

HB

226

<TARGET><BILL>HB 226</BILL><SUBJECT>HB
226</SUBJECT><COMM>HFIN29</COMM></TARGET>

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2016 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	HB 226
Fiscal Note Number:	3
(H) Publish Date:	2/5/2016

Identifier: HB226-DHSS-SDSA-2-4-16
 Title: EXTEND ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
 Sponsor: HAWKER
 Requester: House HSS

Department: Department of Health and Social Services
 Appropriation: Senior and Disabilities Services
 Allocation: Senior and Disabilities Services Administration
 OMB Component Number: 2663

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2017 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2017 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services		248.0	248.0	248.0	248.0	248.0	248.0	248.0
Travel		1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Services		520.2	520.2	520.2	520.2	520.2	520.2	520.2
Commodities		0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	0.0	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1002 Fed Rcpts		603.2	603.2	603.2	603.2	603.2	603.2
1004 Gen Fund		166.7	166.7	166.7	166.7	166.7	166.7
Total	0.0	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9	769.9

Positions

Full-time		2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues							
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Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2016) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2017) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? n/a

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

Not applicable; initial version.

Prepared By:	Duane Mayes, Director	Phone:	(907)269-2083
Division:	Senior and Disabilities Services	Date:	02/03/2016 05:00 PM
Approved By:	Sana Efird, Asst. Commissioner, Finance and Management Services	Date:	02/04/16
Agency:	Health and Social Services		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Analysis

The proposed legislation would amend AS 44.66.010(a)(4) to extend the Commission’s sunset date by eight years to June 30, 2024

The federal government, through its Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, provides funding to support services for individuals over the age of 60 as required by the Older Americans Act (OAA). To be eligible to receive OAA funding, each state must designate a “state unit on aging” and develop a state plan. The State of Alaska has designated Health and Social Services as its state unit on aging.

The operations of Alaska’s state unit on aging are carried out jointly by DHSS’ Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (DSDS) and the Commission on Aging. DSDS administers state and federally funded grant programs. The commission is responsible for developing the state plan and performing advocacy, outreach, and educational activities.

In accordance with OAA Section 305, a state may be divided into a number of planning and service areas or, as in the case of Alaska, be a single planning and service area. OAA Section 306 (a)(6)(D) requires that planning and service agencies:

(D) establish an advisory council consisting of older individuals (including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas) who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs assisted under this Act, family caregivers of such individuals, representatives of older individuals, service providers, representatives of the business community, local elected officials, providers of veterans’ health care (if appropriate), and the general public, to advise continuously the area agency on aging on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan and operations conducted under the plan;

In Alaska, the commission serves as the “advisory council.”

The Senior and Disabilities Services Administrative component receives \$603.2 in Older Americans Act funding, requiring \$166.7 in state match:

- \$248.0 Personal Services to fund two Health Program Manager II Positions (PCN 02-1515, 06-2342)
- \$1.4 Travel for site reviews
- \$520.2 Services
- \$0.3 Commodities

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2016 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	HB 226
Fiscal Note Number:	2
(H) Publish Date:	2/5/2016

Identifier: HB226-DHSS-COA-2-4-16
 Title: EXTEND ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
 Sponsor: HAWKER
 Requester: House HSS

Department: Department of Health and Social Services
 Appropriation: Senior and Disabilities Services
 Allocation: Commission on Aging
 OMB Component Number: 2674

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2017 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2017 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
			FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2017	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Personal Services		478.8	478.8	478.8	478.8	478.8	478.8
Travel		37.7	37.7	37.7	37.7	37.7	37.7
Services		19.2	19.2	19.2	19.2	19.2	19.2
Commodities		4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	0.0	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund		42.9	42.9	42.9	42.9	42.9	42.9
1007 I/A Rcpts		348.1	348.1	348.1	348.1	348.1	348.1
1037 GF/MH		29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6	29.6
1092 MHTAAR		119.1	119.1	119.1	119.1	119.1	119.1
Total	0.0	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7	539.7

Positions

Full-time		4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues							
---------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2016) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2017) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*
(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? n/a

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

The narrative description has been updated.

Prepared By:	Duane Mayes, Director	Phone:	(907)269-2083
Division:	Senior and Disabilities Services	Date:	02/01/2016 08:30 AM
Approved By:	Sana Efird, Asst. Commissioner, Finance and Management Services	Date:	02/04/16
Agency:	Health and Social Services		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Analysis

The proposed legislation would amend AS 44.66.010(a)(4) to extend the Commission's sunset date by eight years to June 30, 2024

The federal government, through its Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, provides funding to support services for individuals over the age of 60 as required by the Older Americans Act (OAA). To be eligible to receive OAA funding, each state must designate a "state unit on aging" and develop a state plan. The State of Alaska has designated Health and Social Services as its state unit on aging.

The operations of Alaska's state unit on aging are carried out jointly by DHSS' Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (DSDS) and the Commission on Aging. DSDS administers state and federally funded grant programs. The commission is responsible for developing the state plan and performing advocacy, outreach, and educational activities.

In accordance with OAA Section 305, a state may be divided into a number of planning and service areas or, as in the case of Alaska, be a single planning and service area. OAA Section 306 (a)(6)(D) requires that planning and service agencies:

(D) establish an advisory council consisting of older individuals (including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas) who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs assisted under this Act, family caregivers of such individuals, representatives of older individuals, service providers, representatives of the business community, local elected officials, providers of veterans' health care (if appropriate), and the general public, to advise continuously the area agency on aging on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan and operations conducted under the plan;

In Alaska, the commission serves as the "advisory council."

The commission consists of eleven seats and has a staff of four full-time employees.

The commission is funded in part (\$348.1) by a reimbursable services agreement from the Senior and Disabilities Services Administration component. A small part (\$73.5) of that Senior and Disabilities Services Administration RSA funding is drawn from a Title III Older Americans Act grant from the federal DHHS Administration for Community Living.

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2016 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	HB 226
Fiscal Note Number:	1
(H) Publish Date:	2/5/2016

Identifier: HB226-DHSS-SCBG-2-4-16
 Title: EXTEND ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
 Sponsor: HAWKER
 Requester: House HSS

Department: Department of Health and Social Services
 Appropriation: Senior and Disabilities Services
 Allocation: Senior Community Based Grants
 OMB Component Number: 2787

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2017 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2017 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services								
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits		6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	0.0	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1002 Fed Rcpts		5,771.3	5,771.3	5,771.3	5,771.3	5,771.3	5,771.3
1004 Gen Fund		1,032.1	1,032.1	1,032.1	1,032.1	1,032.1	1,032.1
Total	0.0	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4	6,803.4

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues							
---------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2016) cost: 0.0 (separate supplemental appropriation required)
 (discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2017) cost: 0.0 (separate capital appropriation required)
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ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

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 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? n/a

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:

Not applicable; initial version.

