what so ever. . I called and told doctors of Peters Traumatic Brain Injury and no one would help us, not even to monitor his progress especially since he had children. Finally out of desperation, I called Fairbanks memorial Hospital and talked to their emergency room social worker to even get ANY doctor to take Peter on as a client, she finally had a referral to Tanana valley clinic.

We connected with ACCESS Alaska for help processing Peter’s disability paperwork for Social Security, but their resources were limited to their knowledge and there was no precedence for a disabled father of two children – there was no help what so ever for families. We attended TBI support group which helps Peter know that he is not alone, although he is the only person with small children. Peter almost lost his children to his ex-wife as before the accident they had 50/50 custody of the children. There was no help. No one should ever have to worry about losing custody of their children because of an accident and the ensuing legal issues along with a very expensive debt because of the accident. Peter is 100% disabled due to the injury, but he is making progress!

Peter and I married 6 months after his accident, his injury is difficult through his aphasia, but he is kind and wonderful – his determination and positive attitude are what is keeping us going through the hard spells. Alaska Center for Children and Adults (ACCA) has a speech therapy clinic that started in 2011 for Adults and they are working with us to provide Peter valuable and much needed therapy that we would not be able to afford otherwise.

This has been traumatic on our family and now that Peter is receiving some of the help he needs to try and recover as much as possible, you are taking away some of the funding that is so richly needed in the interior. There are no resources available here in Fairbanks that help children deal with the stress trauma of having a loved father, unless you have financial resources there is no help.

I urge you to please vote against this, there has to be other ways to cut expenses without taking away the already small resources for families.

I never want another family to come back to Fairbanks the way I brought Peter back and the ongoing stress that having little to no resources or places to turn to for help.

Please don’t take away the funding -

I thank you in advance for looking to other areas to reduce funding

## **Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Crystal Parrilla <Crystal@ayfn.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:11 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services  
**Attachments:** Rep Alan Austerman letter.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Crystal Parrilla**

**740 Communication Avenue**

**Anchorage, AK 99503**

**3/5/2013**

**Representative Alan Austerman**

**State Capitol, Room 204**

**Juneau, AK 99801**

**Dear Representative Austerman,**

**As a peer support worker I would like to see the budget remain the same, cutting out \$8.3 million dollars will affect many people within the community. Substance abuse services, supported housing, and mental health services help many people in the community avoid being sent to jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. As a peer navigator I help a lot of people stay stable and find resources within the community to help them become or remain a healthy, contributing member of our Alaskan community.**

**Acute services cost about 2 – 5 times more to provide to a person than community supports cost. Behavioral Health Services provide community supports which help “level the playing field” for people with mental illness. Community supports also allow a person to recover or feel apart of society which helps promote wellness. When a person feels that they are a part of a bigger group or community they can often times contribute in a healthy and positive way, from volunteering to even getting back into the work force. By promoting people to stay in the community and get well so they can get jobs they can also contribute to the economy creating a stronger economy.**

As a youth I needed community supports so that I could become stable and well enough to accomplish getting a job and getting into college so I can someday move up with my job. I have personally used peer support, wrap around services including therapy, case management, and support groups. Without these community supports I would have probably ended up just as a statistic and in acute psychiatric care or worse in jail. I would like to see other youth and adults continue to have access to these supports so that they can succeed and work towards their goals in life as well. I am now a peer support worker and I see a lot of potential in my clients that I work with everyday as they learn to manage their mental illness and work toward their goals becoming a more contributing member of society. Please do not cut the budget for mental health services. These are important and help everyone within the community not just those with mental illness. Thank you for your time and considering my request.

Sincerely,

**Crystal Parrilla**

**Crystal Parrilla**

**Peer Navigator**

*Phone: 907-770-4979*

*Cell: 907-748-5389*

*Fax: 907-770-4997*

*crystal@ayfn.org*

*YouthMoveAlaska@facebook.com*

*www.facebook.com/YouthMoveAlaska*

*740 Communications Ave*

*Anchorage, AK 99503*

*www.ayfn.org*

*www.facebook.com/ayfn.org*

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** carolyn kinneen <ckinneen@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:09 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman  
**Subject:** farm to schools program support

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi,

The Farm to Schools program is important to me as a mother, an Alaskan and someone who works with the Alaskan Food Supply.

Please reinstate the funding for this programs fourth year. It really impacts local economies, food security for our state and the health of our children -- and the way they view their state.

Thanks!

Carolyn Kinneen

Carolyn Kinneen  
1133 M Court Anchorage AK 99501  
SnowGlobe LLC  
907 227-8422  
[www.fresh49.com](http://www.fresh49.com)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Rep. Les Gara  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 3:06 PM  
**To:** robin allen; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson  
**Subject:** RE: Trauma Care Fund  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hi Robin-

I share your concerns and will try to build the support for those items in the budget. The Republican-led caucus members hold a 9-2 majority on the Finance committee, so thanks for your help convincing Operating Budget Chair [Alan Austerman](#), and majority members [Munoz](#), [Neuman](#), [Thompson](#), [Stolze](#), [Edgmon](#), [Holmes](#) and [T. Wilson](#).

Thanks. Les

P.S. – Here is a [link](#) to my e-news highlighting some problems in the budget, and you're encouraged, if you'd like, to sign up for our **Legislative E-news** so we can keep you up to date on important legislative issues where your voice may be needed (just reply that you'd like that).

Also, please note that letters to the editor often work better than letters to legislators – as they are read by thousands of voters. If you write a letter to the editor to the Anchorage Daily news, they should go to [letters@adn.com](mailto:letters@adn.com), and have a strict 175 word limit.

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**From:** robin allen [mailto:dave\_robin1@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:57 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson  
**Subject:** Trauma Care Fund

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that you will please consider the need for funding the State of Alaska Trauma System. As a life long Alaskan, I have seen the vast improvement in the quality and availability of medical care for the injured Alaskan. Our Trauma System has allowed the growth of a standardized system of Trauma care and transportation of the injured Alaskan to highest level of care. Our regional hospitals and clinics have increased their level of education, certification, and training of all staff. The Trauma Care Fund has provided this training and education beginning at the pre-hospital level up to Advanced Trauma Care for physicians and nurses. The Trauma Care Fund has allowed this training to be done on the local level for many of the rural hospitals and clinics. This increases the quality of care for all Alaskans.

The implementation of a Trauma System in the State of Alaska has provided a system by which data can be accurately gathered and analyzed to provide process improvement in all areas of Trauma care. It has been well

established, that when States have Trauma systems in place it improves over all care of the patient, not just in Trauma, but in all areas of care.

The Iditarod is a wonderful piece of medical history for our Great State and an example of the Alaskan "can do" attitude. Please lets continue to move forward and provide the best possible medical care for all Alaskans.

**CONTINUE ALL FUNDING FOR THE TRAUMA CARE FUND!!!!**

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Robin Allen

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Cara Rodgveller <cara.rodgveller@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; ep.steve.thompson@akleg.gov; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Cc:** Cara Rodgveller  
**Subject:** Do NOT cut funding for Behavioral and Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am strongly opposed to cutting funds for Behavioral and Health Services. A lack of these support systems put people of all ages at risk for suicide, jail time, and a lower quality of life. Besides affecting individuals, it affects the community negatively by creating a less safe environment, and increases the costs to the state associated with jails, prisons, nursing homes, and mental institutions.

I find it ironic and offensive that the Governor publicly claims he is for suicide prevention in Alaska, yet cuts programs for suicide prevention or programs that reduce suicide, such as substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment.

Cara Rodgveller, Juneau, AK

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Celeste Bennett <Celeste@ayfn.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Amber Hampton  
**Subject:** \$8.3 million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

I am a functional member of society today thanks to my community behavioral health supports.

I pay taxes. I do not receive public assistance. I have co-occurring diagnoses that I was told would leave me incapable of recovery. Thanks to my community behavioral health supports (Alaska Youth and Family Network in particular) I am living recovery. I have a happy, healthy family thanks to the help I received from community supports.

I am a domestic violence survivor. I've been diagnosed with Bi-Polar disorder, PTSD, ADD, and Alcoholism. I have been hospitalized twice due to complications arising from these diagnoses. I tried to kill myself in 2007. I couldn't leave my apartment most of the time. If it wasn't for the help I received from my community behavioral health services I might be dead.

It is a travesty that it is even considerable to reduce spending in the area behavioral health.