Prepared By:	Duane Mayes, Director	Phone:	(907)269-2083
Division:	Senior and Disabilities Services	Date:	02/03/2016 05:00 PM
Approved By:	Sana Efird, Asst. Commissioner, Finance and Management Services	Date:	02/04/16
Agency:	Health and Social Services		

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Analysis

The proposed legislation would amend AS 44.66.010(a)(4) to extend the Commission's sunset date by eight years to June 30, 2024

The federal government, through its Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, provides funding to support services for individuals over the age of 60 as required by the Older Americans Act (OAA). To be eligible to receive OAA funding, each state must designate a "state unit on aging" and develop a state plan. The State of Alaska has designated Health and Social Services as its state unit on aging.

The operations of Alaska's state unit on aging are carried out jointly by DHSS' Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (DSDS) and the Commission on Aging. DSDS administers state and federally funded grant programs. The commission is responsible for developing the state plan and performing advocacy, outreach, and educational activities.

In accordance with OAA Section 305, a state may be divided into a number of planning and service areas or, as in the case of Alaska, be a single planning and service area. OAA Section 306 (a)(6)(D) requires that planning and service agencies:

(D) establish an advisory council consisting of older individuals (including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas) who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs assisted under this Act, family caregivers of such individuals, representatives of older individuals, service providers, representatives of the business community, local elected officials, providers of veterans' health care (if appropriate), and the general public, to advise continuously the area agency on aging on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan and operations conducted under the plan;

In Alaska, the commission serves as the "advisory council."

The commission consists of eleven seats and has a staff of four full-time employees.

The Senior Community Based Grants component receives \$5,771.3 in Older American's Act funding, requiring \$1,032.1 in state match dollars. These dollars target the following grant programs:

- National Family Caregiver Support
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services for seniors
- Nutrition Supplement Incentive Program Provider Agreements
- Nutrition Incentive Program for Senior Meals through Schools



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE HAWKER

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE • DISTRICT 28

Anchorage • Glen Alps • Rainbow • Indian • Bird • Girdwood • Portage

House Bill 226 Sponsor Statement

Short Title: Extend Alaska Commission on Aging

House Bill 226 would extend the Alaska Commission on Aging for eight years, until June 30, 2024, based on the recommendations of the Legislative Auditor to the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee.

The recently completed audit found that the Alaska Commission on Aging is serving the public's interest by formulating and approving the comprehensive State Plan for Senior Services; advocating for older Alaskans; providing education programs; making recommendations to the legislature and the governor on legislation, appropriations, programs and services for seniors; and serving as a federally recognized advisory council to satisfy the requirement of the Older Americans Act, allowing Alaska to receive federal funding through the Administration on Community Living.

House Bill 226 is supported by many organizations including the AARP, Access Alaska, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, Anchorage Senior Activity Center, Coalition of Mat-Su Senior Centers, Denakkanaaga, Inc., Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman, Mat-Su Council on Aging, Municipality of Anchorage – Senior Citizens Advisory Commission, North Star Council on Aging, Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc., and Soldotna Area Seniors, Inc.

PUBLISHED: 1/19/16

SESSION: State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska 99801 • (907) 465-4949
INTERIM: 716 W. 4th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • (907) 269-0244
Rep.Mike.Hawker@akleg.gov • www.housemajority.org/hawker



Alaska Commission on Aging Fact Sheet

- The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is an 11 member advisory council whose mission is to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them to lead useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.
- The Alaska Commission on Aging satisfies a requirement of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), allowing Alaska to receive almost \$11 million in federal funding in FY16. The requirements are that the council must:
 - Be comprised of older individuals eligible to participate in OAA-funded programs;
 - Advise the "state agency on aging" regarding matters of aging issues. In Alaska, the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is the state agency on aging as designated by the Governor.
- The Alaska Commission on Aging develops the comprehensive *Alaska State Plan on Senior Services*, makes recommendations on legislation and appropriations beneficial for older Alaskans, and provides education/outreach regarding matters related to aging.
- The Alaska Commission on Aging also serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and advises the AMHTA on the needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Commission, in partnership with the AMHTA and other agencies, published *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015)*. The Commission also makes recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs for Senior Trust Beneficiaries (older people with dementia and other cognitive impairments) and the use of funds that benefit this vulnerable population.
- The Alaska Commission on Aging serves as an advocate and educator regarding the needs of Alaska's older people to help ensure the dignity, health, safety, and independence of Alaska's seniors. In collaboration with partners, the Commission coordinated the *Power of Aging Symposium*, to provide information about senior issues, in addition to the *Alaska Senior Housing Summit*, which was the first and only summit devoted to a discussion of senior housing in Alaska. The Commission hosts regular community forums to encourage senior citizen input on issues affecting them and sponsors the bi-weekly statewide senior legislative advocacy teleconferences during session to examine and discuss legislation of interest to seniors.
- Legislative Audit conducted a sunset audit of the Commission in 2015, concluding that the Commission is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives and that the Commission meets the federal requirement for each state to establish an advisory council to advise the state on matters related to aging.
- The Commission's FY2016 budget is \$542,700 (\$45.9 GF; \$348.1 Interagency Receipts that include federal pass-through funds; \$29.6 GF/MH; and \$119.1 MHTAAR). The commission consists of eleven members and has a staff of four full-time employees.

Contact: Denise Daniello, Executive Director of the Alaska Commission on Aging, 465-4879 or
denise.daniello@alaska.gov.

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Email: rwsivertsen@gmail.com
Term: Serves on ACoA Board in the designated seat for the
Pioneer Home Advisory Board Chair

Anna Frank, Public Member
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Email: afrank@gci.net
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Term Expires: 9/1/2017

ALL 11 SEATS VOTE (6 = A QUORUM)
ACoA Staff

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Juneau, AK 99811-0693
www.alaskaaging.org



ALASKA DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

06-20090-15

SUMMARY A Sunset Review of the Department of Health and Social Services,
OF: Alaska Commission on Aging

Why DLA Performed This Audit

The purpose of this audit was to determine if there is a demonstrated public need for the commission's continued existence and whether its termination date should be extended. Currently the commission will terminate on June 30, 2016, and will have one year from that date to conclude its administrative operations.

Report Conclusions

Overall, the audit concluded that the Alaska Commission on Aging (commission) is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives through advocacy, outreach, and education. Furthermore, the commission meets the federal requirement that each state establish an advisory council to advise the state on aging matters. We recommend that the commission's termination date be extended eight years to June 30, 2024.

Analysis of Public Need

The commission has operated in the public's interest by formulating and approving a comprehensive statewide plan — the State Plan for Senior Services. The plan identifies and addresses the concerns and needs of older Alaskans, and fulfills a federal requirement necessary to receive Administration on Aging grant funding.

The commission has also operated in the public's interest by serving as an advocate for, and educator on, the needs of older Alaskans. The commission submitted over 50 recommendations to the legislature and governor regarding legislation and appropriations for programs or services that benefit older Alaskans. Furthermore, the commission collaborated with several state and local organizations on commission projects including development of the State Plan for Senior Services and sponsoring educational and outreach events.

The audit identified two operational changes that would allow the commission to better serve the public's interests.

Findings and Recommendations

1. The commission's executive director should implement and follow procedures to public notice all commission meetings.
2. The commission's chairperson should review and approve the legislation watch list prior to distribution.

Report Highlights

Why DLA Performed This Audit

The purpose of this audit was to determine if there is a demonstrated public need for the commission's continued existence and whether its termination date should be extended. Currently the commission will terminate on June 30, 2016, and will have one year from that date to conclude its administrative operations.

What DLA Recommends

1. The commission's executive director should implement and follow procedures to public notice all commission meetings.
2. The commission's chairperson should review and approve the legislation watch list prior to distribution.

A Sunset Review of the Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska Commission on Aging

April 10, 2015

Audit Control Number 06-20090-15

REPORT CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the audit concluded that the Alaska Commission on Aging (commission) is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives through advocacy, outreach, and education. Furthermore, the commission meets the federal requirement that each state establish an advisory council to advise the state on aging matters. We recommend that the commission's termination date be extended eight years to June 30, 2024.

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC NEED

The commission has operated in the public's interest by formulating and approving a comprehensive statewide plan — the *State Plan for Senior Services*. The plan identifies and addresses the concerns and needs of older Alaskans, and fulfills a federal requirement necessary to receive Administration on Aging grant funding.

The commission has also operated in the public's interest by serving as an advocate for, and educator on, the needs of older Alaskans. The commission submitted over 50 recommendations to the legislature and governor regarding legislation and appropriations for programs or services that benefit older Alaskans. Furthermore, the commission collaborated with several state and local organizations on commission projects including development of the *State Plan for Senior Services* and sponsoring educational and outreach events.

The audit identified two operational changes that would allow the commission to better serve the public's interests.

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P.O. Box 113300
Juneau, AK 99811-3300
(907) 465-3830
FAX (907) 465-2347
legaudit@akleg.gov

April 30, 2015

Members of the Legislative Budget
and Audit Committee:

In accordance with the provisions of Title 24 and Title 44 of the Alaska Statutes (sunset legislation), we have reviewed the activities of the Alaska Commission on Aging, and the attached report is submitted for your review.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SERVICES
ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING
SUNSET REVIEW

April 10, 2015

Audit Control Number
06-20090-15

The audit was conducted as required by AS 44.66.050 and under the authority of AS 24.20.271(1). Per AS 44.66.010(a)(4), the Alaska Commission on Aging is scheduled to terminate June 30, 2016. We recommend the legislature extend the termination date to June 30, 2024.

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. Fieldwork procedures utilized in the course of developing the findings and recommendations presented in this report are discussed in the Objectives, Scope, and Methodology section.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kris Curtis".

Kris Curtis, CPA, CISA
Legislative Auditor

ABBREVIATIONS

ACN	Audit Control Number
AHFC	Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
AMHTA	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
AOA	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging
AS	Alaska Statutes
CISA	Certified Information Systems Auditor
commission	Alaska Commission on Aging
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Services
DLA	Division of Legislative Audit
DSDS	Division of Senior and Disabilities Services
FY	Fiscal Year
OAA	Older Americans Act

CONTENTS

	Organization and Function	1
	Report Conclusions	5
	Findings and Recommendations	7
	Analysis of Public Need	9
	Objectives, Scope, and Methodology	17
Appendices	Appendices Summary	21
	Appendix A: Alaska Commission on Aging Survey Results	23
Agency Responses	Department of Health and Social Services	27
	Alaska Commission on Aging	29
Exhibits	Exhibit 1: Alaska Commission on Aging Members as of January 31, 2015	1
	Exhibit 2: Alaska Commission on Aging Schedule of Operating Expenditures and Funding Sources July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014	10

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ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

Alaska Commission on Aging

The Alaska Commission on Aging (commission) was established in 1981 for the purpose of helping ensure that people over the age of 60 maintain good health, honor, and dignity.¹ The commission is organizationally located within the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS).

The governing statutes of the commission, AS 47.45.200-.290, outline the commission's authority, purpose, and scope of work. The primary functions of the commission include the following:

1. Approve a comprehensive statewide plan that identifies the concerns and needs of older Alaskans and, with reference to the approved plan, prepare and submit to the governor and legislature an annual analysis and evaluation of the services provided to older Alaskans.
2. Make recommendations directly to the governor and the legislature with respect to legislation, regulations, and appropriations for programs or services that benefit older Alaskans.
3. Encourage the development of municipal commissions serving older Alaskans and community-oriented programs and services for the benefit of older Alaskans.

Exhibit 1

Alaska Commission on Aging Members January 31, 2015

Mary Shields, Chair
Public Member

Rolf W. Numme, Vice Chair
Public Member

David A. Blacketer
Public Member

Marie Darlin
Public Member

Eleanor Dementi
Public Member

Edna DeVries
Public Member

Anna M. Frank
Public Member

Rachel E. Greenberg
Senior Service Provider

Duane Mayes
*Division of Senior and
Disabilities Services Director
Commissioner Designee*

Paula R. Pawlowski
*Serve Alaska
Executive Director
Commissioner Designee*

Robert W. Sivertsen
*Pioneers' Homes Advisory
Board Member*

¹Chapter 79, Sec. 1(b), SLA 1981.

-
4. Employ an executive director who serves at the pleasure of the commission.
 5. Help older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and productive lives.
 6. Request and receive reports and audits from state agencies and local institutions concerned with older Alaskans' conditions and needs.
 7. Upon request, give assistance to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation senior housing office in administering the senior housing loan program under AS 18.56.710-.799 and in the performance of the office's other duties under AS 18.56.700.
 8. Provide recommendations concerning the integrated comprehensive mental health program for persons with dementia-related illnesses to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority for its review and consideration. Also, provide recommendations regarding the use of monies in the mental health trust settlement income account in a manner consistent with regulations adopted under AS 47.30.031.