Thank You,

Celeste L. Bennett

Administrative Coordinator

Alaska Youth and Family Network

Main Office: 907-770-4979

Fax: 907-770-4997

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Thomas Woodward <[twoodward@pchsak.org](mailto:twoodward@pchsak.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:47 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Reduction in general fund for Behavioral Health

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Representative Austerman,

I work with many Adult clients who use mental health services at Cottonwood Behavioral Health in Soldotna. I am a Mental Health Clinician but I work with many colleagues who do rehabilitation work with very low income mental health clients. All of the services we provide help keep these clients stable and in recovery mode. Without these services I can tell you from my experience that many clients will end up in jail, the local hospital emergency department, Alaska Psychiatric Institute or more dependent on public assistance.

Because of this I would urge you to reject the recommendation of the Behavioral Health Subcommittee to reduce the general fund for behavioral health by 8,368,800 dollars. Thank you for your consideration.

Tom Woodward, MA - Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

Cottonwood Behavioral Health

Peninsula Community Health Services

230 E. Marydale, Suite 2

Soldotna, AK 99669

907-260-3691

fax 907-260-3697

[twoodward@pchsak.org](mailto:twoodward@pchsak.org)

[www.pchsak.org](http://www.pchsak.org)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Helen Kalk <Helen.Kalk@ccsjuneau.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:47 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** proposed cut to Behavioral Health Budget  
**Attachments:** letter to Rep. Alan Austerman.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please see my attached comments regarding the proposed cuts to the Behavioral Health Budget. Thank you for your attention.

Helen A. Kalk

Helen A. Kalk, Program Director  
Child Care and Family Resources  
Catholic Community Service  
419 6th St.  
Juneau, AK 99801  
907-463-6183 direct line  
907-586-9018 fax  
907-463-6180 main line(FRC)  
907-790-1829 fax(FRC)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** susan jabal <susanjabal@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:43 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Young children's programs

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am writing to indicate my preference for restoring funding for Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers to the governor's proposed funding levels.

My 18 month old son is a participant for the Parents as Teachers program and we so appreciate all that this program does for him, our other son, and our family. We are enveloped in individualized support as we struggle with speech impairments and the general challenges of having 2 young children.

In our continued interactions with other families in our community, it is so clear the importance of these early years as the building blocks to our children's future. By providing these types of services early, children and families are set up for the greatest of successes in their future, and they may avoid more costly service needs later.

Please restore the funding to these critical programs, and keep prevention based programs a priority for our children.

Thank you -

Susan Jabal  
Juneau, AK  
Susanjabal@gmail.com

Sent from my iPad

Sent from my iPad

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Jana walette <archintake@mtaonline.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:27 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** BHS Budget Cuts  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am asking for your help to **stop** The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services from recommending an 8.3 million reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These programs are very much needed in our community.

Thanks for your support.

Jana Walette, Intake Coordinator & UR Specialist

Volunteers of America, ARCH

(907) 689-1501 direct number

(907) 694-3336 main number



## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Jill Hodges <jill@alaskabraininjury.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg  
**Subject:** House Finance Testimony  
**Attachments:** March5\_JH.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Jill Hodges

1581 Nelchina Street, A#3

Anchorage, AK 99501

March 5, 2013

House Finance Committee Members

Alaska State Legislature

Dear House Finance Committee members:

For the record my name is Jill Hodges. 10 years ago, I earned my Business Degree and moved to Alaska. My family also moved north. Today, my dad and brother work on the North Slope. My mom is a teacher. My sister owns a BBQ business. Another brother is a firefighter. My boyfriend is an arctic engineer.

I was raised with a spirit of "work hard and smart and you can accomplish anything." I took on that spirit and made myself into a Division 1 athlete, class valedictorian, and student-athlete of the year. Sounds like a pretty balanced kid. Well, little did anyone know that despite my success, I was battling depression, I tortured myself with binge eating and obsessive exercise, and I sometimes had thoughts of killing myself. Mostly I was angry, successful people are supposed to be happy. Finally when I went away to college, I found the courage to seek mental health services, and I learned to respect myself. Four years later, life sent me a phone call. My younger brother was sitting in the hospital in a coma. He had suffered a traumatic brain injury.

I have spent the last eight years immersing myself in TBI best-practice care and services offered across the country. My brother's injury happened in California where resources exist. The neurosurgeon kept my brother alive and minimized the damage. My mom found a rehabilitation program. We still get a phone call from the case manager. My parents could have gone broke with medical expenses (and drowned in frustration), but the government stepped in temporarily to help keep them on their feet. My brother, the firefighter, has found his

purpose, and I found a career helping others. The TBI knowledge came in handy one year ago when I was a passenger in a car that crashed and I too sustained a mild TBI.

Alaska does not have brain injury services. There have been nearly 15,000 Alaskans that have been hospitalized for TBI in the last 20 years. These families have further insult to injury by having very few, if any, medical, rehabilitation or community supports.

Please recapitalize the trauma care funds (DHSS)

Fully fund the Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program (DHSS)

Fully fund Behavioral Health Services (DHSS)

Fund the Alaska Complex Behavior Collaborative (DHSS)

Fund the Statewide Independent Living Centers in Alaska (Labor)

Life happens whether we plan for it or not. We cannot have hard working, healthy family units without having a continuum of basic medical, mental health, and community resources. Please fund these programs.

Sincerely,

Jill Hodges

Anchorage, AK

Cc: Representative Austerman

Representative Stoltz

Representative Neuman

Representative Costello

Representative Edgmon

Representative Holmes

Representative Munoz

Representative Thomas

Representative T. Wilson

Representative Gara

Representative Guttenberg

Jill Hodges

Executive Director

**Alaska Brain Injury Network**

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 140

Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone: (907) 274-2824

Toll Free: (888) 574-2824

Fax: (907) 274-2826

[www.alaskabraininjury.net](http://www.alaskabraininjury.net)

*Check out our new Alaska Brain Injury Network products: <http://www.cafepress.com/alaskabraininjury>*

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Ian Bauer <Ian@ayfn.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** 8.3 million reduction to behavioral health services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

My name is Ian Bauer, and I work for Alaska Youth and Family Network. I am writing you today on behalf of the company I work for. I believe that it would be in your best interest to not cut funding for behavioral health services. We are a pretty amazing community support that actually enables clients to help themselves instead of telling them what they need to do with their lives. We help redirect them ,and help them identify and achieve goals, and because of the approach we take clients are more likely to remain able to help themselves out of the slumps they were born, raised , or put into. I have seen a lot of success from this non-profit organization, and I know it helps a lot of people every year.

Thank You,

Ian Bauer

Alaska Youth and family Network

Phone: 907-770-4979

Fax: 907-770-4997

740 Communications Ave.

Anchorage, AK 99503

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Carol A. Mickelsen <carol.mickelsen@k12northstar.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:09 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Fwd: Farm to School Program

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Carol A. Mickelsen <carol.mickelsen@k12northstar.org>  
To: house finance committee <house.finance.committee@akleg.gov>  
Sent: Tue, 05 Mar 2013 14:06:16 -0900 (AKST)  
Subject: Farm to School Program

To whom it may concern,

During the past several years we have had an amazing school garden here at Hunter. There has been an incredible amount of community buy-in and involvement, more than at any other school, from what we have been told. Students have been able to work in the garden and some have even been paid a small amount. The volunteers who work with the students get paid nothing. As the funding has dried up, Calypso Farms has been able to do less and less to keep the program going. This year families are going to have to **pay a fee** in order for their children to be able to help out in the garden. After all the progress that has been made, this is very sad to see. Our community consists of mostly low-income families, and this is heartbreaking to see such a great addition to our community dry up and become inaccessible or unsustainable because of lack of funding. This is the opposite direction than what we should be going.

In addition, now we here that the Farm to School Program may get cut. We all know that things are tight. Unfortunately, this is not the fault of the people who are benefiting from these programs. We need more of these types of programs, that help communities and small business, not less. Please do not cut the Farm to School Program!

Our custodian made a suggestion that perhaps instead of paying \$20,000 per oil painting for the White House, that money could go to fund things like this. They could use modern technology and take a good photo instead. I am sure there are other cuts that could be made at the state level as well. \$20,000 may not be much according to the Feds. but to a program like the above-mentioned, it would pay for years of community gardens or a Farm to School Program! Seriously, we need to see some appropriate priorities in our leadership.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,  
Carol Mickelsen  
Behavior Intervention Aide  
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen  
Behavior Intervention Aide  
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen  
Behavior Intervention Aide  
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen  
Behavior Intervention Aide  
Hunter Elementary

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Carol Mickelsen  
Behavior Intervention Aide  
Hunter Elementary

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** jmpfist@alaska.net  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:09 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Education Funding

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Member Rep. Austerman:

I am very concerned with many issues that are happening in Juneau this session. None of them are more puzzling then how we are spending or not spending our money.