The commission is comprised of 11 members: one senior service provider and seven public members appointed by the governor who serve overlapping four-year terms, two department commissioners or their designees, and the Alaska Pioneers' Homes Advisory Board chair. At least six of the commissioners must be 60 years of age or older, with at least two being 65 years of age or older. Commission members should be representative of low income persons, minorities, and rural and urban areas. Additionally, appointments should secure statewide geographical representation on the commission. The commission is comprised of four staff: an executive director, two planners, and an administrative assistant. The FY 15 budget is \$557,800.

The commission is required to conduct four meetings annually. These meetings include the presentation of reports from governmental and private organizations who serve older Alaskans. The commission has also formed several committees to carry out its duties. The commission's standing committees include: executive,

planning, legislative advocacy, bylaws, older workers' recognition, and nominating. Committee activities are reported during quarterly commission meetings.

Federally Required State Unit on Aging

The federal government, through its Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, provides funding to support services for individuals over the age of 60 as required by the *Older Americans Act* (OAA).² To be eligible to receive OAA funding, each state must designate a "state unit on aging" and develop a state plan. The State of Alaska has designated DHSS as its state unit on aging.

The operations of Alaska's state unit on aging are carried out jointly by DHSS' Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (DSDS) and the commission. DSDS administers state and federally funded grant programs. The commission is responsible for developing the state plan and performing advocacy, outreach, and educational activities.

In accordance with OAA Section 305, a state may be divided into a number of planning and service areas or, as in the case of Alaska, be a single planning and service area. OAA Section 306(a)(6)(D) requires that planning and service area agencies:

Establish an advisory council consisting of older individuals (including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas) who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs assisted under this Act, family caregivers of such individuals, representatives of older individuals, service providers, representatives of the business community, local elected officials, providers of veterans' health care (if appropriate), and the general public, to advise continuously the area agency on aging on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan and operations conducted under the plan.

In Alaska, the commission serves as the "advisory council."

²Funding is awarded in accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended in 2006.

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REPORT CONCLUSIONS

In developing our conclusion regarding whether the Alaska Commission on Aging's (commission) termination date should be extended, commission operations were evaluated using the 11 factors set out in AS 44.66.050. Under the State's "sunset" law, these factors are to be used in assessing whether an agency has demonstrated a public policy need for continuing operations.

Overall, the audit concluded that the commission is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives through advocacy, outreach, and education. Furthermore, the commission meets the federal requirement that each state establish an advisory council to advise the state on aging matters including developing and administering a state plan, and operations conducted under the plan.

In accordance with AS 44.66.010(a)(4), the commission is scheduled to terminate June 30, 2016. We recommend that the commission's termination date be extended eight years to June 30, 2024.

The audit makes two recommendations to improve commission operations: one to improve public noticing commission meetings, and one to reduce resources spent on monitoring legislation not directly related to the commission's objectives. (See Recommendations 1 and 2.)

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Alaska Commission on Aging's (commission) 2007 sunset audit included one recommendation to consider amending state law to reflect the commission's current mission. In 2003, the commission's grant responsibilities were transferred to the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services when the commission was moved from the Department of Administration to the Department of Health and Social Services. Statutes were not updated at that time to reflect the reorganization. The prior recommendation was addressed in 2008 when the commission's governing statutes were amended, removing responsibilities for grant administration.

Recommendation 1: The commission's executive director should implement and follow procedures to public notice all commission meetings.

The commission did not provide adequate notice for all public meetings held during the audit period. Specifically:

- The commission did not provide reasonable advance notice for one of nine tested quarterly meetings.³
- The commission did not provide reasonable advance notice for two of nine legislative teleconferences held during 2011.⁴
- The commission did not public notice any of the 40 committee meetings held between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015.

Alaska Statute 44.62.310(e) requires that reasonable public notice be given for all public meetings of a governmental body. Due to oversight, the commission did not consistently follow written procedures for publishing notices of all quarterly meetings and teleconferences. Furthermore, the commission was unaware that public notice requirements applied to the committee meetings. Inadequate public noticing may decrease the commission's effectiveness by reducing public input.

We recommend the commission's executive director implement and follow procedures to public notice all commission meetings. Procedures should include public noticing commission committee meetings.

³Reasonable advance notice is defined as 10 calendar days. Between July 1, 2010, and September 18, 2014, 17 quarterly meetings were held, of which nine were tested.

⁴One public notice is issued by the commission each calendar year for all teleconferences held during the year. Public notice for teleconferences held during calendar years 2011 through 2014 were tested.

**Recommendation 2:
The commission's
chairperson should
review and approve the
legislation watch list prior
to distribution.**

Between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015, the commission published five annual watch lists identifying legislative bills that were of interest to the commission. However, the watch lists included at least eight bills unrelated to the commission's statutory objectives. Unrelated bills included topics such as exempting firearms from federal regulation, prohibiting the use of cell phones while driving in school zones or on school property, and the length of regular legislative sessions.

In accordance with AS 47.45.240(a)(2), the commission is required to make recommendations to the governor and legislature with respect to legislation and appropriations for programs and services that benefit older Alaskans. The commission periodically holds legislative teleconferences to gather public input and discuss legislation affecting seniors. Watch lists are distributed to public participants attending the commission's teleconferences to facilitate discussion when deciding what legislation the commission should support.

A commission staff member is responsible for preparing and distributing the watch list to teleconference participants. The audit found there was no review of the watch list to ensure its contents accorded with the commission's statutory objectives. Monitoring legislation outside of the commission's objectives results in an inefficient use of resources.

We recommend the commission chairperson review and approve the legislation watch list prior to distribution.

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC NEED

The following analysis of the Alaska Commission on Aging's (commission) activities relate to the public need factors defined in AS 44.66.050(c). This analysis is not intended to be comprehensive, but addresses those areas we were able to cover within the scope of our review.

As part of the audit, a survey was conducted. The survey was sent to 218 service providers and stakeholders, and 64 (29 percent) responded. The survey questions and responses are presented as Appendix A.

Sunset Criteria No. 1

Determine the extent to which the board or commission has operated in the public interest.

The commission has operated in the public's interest by formulating and approving a comprehensive statewide plan — the *State Plan for Senior Services*. The plan identifies and addresses the concerns and needs of older Alaskans, and fulfills a federal requirement necessary to receive U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging (AOA) grant funding.

The commission served as an advocate for and educator on the needs of older Alaskans. Between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015, the commission provided over 50 recommendations to the legislature and governor regarding legislation and appropriations for programs or services that benefit older Alaskans. The commission worked with both the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) to assess and provide education regarding seniors' needs. The commission's work with AMHTA and AHFC included developing and issuing *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias*, hosting a senior housing summit to address seniors' statewide housing needs, and hosting the Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium providing education on seniors' role in society.

Survey results indicate that 72 percent of respondents believe the commission operates in the public's interest either *always* or *most of the time*, while 12 percent responded *sometimes*.

Sunset Criteria No. 2

Determine the extent to which the operation of the board or commission has been impeded or enhanced by existing statutes, procedures, and practices that it has adopted, and any other matter, including budgetary, resource, and personnel matters.

Commission operations have been impeded by commission staff not actively maintaining the commission's website. Minutes for meetings held from September 2013 through January 2015 were not available via the commission's website at the time of the audit. Additionally, the website contained numerous broken or outdated hyperlinks. When informed of these deficiencies, the commission staff significantly addressed the problems.

As shown in Exhibit 2, total FY 14 commission expenditures were \$526,124. The general fund provided approximately 64 percent of funding.

Exhibit 2

**Alaska Commission on Aging
Schedule of Operating Expenditures and Funding Sources
July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2014
(Unaudited)**

Expenditures	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14
Personal Services	\$ 379,503	\$ 403,294	\$ 363,921	\$ 440,208	\$ 462,067
Travel	74,042	41,995	44,517	64,920	32,595
Services	34,145	33,392	23,028	30,386	25,805
Commodities	4,953	5,832	14,354	7,396	5,657
Total Expenditures	\$ 492,643	\$ 484,513	\$ 445,820	\$ 542,910	\$ 526,124
Funding Sources					
General Fund	\$ 354,607	\$ 394,900	\$ 326,896	\$ 392,331	\$ 338,090
Federal	53,652	-	22,725	37,184	74,529
Alaska Mental Health Trust	84,384	89,613	96,200	113,395	113,505
Total Funding Sources	\$ 492,643	\$ 484,513	\$ 445,821	\$ 542,910	\$ 526,124

Source: Alaska Commission on Aging.

Sunset Criteria No. 3

Determine the extent to which the board or commission has recommended statutory changes that are generally of benefit to the public interest.

As Alaska's planning and service area agency, the commission is federally required to advocate for the needs of older Alaskans. The commission's advocacy activities include commenting on and supporting budget increments, as well as legislation that will benefit older Alaskans.

The commission annually sets legislative advocacy priorities to address the needs of older Alaskans and writes position papers in support of advocacy priorities. Between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015, the commission wrote 20 position papers advocating for the needs of older Alaskans. Additionally, the commission wrote letters of support for 47 legislative bills or appropriations for programs or services that benefit older Alaskans. Position papers were submitted to legislators and the governor, and letters of support were submitted to bill sponsors.

Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents stated that legislative bills and priorities supported by the commission are generally of benefit to older Alaskans either *always* or *most of the time*, while 25 percent of respondents stated *some of the time*.

Sunset Criteria No. 4

Determine the extent to which the board or commission has encouraged interested persons to report to it concerning the effect of its regulations and decisions on the effectiveness of service, economy of service, and availability of service that it has provided.

Since the commission does not establish regulations or provide services, this criterion is not applicable.

Sunset Criteria No. 5

Determine the extent to which the board or commission has encouraged public participation in the making of its regulations and decisions.

The commission encourages participation in its decision-making by allotting time for public comment during its quarterly meetings, one of which is held in a rural location each year. During the audit period, the commission met at least four times per year as statutorily required. Additionally, committees formed by the commission met 40 times between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015. A public comment period was available and public testimony was given at all commission meetings.

The commission also encouraged public participation in the formation of the FY 12 through FY 15 *State Plan for Senior Services* by surveying seniors and senior providers, and holding community forums throughout the State. To help develop the state plan, the commission formed a steering committee that included participation from local organizations, municipalities, senior providers, and senior citizens.

Fifty-three percent of survey respondents stated that the commission encouraged public participation in the making of its decisions either *always* or *most of the time*, while 20 percent of survey respondents stated *some of the time*.

Sunset Criteria No. 6

Determine the efficiency with which public inquiries or complaints regarding the activities of the board or commission filed with it, with the department to which a board or commission is administratively assigned, or with the office of victims' rights or the office of the ombudsman have been processed and resolved.

No complaints against the commission were filed with the Department of Health and Social Services' (DHSS) Commissioner's Office, the Office of Victims' Rights, the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions, or the Office of the Ombudsman from July 1, 2010, through January 30, 2015.

Sunset Criteria No. 7

Determine the extent to which a board or commission that regulates entry into an occupation or profession has presented qualified applicants to serve the public.

Since the commission does not regulate occupations or professions, this criterion is not applicable.

Sunset Criteria No. 8

Determine the extent to which state personnel practices, including affirmative action requirements, have been complied with by the board or commission in its own activities and in the area of activity or interest.

This audit found no indication that hiring practices or commission appointments were contrary to state personnel practices. No complaints against the commission were filed with the Department of Administration's Division of Personnel, the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, from July 1, 2010, through January 30, 2015.

Sunset Criteria No. 9

Determine the extent to which statutory, regulatory, budgetary, or other changes are necessary to enable the board or commission to better serve the interests of the public and to comply with the factors enumerated in this subsection.

The audit identified two operational changes that would allow the commission to better serve the public's interests. The first concerns public noticing meetings. Public notice was not provided for commission committee meetings. Additionally, public notice was not consistently provided with reasonable time in advance of quarterly commission meetings and legislative teleconferences. (See Recommendation 1.) Issuing adequate public notice for all meetings will allow for increased public participation in the commission's decisions and activities.

The second area for improvement concerns monitoring pending legislation. Legislation watch lists prepared by commission staff were not reviewed and approved by the commission prior to distribution to participants of legislative teleconferences. (See Recommendation 2.) Review and approval of watch lists will help ensure that the commission is tracking legislation pertinent to its objectives and purpose.

Alaska Statute 47.45.240(a)(3) requires the commission to encourage the development of municipal commissions serving older Alaskans. Municipal commissions currently operate in the major population hubs — Juneau, Fairbanks, and Anchorage. During the audit period, commission efforts to encourage development of municipal commissions included meeting with the Kodiak mayor to discuss a municipal commission in Kodiak and giving a presentation to interested parties in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

According to the commission, there was limited interest from municipalities in forming new commissions due to resource constraints. Consequently, encouraging the development of municipal commissions was not a priority.