I am very concerned about the cuts that have been proposed for education. It is a given Fact that if you want citizens of Alaska to be able to compete globally you must appropriate the funds necessary to make this happen. "Best Beginnings" is at the Forefront of needing help. Many families do not have the resources to make pre-school Happen for their children. IT is the least this state can do to help our budding citizens Get a head start on their education.

Secondly, K-12 education is in need of help. Please support HS95. the Governor's proposed budget would lead to a third year in a row of educational staff cuts across the state. This is unconscionable, when we as Alaskans have the funds to support our children of this great state. Governor Parnell, additionally, has upped the anti on teacher Evaluations by tying student test scores to teacher evaluations. How can a governor make such demands and then turn around and not fully fund education.

Teachers and students need the educational tools to work with to meet these new demands, the education systems across the state certainly don't need to be looking at budget cuts when it is not necessary.

Further more, our state university system is in need of help, we are encouraging our students to remain in the state but then turn around and do not offer the funding necessary to make our university system one of the best in the U.S.

I could go on and on but the most disheartening is to think of the Oil Tax giveaway with No string attached, is an absolute joke. Why would anyone want to let the Oil companies Our fair share of windfall profits and to take this money and spend it anywhere they want, which probably won't be in Alaska. Why not propose a plan that requires Alaskan Investment and production in exchange for some tax relief. It is in your hands, Please Be good stewards of our state dollars.

Sincerely,

Joann Pfisterer

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus <ianmomtchr@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:08 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Budget  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am a parent who lives in a northern village. My daughter was just 'expelled' from her group home in Anchorage and is back home unexpectedly. I am working with the Complex Behavior Collaborative to keep her home. Without funding for this program, she has no place to go, as other programs will not accept her following the recent escalation.

I do not want her out of state, I want her home and we need support to do this.

Cutting 8.3 million from the Behavioral Health budget will increase the number of people who require hospitalization and who enter the criminal justice system, both juveniles and adults.

This is inappropriate and a waste of funds and human potential.

We do not incarcerate people because they have a disease or physical disability, but when that disability is hidden, that is what happens when they cannot access the services they need.

Budget cuts are necessary, but not at the risk of endangering a vulnerable population.

We want our children to be successful, they need supports and this costs money, but the cost of not providing services is much higher.

In addition, please continue the funding for DUI Therapeutic Courts to prevent recidivism and flooding of courts and support successful accountability for those with addictions.

Thank- you

Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus

Parent

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** D. Robbins <d Robbins.r@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki  
**Subject:** Update: Re: The budget should include more funds to pay down the unfunded liability of PERS/TRS

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Legislators,

The Alaska Retirement Management Board (ARMB) recently met and this is a quote from one of their membership:

*Actuaries and financial experts acknowledge additional money into the funds will save ALL EMPLOYERS a significant amount of money in the long run. Surpluses are not expected to ever be higher.*

You will be hearing more from them directly. They do not say such things lightly but have facts to back it up. Please listen to them for the good of the State of Alaska.

Thanking you,

Doris Robbins

--  
Doris Robbins

(907) 374-0597  
1281 Overhill DR.  
Fairbanks, AK 99709-6753  
[drobbins.r@gmail.com](mailto:d Robbins.r@gmail.com)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** ninavolkova.voa@gmail.com on behalf of Nina Volkova <ninavolkova@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:06 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Reduction to Behavioral Health Grants

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Nina Volkova and I am writing to you as a representative of the behavioral field. I have had the privilege of working with Alaskans for over thirteen years and have provided services to adolescents who are suffering from substance abuse and mental health disorders. During this time, I have seen changes in the system that had impacts on many aspects of our community and in some cases all of us. This is to include local hospitals, police force, detentions/jails, clinics, detox facilities, schools, outpatient/inpatient/residential facilities to name a few. The issues of growth, expansions and cuts are not new; however, what appears to be missing is calculating spending money upfront that we will have to do for measures that are cost prohibitive, such as emergency room admissions, legal costs, incarcerations, and unproductivity. I would like to reflect on some past and current numbers that we all had to pay for.

Between 1992 and 2001, there was a 201% increase in the number of girls in the U.S. arrested for drug abuse violation, and 121% increase for boys. This can be compared to adult arrests for the same category which increased only 33% (Nissen, 2007). These numbers have financial impact on our communities: for instance, in Alaska the costs attributed to crime-related alcohol and other drug abuse in the state were nearly \$154 million in 2003; while health care costs related to alcohol and other drug abuse totaled an estimated \$178 million during the same period (McDowell Group, 2005). These numbers do not represent cost associated with victimization and long-term secondary cost, such as removal of children from home due to parent(s) incarceration or as a result of inability to attend to a child's needs.

According to the Division of Behavioral Health the number of clients that are in need of services increased in FY2009 from 4,605 to 5,199 in FY2011 (youth with serious emotional disturbances who received mental health services; included individuals with co-occurring disorders. The division's BTHK initiative of keeping youth home was successful in bringing out-of-state placement numbers down during the FY98-10; however there has been an increase admission during FY2011 in out-of-state, as well as in-state residential psychiatric treatment centers by over 30%. As a result there was an increase in financial aspect of behavioral health; therefore, the division set a new goal "decrease in the number of children/youth returning to RPTC and acute hospitalization care by 75% by SFY12 (DBH, 2011). This goal will obviously be impacted if we cannot provide ongoing services in least restrictive levels, such as outpatient and lower level residential care.

It is important to note, that health of adolescents has direct impact on our community, economy, and of course behavioral health services. The initiation of drug use often occurring during adolescence is the result of a combination of many different factors of adolescent development. For many adolescents, the use of substances is limited to a brief period of experimentation. It is so commonplace that experimentation with drugs appears to have become part of the normal rites of passage for many youth. However, for some youth, the use of substances leads to compulsive patterns of use characterized by psychological and physical dependence. According to the National Institute of Health, 90% of Americans suffering from addiction began using before age 18. Furthermore, substance use disorders are a leading cause of medical morbidity, mortality, and health expenditures in the United States (NIH, 2003).

As a provider and a member of this community I am asking you to consider investing in adolescence care as opposed to us repeating the cycle of paying significant amounts in other areas of our lives.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance in this matter.

Nina Volkova

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Alicia Cornils <Alicia@ayfn.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 2:02 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Amber Hampton  
**Subject:** \$8.3 Million Reduction to Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

The House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- \* **mental health treatment**
- \* **substance abuse treatment**
- \* **detox services**
- \* **services for youth with severe emotional disturbance**
- \* **supported housing**
- \* **peer support services**
- \* **suicide prevention**
- \* **tribal behavioral health services**
- \* **services for seniors with co-occurring disorders**
- \* **parent and peer navigation**
- \* **services related to domestic violence and sexual assault**
- \* **prevention and early intervention**
- \* **programs that support reunifying and keeping families together**

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes.

- Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.
- By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.
- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a **healthy workforce** and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- My husband was told 10 years ago to go home and tell his wife that he would no longer be able to work, due to his mental health diagnosis. Community peer supports gave him hope and direction, and he not only recovered, he is now executive director of Alaska Youth and Family Network. Now we daily help other families find their way to live happy, productive lives. Without these services, many families would continue to believe that they have no choice but to accept that they cannot function and contribute to society.
- **Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.**

Thank You,

Alicia Cornils

Operations Manager

Alaska Youth and Family Network

740 Communications Ave.

Anchorage AK 99503

Main Office: (907) 770-4979

Fax: (907) 770-4997

Cell: (907) 240-4283

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** robin allen <dave\_robin1@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:57 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson  
**Subject:** Trauma Care Fund

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that you will please consider the need for funding the State of Alaska Trauma System. As a life long Alaskan, I have seen the vast improvement in the quality and availability of medical care for the injured Alaskan. Our Trauma System has allowed the growth of a standardized system of Trauma care and transportation of the injured Alaskan to highest level of care. Our regional hospitals and clinics have increased their level of education, certification, and training of all staff. The Trauma Care Fund has provided this training and education beginning at the pre-hospital level up to Advanced Trauma Care for physicians and nurses. The Trauma Care Fund has allowed this training to be done on the local level for many of the rural hospitals and clinics. This increases the quality of care for all Alaskans.

The implementation of a Trauma System in the State of Alaska has provided a system by which data can be accurately gathered and analyzed to provide process improvement in all areas of Trauma care. It has been well established, that when States have Trauma systems in place it improves over all care of the patient, not just in Trauma, but in all areas of care.

The Iditarod is a wonderful piece of medical history for our Great State and an example of the Alaskan "can do" attitude. Please let's continue to move forward and provide the best possible medical care for all Alaskans.

**CONTINUE ALL FUNDING FOR THE TRAUMA CARE FUND!!!!**

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Robin Allen

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Liz Cabrera <petersburgedc@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:53 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Cc:** Peter Ecklund  
**Subject:** ADFG Operating Budget  
**Attachments:** ADFGFY14.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Rep. Austerman,

Please see attached letter regarding the ADFG operating budget.

Best,  
Liz Cabrera  
Coordinator

--  
Petersburg Economic Development Council  
PO Box 750  
Petersburg, Alaska 99833  
907.772.4042  
[petersburgedc@gmail.com](mailto:petersburgedc@gmail.com)  
<http://www.petersburgedc.org>

Subscribe to our community newsletter: <http://bit.ly/TmB9Qf>

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Ashley Borner <assist\_cdc2@voaak.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:51 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Cutting funding to the Behavioral Health Services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To whom it may concern:

Prevention and early intervention are crucial within the state of Alaska. Alaska's drug problem needs to be addressed, not dismissed! Cutting funding to the Behavioral Health Services would be a grave mistake. Please think about how your vote may affect the at risk youth within Alaska.

Ashley Borner

## Rep. Alan Austerman

---

**From:** Melinda Maddox <officeseward@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:49 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Governor's Increment for Independent Living

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

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March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Melinda Maddox*

*Independent Living Center*

*officeseward@peninsulailc.org*

*P.O. Box 3523 Seward, Ak 99664*

*Ph: 907-224-8711*

*Fax: 907-224-7793*

" It's not the disability it's the ability"

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** jen laroe <jalaroe@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:45 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Operating Budget HB 65

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Greetings House Finance Committee,

Thank you for taking my testimony via email as it makes participating in the legislative process possible for me and many others in today's busy times.

As you may recall from last year, I attempted to testify in person on a subject that is very emotional to me, Education funding, and was unable to speak due to emotions flooding over me. I am not able to put myself out there this year, but hope you do accept my written testimony and hold it in as high regard as you may for in person testimony. Please also consider my voice strongly as I am sure I speak for many other Alaskan parents whose children are being impacted by today's standard of public funding for public education.

I do not disagree that the public school system is flawed, as are many systems by which our society attempts to function. I do believe that until great effort is made at public school reform, consistent and responsible funding levels are imperative to keep many Alaskan schools functioning at all. When graduation rates seem bleak, please remember the percentage of students who are graduating. These students deserve our support as much as those the system is failing. Failing to keep the BSA up with inflation, as has been the case for the last few years, will only exacerbate the problem and decrease the graduation rate.

My children are Lila Quigley, fourth grade student, and Miles Quigley, first grade student. Both attend Harborview Elementary School in Juneau. I am on the site council and have served on the JSD budget committee. More importantly, I spend at least 3 hours a week volunteering my time in the school, directly interacting with students for the last four years. I know a lot of the students by name, and am considered a familiar face. I started a school garden last year with the help of staff, parents and community members and agencies. I am vested in this school, and in quality public education for my children and all children throughout the state.

Please urge the governor to bring the BSA back up to par, and support the children of Alaska, one of the wealthiest states in the nation.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer LaRoe  
5134 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK  
99801  
907-7890-3625

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Catherine DeLacee <catherine@peninsulaloveinc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:42 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Proposed \$8.3 million reduction to Behavioral Health Services  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

The Budget Subcommittee on HSS recommendation of \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services *almost* couldn't come at a worse time. Given the national state of sequestration, the Kenai Peninsula poor are already being told by AHFC that they cannot issue any housing vouchers and can't grant voucher extensions due to questionable receipt of federal funds. So if one can't get shelter, how does one make a start? Prior to Love INC's AHFC-funded homeless housing program, families were customarily separated leaving a life-time impact on kids. Traumatized kids, not helped, will be communities' future troubled adults at a tremendous monetary cost and tremendous loss of potential community contributors.

Having served on boards and working with non-profits over the decades, I know what living in a second-class borough means. The Kenai Peninsula Borough government has no opportunity or responsibility to provide any social services assistance. We are dependent on the State of Alaska and now face diminishing federal funding. If these behavioral health services are pulled from the Kenai Peninsula, with so few resources or even private agencies, the poor and those in need will suffer. There is a current sentiment that the poor just need to get work and take care of themselves. In my 10 years' work in assisting the hungry and the homeless of the Kenai Peninsula I consistently deal with wounded people, who were wounded children, who experience the resultant behavioral health issues. Very tough to make wise decisions without help from this background.

Over my 30 resident years, I have watched individuals who've been injured or laid off go from under-employed/ unemployed, to homeless, to experiencing hunger, to having mental health issues and sometimes descent into addictions. I have watched unemployed parents progressively become more desperate trying to feed and shelter their kids, going out day after day after day looking for work. And then ... no job, no rent, often no food stamps, potential domestic abuse and family disintegration, possible jail time, new demands for public services by remnant families and new expenses for the community and state. Perhaps not surprisingly, some do self-medicate with alcohol and drugs. But, while many want to get into treatment, there has been only six (6) available beds total in Anchorage for a long time! A long wait list locally - costly private treatment or the underfunded, overtasked outpatient treatment through the Kenaitze Indian Tribe and Cook Inlet Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (CICADA) simply can't keep up.

Local non-profits have stepped up to assist where the State has been unable to go. We consider ourselves as citizen partners with the State of Alaska trying to better our State. I have relied on behavioral health services to assist me in getting families stabilized so they might have a shot at just being employed, housed and healthy families with a future.

Please, please reconsider the cut of \$8.3 million for these community-based behavioral health services for those who don't have access to alternatives. We are truly building our 'tomorrows' by how we treat the poorest of the poor in our communities.

Thank you.

Catherine Y. DeLacee,

[catherine@peninsulaloveinc.org](mailto:catherine@peninsulaloveinc.org)

283-7163

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Dick LaFever <cli@ak.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:41 PM  
**To:** Rosalie Nadeau  
**Cc:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; rep.bryce.edgmon@akeg.gov; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Jim Sellers; Pat Ventgen  
**Subject:** Re: Behavioral Health Budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Thanks, Rosalie. I got wind of in an email from Anna Sappah. I'm assuming testifying is in order. Do you have any guidance on what should be in such testimony, or should we go with our best shot?

Dick

*Dick LaFever*

[cli@ak.net](mailto:cli@ak.net)

727.6187

On Mar 5, 2013, at 10:43 AM, Rosalie Nadeau wrote:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Health and Social Services Finance Subcommittee has recommended an \$8.3 million cut to the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH). The impact is devastating because it is approximately 15% of the Governor's recommended Division of Behavioral Health's budget, and it is slightly more if one measures it against the current year's budget. I have heard stories of the steep escalation in the budget, but those escalating budgets have not happened in Akeela's programs, and we are one of the largest programs in the State. For instance, in FY-1992 our Akeela House grant budget was \$682,239, and this fiscal year it is \$681,225. Our other large program, a women and children's residential and outpatient program has only increased \$40,477, from the FY-2007 budget of \$856,478, or \$6,746 per fiscal year. Additionally, the mandatory match each program must contribute in order to qualify for the grant has increased from ten to 25 percent.

We also agreed to take over the management of a small Southeast Behavioral Health Program that had struggled to stay afloat under the City of Ketchikan's management. It has a grant of \$981,098. The City notified DBH that it would close the program effective July 1, 2010, if no one could be found to take over the service. We stepped into that hole, and have inch by inch brought the program back to life. However, it is still a daily struggle to maintain operations in an area of the State that has few services. Any significant cut would likely result in the complete closure of that program that provides mental health and substance abuse services to over 1,000 children and families.

We also have been told that the committee wants to limit indirect to 15% of the budget. Our company has a 26% indirect cost rate agreement approved by the Federal government that is established by reviewing who spends funds in our company and how and where funds are spent. Administrative costs have grown dramatically in the last several years driven in large part by what we providers call unfunded mandates. For instance, the new Behavioral Health regulations require all of us to be accredited by one of three National Accreditation organizations. We have recently completed that process at a cost of approximately \$75,000 with an annual membership cost of a little over \$5,000. The accreditation is for three years, so the process must be repeated in 2015. We also are required to move to an Electronic Medical Records system. We now have \$300,000 invested in that effort, and we anticipate that we will spend an additional \$200,000 before all of our programs will be operational on the system. It takes personnel to maintain these systems and they are administrative in nature. When I began working for Akeela none of the more sophisticated management systems were required by the State. I believe that in part these required functions have been the State's way of shifting management costs from the Division to the provider. However, to meet these unfunded mandates, we must have personnel that do not neatly fit into the direct service category.