Sunset Criteria No. 10

Determine the extent to which the board or commission has effectively attained its objectives and purposes and the efficiency with which the board or commission has operated.

The commission actively worked towards attaining the following primary objectives:

- Prepare and approve a comprehensive statewide plan that identifies and addresses the concerns and needs of older Alaskans.
- Prepare an annual analysis and evaluation of the services provided to older Alaskans.
- Advocate for older Alaskans' needs.
- Make recommendations to AMHTA regarding programs and use of funds.

The commission prepared and approved the FY 12 through FY 15 *State Plan for Senior Services*. The plan was submitted to the DHSS commissioner, the governor, and the AOA; all three entities approved the plan.

As required by AS 47.45.240(a)(1), the commission prepared annual evaluations and analyses of services provided to older Alaskans in reference to the state plan. The evaluations and analyses were compiled into annual reports. These reports also included a summary of the commission's activities during the year. The annual reports were submitted to the legislature and governor.

In advocating for older Alaskans, the commission developed 20 position papers making recommendations on legislation and appropriations that the commission believed to be beneficial for older Alaskans. Additionally, the commission wrote letters of support for 47 legislative bills considered beneficial for older Alaskans.

As required by AS 47.45.240(a)(8), the commission regularly presented at AMHTA board meetings regarding the needs of older Alaskans. Additionally, the commission provided recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs and use of funds.

Sunset Criteria No. 11

Determine the extent to which the board or commission duplicates the activities of another governmental agency or the private sector.

The commission's advocacy efforts are duplicative of other organizations that share common goals such as AARP and the Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network. Common goals shared between the commission and other organizations include availability of senior housing and in-home services. Although the commission's advocacy efforts are duplicated by other organizations, as the State's planning and service area agency, the commission is required by the *Older Americans Act* to advocate on behalf of older Alaskans. *Older Americans Act* advocacy requirements include making recommendations regarding budgets and legislation affecting older Alaskans.

The commission collaborates with several state and local organizations on commission projects. The commission's collaborative efforts included developing the FY 12 through FY 15 *State Plan for Senior Services*, sponsoring educational and outreach events such as the Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium, and assisting with community oriented programs such as the senior fall prevention campaign.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

In accordance with Title 24 and 44 of the Alaska Statutes, we have reviewed the Alaska Commission on Aging's (commission) activities to determine if there is a demonstrated public need for its continued existence and if it has been operating in an efficient and effective manner.

As required by AS 44.66.050(a), this report shall be considered by the committee of reference during the legislative oversight process in determining whether the commission should be reestablished. Currently, under AS 44.66.010(a)(4), the commission will terminate on June 30, 2016, and have one year from that date to conclude its administrative operations.

Objectives

The three central audit objectives were:

1. Determine whether the commission's termination date should be extended.
2. Determine whether the board is operating in the public's interest.
3. Provide a current status of recommendations made in the prior sunset audit.

Scope and Methodology

The assessment of commission operations and performance was based on the criteria established in AS 44.66.050(c). Under the State's sunset law, these criteria are to be used in assessing whether an agency has demonstrated a public need for continuing operations.

The audit reviewed the commission's operations and activities from FY 11 through January 31, 2015. A schedule of commission operating expenditures and funding sources was prepared for FY 10 through FY 14.

During the course of the audit, the following were reviewed and evaluated:

- Applicable statutes to identify commission functions and responsibilities, including member composition and required qualifications.
- Commission member applications and resumés filed with the Office of the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to verify that

members and commission composition met statutory requirements.

- Commission meeting minutes to understand commission proceedings and activities as well as to determine the nature and extent of public input.
- The FY 12 through FY 15 *State Plan for Senior Services* to verify compliance with statutory requirements and identify public participation in developing the plan.
- Publications issued by the commission concerning older Alaskans' needs including *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias*, the executive summary of the *Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium*, and the commission's annual reports for FY 11 through FY 14.
- Reports presented during commission meetings by state agencies and local institutions.
- Public notice documentation to determine whether public notices for commission meetings were published as required by Alaska Statutes.
- Commission budget information from the Governor's Office of Management and Budget and expenditure activity from the Alaska State Accounting System to gain an understanding of the commission's operations.

We inquired of the following organizations to determine if any complaints were filed against the commission or its members, and whether complaints were efficiently resolved:

- Department of Health and Social Services' (DHSS) Office of the Commissioner
- Office of the Ombudsman
- Alaska State Commission for Human Rights
- Office of Victims' Rights
- Department of Administration's Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

-
- Office of the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions
 - United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

A random sample of nine commission meetings was selected from 17 meetings held between July 1, 2010, and September 18, 2014, and assessed for compliance with public noticing requirements. A sample of over 50 percent was considered necessary as results of testing were significant to developing report conclusions. The testing results were projected to the population.

All commission staff and two commission members including the current commission chair and the DHSS commissioner's designee were interviewed to gain an understanding of the commission's activities. Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) representatives were interviewed to gain an understanding of the commission's collaboration with AMHTA and AHFC in addressing the needs of older Alaskans. Additionally, AMHTA meeting minutes were reviewed to identify the commission's recommendations to AMHTA regarding programs and trust fund use.

A random sample of five of 47 letters of support for legislative bills, and three of 20 position papers providing recommendations on legislation and appropriations issued between July 1, 2010, and January 31, 2015, were selected and assessed for compliance with the purposes and duties of the commission. In determining sample sizes, the inherent risks were considered limited, and the risks of noncompliance were considered low. The testing results were projected to the population. Watch lists of legislative bills being monitored and discussed by the commission were also reviewed.

A survey of senior service providers and stakeholders was conducted to obtain opinions on various aspects of the commission's activities, including whether the commission operated in the public's interest, and if a public need exists for the commission's continuation. The population of senior service providers and stakeholders included Division of Senior and Disabilities Services care coordinators, aging and disability resource centers, and senior centers. The survey was sent to 218 service providers and stakeholders, and 64 (29 percent) responded.

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APPENDICES

As a part of this audit, a survey was provided to 218 senior service providers and stakeholders. Of those surveyed, 64 (29 percent) responded. The survey results are summarized in Appendix A.

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APPENDIX A:

Alaska Commission on Aging Survey Results

Question 1: In your opinion, does the commission operate in the public interest?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Always	27	42%	72%
Most of the time	19	30%	
Some of the time	8	12%	12%
Never	0	0%	
Unsure	10	16%	16%
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 2: Are you familiar with the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	47	73%	73%
No	17	27%	27%
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 2a: Do you believe the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services adequately addresses the concerns and needs of older Alaskans?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	20	43%	43%
No	15	32%	32%
Unsure	10	21%	25%
No Opinion	2	4%	
Total Respondents	47	100%	100%

Question 3: Are the legislative bills and priorities supported by the commission generally of benefit to older Alaskans?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Always	16	25%	58%
Most of the time	21	33%	
Some of the time	16	25%	25%
Never	0	0%	
Unsure	9	14%	17%
No Opinion	2	3%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 4: Does the commission encourage public participation in the making of its decisions, including decisions to support specific legislation?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Always	15	23%	53%
Most of the time	19	30%	
Some of the time	13	20%	22%
Never	1	2%	
Unsure	11	17%	25%
No Opinion	5	8%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 5: Does the commission encourage the development of community-oriented programs and services for older Alaskans?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Always	17	26%	56%
Most of the time	19	30%	
Some of the time	11	17%	19%
Never	1	2%	
Unsure	11	17%	25%
No Opinion	5	8%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 6: Does commission membership adequately represent the various interests of older Alaskans?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	28	44%	44%
No	12	19%	19%
Unsure	19	29%	37%
No Opinion	5	8%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 7: Do you believe there are other agencies, government or private, that serve the same purpose or duplicate the activity of the commission?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	11	17%	17%
No	25	39%	39%
Unsure	23	36%	44%
No Opinion	5	8%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 8: Has the commission been effective in helping older Alaskans lead dignified, useful, and meaningful lives?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	38	59%	59%
No	3	5%	5%
Unsure	18	28%	36%
No Opinion	5	8%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

Question 9: Do you believe a public need exists for the continuation of the commission?

Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	
Yes	42	66%	66%
No	4	6%	6%
Unsure	12	19%	28%
No Opinion	6	9%	
Total Respondents	64	100%	100%

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Agency Response from the Department of Health and Social Services



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Health and Social Services

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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RECEIVED
MAY 27 2015
LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

May 26, 2015

Kris Curtis, CPA, CISA
Legislative Auditor
Legislative Budget and Audit Committee
Division of Legislative Audit
P.O. Box 113300
Juneau, Alaska 99811-3300

Dear Ms. Curtis:

RE: Confidential Preliminary Audit Report, Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Alaska Commission on Aging Sunset Review (ACoA) on April 10, 2015

We appreciate the recommendation that the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) be extended to June 30, 2024. Below are the responses for each of the recommendations included in the preliminary audit report dated May 7, 2015.

Recommendation No. 1

The commission's executive director should implement and follow procedures to provide public notice for all commission meetings.

DHSS concurs with the recommendation. It is the practice of the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) to calendar its quarterly board meetings one year in advance and provide those dates on the published agenda for each meeting. Additionally, it posts the statewide legislative advocacy teleconference dates through the state's online public notices during the legislative session.

DHSS has posted the fiscal year 2014 and 2015 ACoA committee meeting agendas and approved minutes to the commission's website at the following link

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/acoa/Pages/default.aspx>. ACoA has also updated its practices to provide notice of the committee meeting dates on the State's online public notice website.

Recommendation No. 2

The commission's chairperson should review and approve the legislative watch list prior to distribution.

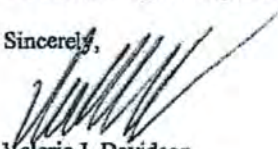
DHSS concurs with the recommendation. ACoA has amended its policy and procedure manual requesting the commission chair and/or its legislative advocacy committee chair to approve the

Ms. Kris Curtis, CPA, CISA
May 26, 2015
Page 2 of 2

watch list prior to public distribution. This policy and procedure and was approved by the ACoA By-Laws committee prior to the commission's May board meeting.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to address these outstanding issues and to provide additional insight into your evaluation of them.

Sincerely,



Valerie J. Davidson
Commissioner

Cc: Sana Efird, Assistant Commissioner
Jon Sherwood, Deputy Commissioner
Mary E. Shields, Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging
Denise Daniello, ACoA Executive Director
Linnea Osborne, Accountant V

Agency Response from the Alaska Commission on Aging



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of
Health and Social Services

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

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RECEIVED
MAY 19 2015
LEGISLATIVE AUDIT

May 19, 2015

Kris Curtis, CPA, CISA
Legislative Auditor
P.O. Box 113300
Juneau, AK 99811-3300

Subject: Response to Confidential Preliminary Report, Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS),
Alaska Commission on Aging Sunset Review

Dear Ms. Curtis:

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) has received the confidential preliminary report regarding the findings from the audit conducted by the Division of Legislative Audit in preparation for the commission's termination date of June 30, 2016. We appreciate this opportunity to provide a response to the recommendations identified in the audit findings and our proposed corrective action strategies.

Recommendation #1: The commission's executive director should implement and follow procedures to provide public notice for all commission meetings. (Please see page 7.)

Response: ACoA concurs with the audit's findings. Based on this recommendation, ACoA's executive director has directed staff to post on-line public meeting notices for all ACoA board and committee meetings following state regulation regarding public notification of meetings, AS 44.62.310(e). As a practice, the commission calendars the quarterly board meetings one year in advance and lists those dates on the published agenda for each meeting. Further, we post all of the statewide legislative advocacy teleconference dates on the online public notices in advance of those meetings for the duration of legislative session. We believe that audit recommendation #1 has been addressed through these corrective actions.

Recommendation #2: The commission's chairperson should review and approve the legislative watch list prior to distribution. (Please see page 8.)

Response: ACoA concurs with the audit's findings. Based on this recommendation, ACoA has amended the commission's policy and procedure manual with a new requirement for the commission chair and/or ACoA's legislative advocacy committee chair to review and approve the watch list prior to public distribution. The commission recommends adding the chair of ACoA's legislative advocacy committee to provide an alternate commission member in the event that the chair is not available in order to provide timely review and approval of the watch list prior to the senior legislative advocacy teleconference meetings. ACoA's approved policy and procedure amended manual is attached to this response. Further, we have implemented this practice for the remaining FY15 senior legislative advocacy teleconference meetings. We believe that audit recommendation #2 has been addressed through this corrective action.

Supplemental Comments

Alaska is the state with the fastest growing senior population in the nation for the past five years, and people age 60+ are the fastest growing demographic in the State. This demographic trend is due to the large number of aging baby boomers who arrived in the state during the economic boom of the pipeline era (1970s-1980s) and have remained permanent residents.