Finally, treatment works and costs less than failure to provide treatment. The best example can be found with our prison programs. Prisoners who have been in substance use treatment show a recidivism rate that is 12% to 16% lower than is the rate of prisoners who have not experienced treatment. The current recidivism rate for prisoners is approximately 67%. If one applies that rate to 100 prisoners at a daily rate of \$115 per prisoner, 67 individuals going back to prison cost \$7,705 per day, while 51 going back to prison cost \$5,865 or a savings per day of \$1,840 based on a 16% difference. The savings over the year at the daily rate savings of \$1,840 translates to \$671,600 for prisoners not returning to prison because they received treatment.

Rosalie Nadeau,

Akeela CEO

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Rachael Uponen <frontdesk2@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:26 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze  
**Subject:** Independent Living Increment

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representatives Austerman and Stoltze:

My name is Rachael, and I am writing to request that you reconsider your decision to remove the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living.

Thanks to the Disability Rights and Independent Living movements, people with disabilities are more visible than ever before. However, sometimes our needs for services are overlooked. When one has a disability, it impacts everything in life. Some of us pay more for insurance due to pre-existing conditions. Some of us are unable to drive, and must pay for either a taxi cab or an accessible vehicle. Some of us have difficulty finding and keeping a job, and some of us cannot work at all. This may mean we need job training or Individualized Education Programs. The financial and emotional costs of these needs can often be overwhelming, and that is where Centers for Independent Living (CILs) come in.

I work at an Independent Living Center (ILC) and I am also an individual with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Because I have a mind that is always busy due to intrusive thoughts, I get distracted easily and have trouble when there is not a set procedure for a given task. This made it difficult for me to gain employment experience. The ILC agreed to hire me for a probationary period, and one of their staff trained me in independent living and job skills. I now have a full-time job with great benefits, and I have never been happier.

Every day, I encounter people who are in need of our services. Our consumers come to us with needs ranging from transportation to nursing home transition. An overwhelming majority of elders and people with disabilities wish to live in their homes rather than an institution. Furthermore, most of us want to live as independently as possible. Because Alaska is so rural, however, this can prove to be difficult. That's why the ILC also provides rural outreach. Many of our staff travel to outlying communities to give presentations, answer questions, and work with local advocates and consumers to determine how to best serve each individual.

I understand that \$100,000 is a lot of money, and that our state cannot afford to spend money recklessly. However, we also cannot afford to abandon aging Alaskans or Alaskans with disabilities. Our services at the ILC are free of charge, and because we are a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on donations and grants to continue our services.

When elders and people with disabilities can live independently, we can work, study, and learn new skills. We can contribute to society by doing our jobs and raising our children. We can contribute to the economy as consumers. This leads to a healthy flow of money, goods, and services, and to more Alaskans living happy, productive lives. I am just one individual who is living proof of this fact.

The right to live independently is something that is cherished by people with and without disabilities alike. Again, I ask you to please reconsider your decision to remove the Governor's \$100,000 increment for maintaining this right. It is not wasteful spending; it is absolutely necessary for the productivity and livelihood of so many people.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rachael Uponen

Receptionist

Independent Living Center

47255 Princeton Ave. #8

Soldotna, AK 99669

(907) 262-6333 (Phone)

(907) 260-4495 (Fax)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kenny Lake Public Library <kennylakelibrary@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:20 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep.Bill.Stoltz@akleg.gov  
**Cc:** Sharon Ables; LIO Glennallen; shane.southwick@alaska.gov  
**Subject:** EED proposed budget: library proposals

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman and Representative Stoltz; I am writing from the Kenny Lake Library in Kenny Lake Alaska. Our small community has benefited greatly from the OWL program for the past several years. We are encouraging continued funding for two aspects of the OWL program: Broadband and infrastructure support and "Live Homework Help.

Our library can now offer newer computer equipment, video conferencing equipment and services, improved bandwidth and training for our staff as well as 97 other public libraries in Alaska. Many of our patrons are unable to obtain these services as often these services are cost prohibitive or not provided to their homes. Another program called "Live Homework Help" has become an invaluable tool for folks from 4th grade through college. Anyone can obtain assistance in math, science, language arts, and social studies 7 days per week. We love everything that the OWL program has helped us with. Please continue these wonderful and invaluable programs for all of Alaska. Thank you. Kathy Libbey

Please let us know if you prefer not to receive e-mail from Kenny Lake Library.

Hours: Monday 1-4; Tuesday 4-7; Wednesday 11-3; Thursday 1-4;  
Friday 1-4; Saturday 1-4; Sunday CLOSED

Frances Kibble Kenny Lake Public Library  
HC 60 Box 223  
Copper Center, Alaska 99573  
(907) 822-3015

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Vivian Fleming <vivian.fleming@maniilaq.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:17 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Response to Proposed Behavioral Health Services Funding Cut

**Importance:** High

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

My name is Vivian Fleming. I am the Behavioral Health Director for Maniilaq Behavioral Health Services. I am reaching out to you to describe how the proposed budget cuts will affect my program, the staff and the community. Maniilaq Behavioral Health Services is located in the Northwest Arctic Region in remote Alaska. The main hub is in Kotzebue with residence of about 3000; give or take the season. We provide services to 11 outlying smaller villages whose occupants can range from 50 up to about 900 people. I am sure you are aware and have hopefully acknowledged the statistics provided by the epidemiology department, and representatives from this region, and of course the many testimonies from my colleagues that this region has some of the highest rates of substance abuse, domestic violence, suicide, and mental health concerns.

The Behavioral Health program is tasked with providing support to all of the individuals in the northwest arctic region. To date we service about 200-350 clients each year, this includes substance abuse/dependence, mental health, medication management, wellness to include issues dealing with suicide and providing support to families and the communities. You might be under the impression that there are a couple of other agencies that also provide behavioral health support for 12 villages, but this is not the case. Maniilaq Behavioral Health is the only support these communities have. Outside of the referring agencies and inner Maniilaq supports there are no additional resources located here in this region. For the overall wellness of the client (keeping them close to their community) and to cut down on cost, we try to keep the client at the lowest level of care if possible. The closest acute behavioral health facilities are located in Anchorage Alaska. So you see, by cutting cost in one area you are actually raising costs in another.

We are already under staffed to provide the community demand for services. Cutting my program dollars will reduce my budget significantly which will reduce a significant number of the much needed staff. We have staff that is located in the villages. These staff lives in their home community and provide support to their fellow

tribal members and are essentially the backbone to our BHS program. They are the eyes and ears of the therapist and are oftentimes the initial contact to those requiring services. A cut in funding could potentially eliminate their positions which will thereby cut off behavioral health supports needed. Cutting funding will also increase unemployment in the villages that have few to no jobs available anyway. This action will increase budget dollars to provide public assistance to the unemployed.

The therapist positions are one of the hardest positions to fill. Our program is currently understaffed with only 6 therapists to service 12 villages. Cuts in funding will significantly reduce the amount of clinical support to the communities which will in turn increase the travel and mental health cost to transport the people out of the region. We currently have 3 substance abuse counselors. By cutting our budget will also cut positions that are in great demand.

I urge you to maintain the current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services. Such a drastic reduction in funding will decrease the only resources these communities have thereby significantly increasing the actual money expended by requiring acute out of region or out of state services.

Thank you for your consideration to this urgent matter.

Vivian Fleming MA, LPC

Vivian Fleming, MA, LPC

BHS Director

Maniilaq Association

P.O. Bx 256

907-442-7640/7730 fax 7749

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Adam Grove <drgrove@ak.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:10 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** HFC - Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury Program and Complex Behaviors Collaborative  
**Attachments:** TBI-AA.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Please see the attached letter re: this week's hearings.

Thank you very much for your time.

Adam

Adam Grove, ND  
Naturopathic Physician

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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Patrice Parker <patrice.parker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Proposed cuts to Behavioral Health

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives,

In the wake of the Newtown tragedy, most of you said that instead of banning assault weapons, the country should focus on mental health needs. Now is your opportunity to put our money where your mouth is. Rather than hope the country will just forget about the most recent and most heartbreaking case of assault weapon mass murder, it's time to do something significant.

Gov. Parnell has focused on Alaska's high rates of sexual assault but prevention programs are also targeted.

There is an epidemic of heroin use in Alaska and yet the proposed cuts include substance abuse treatment. Juneau, Alaska's Capital, is part of the epidemic. I personally know two Juneau kids who recently got caught up in it and are going to jail. My own son fought addiction.

Watch the recent series on KTUU for a little more insight.

Additionally, suicide prevention is another issue many of you campaign on - and most every day the obituaries underscore the heartbreaking impact of suicide on our families. My son beat his heroin addiction, but didn't get proper treatment for chronic depression. He killed himself. So I know, when I read the obituaries, what those families are suffering and will continue to suffer for the rest of their lives.

Heroin addiction is not just an affliction of the poorest parts of urban America, and suicide is not just happening in Alaska Native villages. It's happening in your districts, too, to families just like yours.

Please don't cut the Behavioral Health budget.

Sincerely,

Patrice Parker  
1550 H Street  
Anchorage, AK 99501

Sent from my iPhone

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** akbmd@aol.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 1:03 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** CBC Program  
**Attachments:** CBC Program.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please open and read. It works!  
Laura Kelly  
[akbmd@aim.com](mailto:akbmd@aim.com)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jason Hoke <jhoke@coppervalley.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:51 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Farm to School Support  
**Attachments:** Farm to School Support- Austerman.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Representative Austerman,

Please find a letter of support for the Farm to School Program. I hope that this funding and program stays to foster agricultural development in Alaska, maintain food security for the state, and the innumerable benefits to schools and our children.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and service to our state.

Jason Hoke

Executive Director

Copper Valley Development Association, Inc.

Mile 111 Richardson Hwy

PO Box 9

Glennallen, AK 99588

(907) 822-5001

(907) 822-5009 fax

(907) 259-5006 cell

[www.coppervalley.org](http://www.coppervalley.org)



**ARDOR**

Alaska Regional Development Organizations

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** hsmaze@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:48 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health Services are essential!

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders-including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders-at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

These Alaskans are at higher risk for institutionalized care-such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. Without this funding they will be forced to use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care. We want to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives-at the same time we are saving money. These Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community workforce and promote a strong economy. Community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.

Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Sent via the HTC Vivid™, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Michele Friars <mfriars@mtaonline.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:47 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** budget cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representatives of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Michele Friars and I have worked for Volunteers of America for the past 21 years providing services to adolescents who come from different parts of Alaska that suffer from substance abuse and co-occurring issues. As the clients receive treatment services to address their main issue such as addiction, mental health and behavioral issues it is important to recognize that they are also gaining knowledge in different areas that support their successful transition into adulthood. Over the years, considering that the kids had not attended school for years prior to their admission due to their substance abuse I have seen kids passing their high school equivalency exams while they were completing their educational goals in our program. In many cases these kids were able to resolve their legal issues and successfully transition out of the division of juvenile justice system and become responsible young adults and not be a burden to our society. Most importantly, they have been able to rebuild their family relationships and establish new healthy relationships in the community.

Unfortunately, we are experiencing ongoing issues with kids being on a wait list for services who are out on the streets or in detention centers. The current issue of budget cutting will have a very negative impact on these kids which will mean possible unnecessary incarcerations and hospitalizations for those kids whose issues can be addressed in treatment services. Please consider the long term cost and impact of this action on our community.

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jackie Eisenberg <uafrep.naswak@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:41 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Please don't cut funding for Behavior Health

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative, I am writing to you regarding the proposed cuts to the DHSS, Behavior Health budget. Taking care of Alaska's most vulnerable individuals is crucial to ensuring that Alaska remain a safe and sustainable place to live and raise a family. Of particular significance are the prevention and early intervention services that work to fix problems faced by families with young children before they become life long problems that are damaging to our communities and our state. Our residents are resilient but they need your support to remain healthy and active in contributing to our communities and our economy. **Please do not cut the budget for Behavioral Health services throughout Alaska!**

Thank you for your consideration,  
Jackie Eisenberg,  
Devoted Mother of two, and life long Alaskan

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Christy Russ <Christy@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:36 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg  
**Subject:** HB65  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Christy Russ

**Independent Living Center**

TRAILS Coordinator & Development Specialist

3953 Bartlett

Homer, AK 99603

(907) 235-7911

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Rick Malley <ilobhomer@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:26 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** HB-65

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Rick Malley

The Independent Living Center

PO Box 2474

Homer, AK 99603

Voicemail; 1-907-226-2193

Ph: 1-907-235-7911

Fax: 1-907-235-6236

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Lori DeStefano <loridestefano19@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:21 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Behavioral Health funding cuts

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

I am writing this email to speak against the proposed \$8.3 million cuts to the Behavioral Health Budget. Any reduction in funds would greatly impact an already financially strained industry. Cuts to funding for substance abuse and mental health treatment could close agencies, or reduce agency ability to continue to provide quality services. Community services for suicide prevention and those provided to address domestic violence and sexual assault could be lost. This all comes at an increased cost to the community, as this loss of services results in increased use of emergency room services, increased numbers of people requiring institutionalization and increased crime rate. People will be forced to seek care outside of their homes and communities, resulting in alienation from their key supports. I've witnessed first-hand the impact and benefit of treatment for friends and loved ones with substance and mental health issues, and know that those folks could not have achieved the changes they made without treatment. Public funds are vital to retaining these under-resourced facilities, to ensure people can live a productive life that will benefit our communities.

Lori DeStefano  
Anchorage, AK

Sent from my iPhone

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Clare Charles <clare.charles@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:24 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** DON'T CUT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES!

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

To Whom it May Concern,

I am deeply passionate about the need to preserve services for the most vulnerable of Alaska's population. Alaska is first in many mental health, suicide and addiction needs in the country and we cannot reduce the services provided when we know there is such a high need. I have been working in the Social Services field with homeless and at-risk teens for 5 years and have witnessed a devastating amount of impairment and desperation among young people and their families. It would be beyond negligent to remove these valuable supports in the face of tragedies like Sandy Hook Elementary. How can we educate and protect our communities from these kinds of grievous horrors without the many agencies that do this work? Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care. By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money. Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community and they contribute to a **healthy workforce** which promotes a strong economy.

PLEASE PRESERVE THESE SERVICES WHICH ARE INTEGRAL TO THE HEALTH AND FUNCTIONING OF SO MANY ALASKANS.

Clare Charles

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Barb george <lady\_loon@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 12:01 PM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Operating budget

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Rep. Austerman,

Please reconsider your cuts to Early Education. Please increase the base allocation for funding for our children.

If you have ever been in a classroom, or have children in public school, you know how important teachers and class-size are to the overall success of our students.

Please invest in our most valuable resource, the children of Alaska.

Please invest in a viable future for our state by investing in our children. We cannot afford to balance our budget at the expense of the future of our children and our state. Please support education and our students and our teachers.

Thank you,  
Barbara George  
Retired teacher  
Fairbanks, Ak

Sent from my iPad

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Doug Harris <Dough@jamhi.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:58 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Concerns regarding cuts to behavioral health care

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good afternoon. My name is Doug Harris. I am writing today as a member of the Board of Directors of the Disability Law Center for the State of Alaska and as Clinical Director of JAMHI, the community behavioral health provider for Juneau, Tenakee, Elfin Cove, and Gustavus.

In the time that I have been clinical director at JAMHI, four years next month, we have striven to establish the infrastructure necessary to provide the best care to individuals in need of behavioral health services. In this time, JAMHI has increased overall productivity by an average of 450% and increased the number of individuals we see by 50%, not including those seen only for Emergency Services. This is with the same number of staff and the same budget. In addition to our own infrastructure, we have worked hard to develop the community partnerships with agencies that are equally impacted by these proposed cuts. Many of these partners are here today out of concern the impact these cuts will have on the people who rely on the services we all provide to live respectable lives. AWARE, SEARHC, Rainforest Recovery Center, Bartlett Regional Hospital, Juneau Youth Services, Front Street Clinic, SAIL, Juneau Police Department, St. Vincent DePaul, The Glory Hole, Polaris House, Juneau Trial Courts, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, and Lemon Creek Correctional Center.