The commission is charged with planning, advocacy, education, and interagency collaboration to address the needs and concerns of Alaska seniors and their caregivers. By statute, we advise the Governor and Legislature of the needs of Alaskans age 60 and older and coordinate with multiple agencies statewide to ensure that senior interests are considered in their plans for service provision. The commission is a resource and respected voice for older Alaskans. We would like to take this opportunity to offer further comments regarding this audit review that relate to the commission's core service activities that were not noted in the management letter.

Sunset Criteria No. 1: Determine the extent to which the board, commission, or program has operated in the public interest. (Please see page 9).

Education/Public Awareness Activities

In addition to ACoA's educational activities already identified in the audit, the commission engages in other public awareness efforts that we would like to bring attention. First, the commission, in partnership with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the DHSS contracted with the UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research to produce the "Report on the Economic Well-being of Alaska Seniors (2007)" that focused on the social and economic resources that older Alaskans bring to the communities where they live. To our knowledge, this was the first report to publicly recognize the economic value of the retirement industry.

Second, the commission conducted two targeted public outreach and education efforts to promote health and reduce injury for Alaska seniors in coordination with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the DHSS division of public health. The *Healthy Body, Healthy Brain Campaign* focused on the relationship between positive lifestyle choices - healthy eating, physical activity, mental challenges, and social engagement - and reducing the risk for developing dementia. The commission also spearheaded the creation of the *Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition*, which included participation from many DHSS agencies, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and senior service providers, to help reduce accidental falls, which are the number one cause of injury to Alaskans age 65 and older. This effort included a senior fall prevention toolkit of education materials for senior centers, media promotions, and participation in community presentations.

Third, the commission partners annually with the Department of Labor's Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training Program (MASST) to promote awareness of the contributions of the older worker during "Employ Older Alaskan Workers Week" through a Governor's proclamation, presentations, and media efforts to strengthen a diversified workforce.

Finally, we would like to note that the commission's Alaska Senior Housing Summit mentioned in the audit was the *first and only* conference devoted to the discussion of senior housing issues in the state. (Please see page 9, fourth paragraph). The purpose of the summit was to bring together policy makers, housing resource program specialists, seniors, senior providers, and community stakeholders to discuss the pressing needs for affordable, appropriate and sustainable senior housing along the continuum of care that include independent senior housing, senior housing with support services, and long-term care housing such as assisted living facilities and nursing homes. The summit was well-attended and received high commendation based on participant response to the conference

evaluation surveys. A summary of the Summit's proceedings was published in a white paper that was distributed to policy makers and public members.

Planning Activities

We would like to take this opportunity to provide follow-up information concerning *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias*. (Please see page 9, fourth paragraph.) The Roadmap was developed in response to the former administration's request to ACoA for a statewide comprehensive approach to address the multiple and complex challenges that dementia presents to individuals, their families, caregivers, and the long-term care system in Alaska. The commission partnered with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska, DHSS division of senior and disabilities services, and coordinated efforts of several other agencies to develop the Roadmap, the *first ever* state plan to address the care needs of a growing population of Alaskans impacted by dementia. Advanced age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease.

Due to the aging of Alaska's population, particularly the increase of those age 85 years and older, Alzheimer's disease is rapidly becoming a critical public health issue and one of the few major causes of death that is rising in Alaska. In addition to outcomes from community forums and caregiver surveys, the Roadmap also includes findings from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), which is the first time that surveillance data has been gathered in Alaska about perceived cognitive impairment. The Roadmap includes an implementation plan of prioritized strategies and conveners to implement the specific strategies. The Roadmap was presented at the Alzheimer's Vision to Reality Conference (November 2014), Alaska's Public Health Summit (January 2015), Medical Care Advisory Committee (January 2015), and to the State House Health and Social Services Committee (March 2015). The plan is published and posted on ACoA's website.

Sunset Criteria No. 9: Determine the extent to which statutory, regulatory, budgeting, or other changes are necessary to enable the agency, board or commission to better serve the interests of the public and to comply with the factors enumerated in this subsection. (Please see pages 13-14.)

The commission regularly partners with municipal senior commissions with respect to our core services of advocacy, planning, and public awareness to strengthen supports for seniors. (Please see page 14, second paragraph. To reinforce advocacy efforts, the commission collaborates with municipal senior commissions to gather input about local senior needs through surveys and community forums that have statewide implications. We attempt to address these needs in the commission's budget and policy recommendations that form the base for our annual advocacy priorities. As a result, the municipal commissions often work with their local governing bodies to pass resolutions that support a shared platform of senior advocacy priorities which they submit to their legislators.

The commission also participates in the planning efforts of municipal senior commissions. We provide technical assistance, data, and information as requested to develop their senior needs assessments. In October 2014, the commission provided technical assistance to stakeholders of the MatSu borough in response to their interest to implement a regional senior advisory commission. The MatSu planning efforts resulted in the formation of the MatSu Senior Advisory Council. The Council invited an ACoA Commission member, who is also a MatSu resident, to serve on their board.

Regarding public awareness, the commission collaborates with the Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Advisory Commission and the Anchorage Muni Senior Advisory Commission in their annual planning activities for "May is Older Americans Month in Alaska" to honor older Alaskans. The commission requests the official proclamation,

invites the Governor or their designee to attend the celebration, and co-hosts one of the events with a municipal commission as often as possible. For the 2013 Older Alaskans Month celebration, the commission partnered with the DHSS commissioner's office to promote a special recognition of Alaska's centenarians, persons 100 years of age and older. For those who provided consent, their names were read aloud at the Older Alaskans Month celebrations and posted on the DHSS/ACoA websites. Each centenarian also received an official letter from the DHSS commissioner's office and an Older Alaskans Month Executive Proclamation signed by the Governor.

Sunset Criteria No. 11: Determine the extent to which the board, commission, or agency duplicates the activities of another governmental agency or the private sector. (Please see pages 15-16).

While the commission concurs with the audit's finding that its advocacy efforts may appear to be "duplicative" of other organizations like AARP and AgeNet, ACoA's role of providing support to the DHSS as Alaska's state unit on aging is mandated by law through the Older Americans Act, Section 305 to "serve as an effective and visible advocate for older individuals by reviewing and commenting upon all State plans, budgets, and policies which affect older individuals and providing technical assistance to any agency, organization, association, or individual representing the needs of older individuals." For this reason, advocacy is a core service of ACoA and it is through such activities by the commission