In addition to these and other local agencies impacted by the proposed cuts there are the many agencies within the state whose partnerships are equally impacted such as The Co-occurring Disorders Institute, under whose training, my staff and many others have been trained in the most up to date interventions for care of the people we serve. Trainings on Trauma informed care, and co-occurring disorders provide the latest and most effective means to deliver care. Those things directly or indirectly impact not only our clients, but everyone in this room. We want our Mission statement to remain to be "helping people live their own best lives" rather than "helping people survive in times of crises". We have made too much progress to be set back by the proposed funding cuts.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas R. Harris, MEd, LPC

Clinical Director,

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

(907)463-6876

*"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"*



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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** D K <ata@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:56 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Peggy Wilson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Dennis Egan  
**Cc:** Hannah McCarty; Julie Isom; Jesse Kiehl; Steven Ricci  
**Subject:** ADFG Budget  
**Attachments:** Industry Sign On House Finance Committee re ADFG Budget FINAL 4MAR2013A.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Committee Members:

Please find attached a letter from the Southeast seafood industry regarding potential loss of funding for ADFG. ATA strongly supports this letter, which lines out the problem in detail. I hope you will take time to review and contemplate the ramifications prior to voting on the ADFG Subcommittee recommendations before you.

The Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) is deeply concerned about the potential loss of funding for core ADFG port sampling programs and Chinook salmon biometrics work, as recommended by the House ADFG Subcommittee last week. In addition, we fear that ADFG has inadequate funding to conduct its aerial survey program, which is an important puzzle piece for the intricate fishery assessment program in our region. Aerial survey was ADFG's top priority for Region 1. At that time, they anticipated that the port sampling program would be funded as well. Loss of funding, or inadequate funding, for these items could effectively gut the SE management program, leading to reduced fishing opportunity.

The sampling programs and the biometrician staff position are essential to our sustainable fisheries management program, and also help ADFG and the state meet international commitments to the Lower 48 and Canada and defend our interests in the difficult US/Canada treaty arena.

As an example, the sampling program - combined with aerial survey - is critical to assessing run strength for all fisheries and providing fishing time for the troll fleet, particularly during our summer Chinook and coho season. The sampling program is so essential to our spring fishery that we could be severely limited, IF NOT SHUT DOWN, depending on the level of sampling that occurs. That's because the entire fishery is based on hatchery fish, which the port samplers are responsible for retrieving. If ADFG doesn't have the data to ascertain the proportion of hatchery fish to wild, then they will be forced to leave one or more of up to 30 areas closed to fishing for up to two months. Or, if the catch is under-sampled, we could be leaving valuable hatchery fish on the table, which fishermen pay to produce. Trolling is a very complicated fishery and is extremely important to local economies, particularly in early spring when we all know it's pretty lean for the seafood industry. Loss or reduction of the spring component of our fishery would have a domino effect on the success of troll fishery; especially when you add in our fleet's reliance on halibut and the status of that fishery.

The troll fleet is one of the largest in the state and occurs exclusively in Southeast. We are unlike any other salmon fishery as we are state, federal, and internationally managed. There are more troll permit holders in

most Southeast ports than all other salmon fleets combined. About 1 of every 40 people in Southeast work ON a troll boat, and that's not counting the workers in our support sector. The health of the troll fishery is directly tied to the fiscal well-being of the Southeast region.

You should find attached a letter regarding the ADFG Subcommittee recommendation, which is signed by a large number of seafood industry leaders in Southeast Alaska. I hope you will take time to study what we believe a few of the impacts will be should the House Finance committee accept the recommendation of the ADFG Subcommittee.

Also please review the economic snapshot we have provided. Given the revenues the state brings in from commercial fishing taxes, fully funding ADFG so that they can maximize fishing opportunity just makes common sense. Without sufficient data, ADFG will be forced to manage more conservatively, which is an economic loser for all of Alaska!

The governor has asked the legislature to back-fill monies that will no longer be coming to the state from the federal government. We anticipate additional reductions to the ADFG budget in Southeast as the details of the federal sequester unfold. The Southeast region is far too dependent on federal money. That is painfully clear when we must write you about the loss of funding for core programs. This matter is of deep concern and something ATA has raised with the legislature for many years. It is literally a house of cards. The governor is making efforts to shore up ADFG and move to stable funding for essential programs and staff, by incrementally replacing federal money with state funds for those items that are not solely federal mandates. He is also adding money for strategic positions, like the Chinook biometrician, whose work helps to defend Alaska's access to an extremely valuable species. This just makes good sense and we hope the legislature will mirror his commitment to a solid ADFG funding program by securing the monies both he and our experts at ADFG have requested.

Please do what you can to make sure the legislature accommodates the Governor's full budget increment of \$550K, and also add ADFG's top Region 1 priority -aerial surveys - to the the ADFG FY 2014 budget

Do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information or perspective on this issue.

Best regards,

Dale 723-8765 cell

Dale Kelley  
Executive Director  
Alaska Trollers Association  
130 Seward #205  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 586-9400  
ata@gci.net

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**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Ian Niecko <Ian@jamhi.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:51 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Letter regarding BH budget cuts in Alaska  
**Attachments:** Letter fo Finance Committe.doc  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Please see attached letter regarding observations as a mental health worker.

Thanks,

Ian

Ian Niecko, M.Div, MA

Behavioral Health Clinic Case Manager II

Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc.

3406 Glacier Hwy.

Juneau, AK 99801

(907) 463-3303

*"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"*



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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kim Burrows <reception@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:50 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** HB 65

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

March 5, 2013

Dear Representative:

The House Labor Subcommittee has removed the Governor's \$100,000 increment in the operating budget (HB 65) that was allotted for Independent Living. This is a travesty for Alaskans of all ages with disabilities.

Alaska's Centers for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agencies that provide thousands of people with disabilities cost-effective alternatives to expensive long-term care away from home and family. Removal of this \$100,000 increment will increase the number of elderly and disabled who may be forced into dependent, isolated living. But with this funding, Centers for Independent Living can continue to provide services that allow Alaskans of all ages and all disabilities to successfully age in place.

I urge you to restore the Governor's \$100,000 increment for Independent Living in the Department of Labor budget.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Burrows



***Kim Burrows***

***Independent Living Center***

***P.O. Box 2474***

***Homer, AK 99603***

***Phone: 907-235-7911***

***Fax: 907-235-6236***

***Life is an attitude!***

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Esther Hammerschlag <homerspfsig@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:40 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** testimony on proposed budget cuts to Alaska Wellness Coalition

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear House Finance Committee members,

I am writing in response to proposed budget cuts of over \$30 million to DHSS, that could result in over \$9 million of budget cuts to innovative substance abuse prevention and intervention programs. One of the proposed cuts would include \$600K in funding to the Alaska Wellness Coalition for a statewide Positive Community Norms media campaign to address underage drinking. The Positive Community Norms model is based on the premise that people do what they perceive most people are doing, and that people tend to over-perceive risky behavior, and under-perceive protective behaviors. By changing perceptions to that which is the true social norm, a change in the behavior can be made. This strategy has been shown to be effective in many other communities in a short period of time. It is a very powerful messaging tool that is non-judgemental, is reflective of the community, and states the facts.

The Homer Prevention Project (HPP) is a coalition based project, with representatives of over 24 groups and organizations in the community participating in needs assessment and strategic planning, including medical and social service providers, schools, law enforcement, DJJ, family planning and teen support services, Big Brothers Big Sisters, CDVSA, Alaska Family Violence Prevention Project, public health, parents, teens and many others that is focused on prevention of underage drinking and adult heavy and binge drinking in the Homer area. As a community coalition, HPP participates in the Alaska Wellness Coalition and is looking forward to continued collaboration to address the issue of alcohol abuse in our state.

Through our community strategic planning process, HPP prioritized a Positive Community Norms campaign in our own community to address the issues of underage drinking and adult heavy and binge drinking. Coalition members selected this model because of its positive approach, because it builds on the strengths of the community, and it is evidence based and shown to be effective in a short period of time. Increasing awareness of the issues in the community, as well as reinforcing positive social norms related to alcohol use, are fundamental to building a sustainable prevention program.

Community coalitions often operate with little funding and, especially, in our smallest communities, are challenged to find the capacity to implement meaningful and effective programs. Through partnerships with the

Alaska Wellness Coalition, and the Alaska Wellness Coalition's development of a statewide Positive Community Norms campaign, smaller community coalitions will be able to further support their own efforts by utilizing the additional capacity and support provided by this larger, statewide coalition. By working to develop a statewide Positive Community Norms media campaign to address the important need of preventing alcohol abuse in all communities across our state, the Alaska Wellness Coalition will effectively support small community coalitions in launching meaningful, effective, and timely campaigns in their own communities. This support is critical.

Consistency in prevention efforts across the state and consistent messaging are crucial to effectiveness of prevention efforts. Imagine if people saw the same messages, from posters hung in local post offices and bars, to PSAs on local radio stations, ads on buses, and finally ads on television stations broadcast across the state. When communities hear consistent messaging from all levels of influence, imagine how much more effective a campaign to reduce underage drinking, reinforce positive and healthy lifestyles, increase resiliency factors, and increase awareness among parents and adults of the effects of underage drinking will be. Imagine the increased effectiveness and capacity that local community coalitions will have when they have the support of a statewide campaign through the Alaska Wellness Coalition. The presence of a statewide Positive Community Norms campaign that small communities can draw from and build capacity on will maximize effect, while at the same time conserving resources. Furthermore, this supports the Alaska Statewide Plan to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking and other state level and regional plans that recommend this campaign take place as one strategy.

Please retain any funding allocated for the Alaska Wellness Coalition to ensure that Alaska can continue to support the development of healthy communities in a collaborative, effective, sustainable, and most importantly, responsible way.

Sincerely,

Esther Hammerschlag

Project Director, Homer Prevention Project

**Esther Hammerschlag, Project Director**

**Homer Prevention Project**

1230 Ocean Drive

PO Box 2352

Homer, AK 99603

[esther@homerpreventionproject.org](mailto:esther@homerpreventionproject.org)

(907) 235-0570

**<http://homerpreventionproject.org>**

*Homer Prevention Project: Collaborating to reduce alcohol abuse in the Homer and Anchor point area*

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Jennifer Meyer <jameyer2@alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:41 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Please oppose cuts to the general funds for Behavioral Health Services  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Don't take my word for it, listen to the experts here  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-braskIoBw>  
A 30 minute documentary well worth your time.

As you know the House Budget Subcommittee on Health & Social Services has recommended a \$8,368,800 (\$8.3 million) reduction in general funds for Behavioral Health Services. These local, community-based services include:

- \* mental health treatment
- \* substance abuse treatment
- \* detox services
- \* services for youth with severe emotional disturbance
- \* supported housing
- \* peer support services
- \* suicide prevention
- \* tribal behavioral health services
- \* services for seniors with co-occurring disorders
- \* parent and peer navigation
- \* services related to domestic violence and sexual assault
- \* prevention and early intervention
- \* programs that support reunifying and keeping families together

· Behavioral Health Services support keeping people with mental illness and substance use disorders—including seniors and people with intellectual/developmental disorders with co-occurring disorders—at home and in their communities close to family and friends.

· Without community supports, people with these disorders are at higher risk for institutionalized care—such as jail, psychiatric institutions, and nursing homes. In the wake of school shootings this seems like the wrong area to cut.

· Without community supports, people with behavioral health disorders use emergency rooms more often and are at greater risk for institutionalized care.

· By serving people at home and in the community we are better able to see all Alaskans living meaningful and productive lives—at the same time we are saving money.

- Behavioral Health Services help “level the playing field” so that more Alaskans can be employed, housed, and contributing productively in the community.
- Behavioral Health Service Providers contribute to a healthy workforce and promote a strong economy.
- For Alaskans experiencing serious mental illness, the cost of community-based outpatient services is 2-5 times less expensive than institutional care.
- Please support maintaining current funding levels for Behavioral Health Services in the Department of Health & Social Services budget.

Without a doubt the state will spend more in the long run if these cuts go through.  
Please practice good stewardship and do the right thing for all Alaskans.  
Jennifer Meyer

--  
Jennifer Meyer RN, MPH, CPH  
Anchorage Resident 99504

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Chris Pearson <Chris@jamhi.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:40 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Letter on behalf of those affected by Proposed Behavioral Health Care Cuts  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear State Representatives,

I am writing to you on behalf of myself and the Severely Mentally Ill adults that I provide case management services for in the community. The clients that I serve vary in their abilities to successfully participate in society. Some will always need some form of assistance and others just need some help to get back on their feet. Most of my clients are looking to be understood. They are looking for someone they can trust. They are vulnerable individuals that just want assistance so they can feel like they aren't being taken advantage of by others. They are individuals that want navigate the community and be as independent as possible.

I could have talked about how this saves dollars and makes sense but that is not my area of expertise. I am not an accountant, I am a case manager of people. I am a case manager of the people that this budget cut will directly affect. Most of the people I help on a daily basis are not going to have a voice of their own in this fight and it is yet again I find myself advocating for the client's I serve.

Thank you for your time,

**Chris Pearson**

*Case Manager II*

*Juneau Alliance for Mental Health*

*3406 Glacier Highway*

*Juneau, AK 99801*

*"We help adults with mental illness live their own best lives"*



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## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Elizabeth Korenek-Johnson <ekorenek@nomeschools.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:33 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Please Support Best Beginnings

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,  
Thank you for your support of Best Beginnings and Imagination Library. Quality books for Nome's children, and children all over the state, along with great early-literacy activities have immeasurable benefits to our state-wide community. Alaska's kids are Alaska's future. Please continue your support of these critical programs. Vote to fully fund Best Beginnings and Parents as Teachers, and encourage your colleagues to do the same!

Sincere thanks,  
Elizabeth Korenek-Johnson  
Nome Imagination Library Chair & Parent, and teacher!!!  
PO Box 1295  
Nome, AK 99762

[ekorenek@nomeschools.com](mailto:ekorenek@nomeschools.com)

Check out our Classroom Website:  
<http://www.nomeschools.com/~ekorenek/Site>

(If you visit our site often, you may need to "refresh" the page for current updates.)

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Barb Nath <bnath@hopealaska.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:14 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** Operating budget  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good morning ladies and gentleman.

I am sending this email to advocate on behalf of items in the proposed operating budget. I am asking that you keep these areas intact and do not reduce them.

The Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC) is a necessary tool in meeting the needs of our children without having to send them out of the state of Alaska. You have been asked to fund an increment of \$450,000. I am asking that you leave this in the budget.

The Infant Learning Program also meets the needs of Alaskan children, especially those who have been the victims of abuse. The Governor has put money in his budget to be given to the IL/IE program (Under OCS) due to increased mandates and an increase in the number of children needing their services. Please, DO NOT take those funds out of the Governor's budget.

Please, think of someone in your neighborhood whose children might be affected if these funds are cut. Would you be able to face them the next time you saw them? Be strong, set the future of Alaska by doing what is right.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I hope you have a great day.

Barbara Nath

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Kiel Renick <krenick@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 11:04 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** opposition to a reduction in funding for behavioral health services

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Representative Austerman,

Please don't decrease funding to Behavioral Health services in Alaska. Our state suffers from mental illness on an extremely high level, we have a high suicide rate, a high number of veterans, a high number of foster children who need support, a high level of FASD cases, a high level of alcoholism, a high level of violent death, and a high number of homeless people per capita. We also have people that deal with extreme isolation, extreme workforce conditions, and extreme environmental conditions. This year has brought us many violent and sad reminders of how mental illness affects us all, as a community. We need a high degree of care, as a state, and the best way to get that to people is through funding support like the money that could be axed from the Behavioral Health Services budget. I am open to innovating the way we deliver care, developing new systems, or finding other solutions, but reducing funding is not the answer, and Alaska will suffer when Alaskans suffer.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Kiel Renick  
Juneau, Alaska

## Rep. Alan Austerman

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**From:** Doug Toelle <dtoelle@accessalaska.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:57 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson  
**Subject:** House Budget  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Greetings,

I am currently in Washington DC representing the National MS Society otherwise I would be calling in my testimony.

I find it appalling that a state with abundant natural resources constantly and consistently ignores the needs of it's most valuable resource, it's people. The education, health and independence of Alaskan's should be the top priority of Alaska's budget. The current proposed cuts to Behavioral Health and Independent Living impacts Alaska's most venerable citizens. Please restore these funds.

Thank you,

Doug

Douglas Toelle

Development and Advocacy Director

Access Alaska

v 907.479.7940 x120

c 907.460.4720

[www.accessalaska.org](http://www.accessalaska.org)

Access Alaska was created by people with disabilities for people with disabilities as a private, non-residential, consumer-controlled non-profit to provide independent living services to older Alaskans and those who experience a disability.

As a federally recognized Independent Living Center, our mission is to encourage, promote, mentor, and advocate for the total integration of older Alaskans and those who experience a disability to live independently and productively in the community of their choice.

**Rep. Alan Austerman**

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**From:** Angela Elling <Angela@peninsulailc.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 05, 2013 10:52 AM  
**To:** Rep. Alan Austerman  
**Subject:** Request to Restore \$100, 000 Funding for Alaska CIL  
**Attachments:** Letter re CIL Funding.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed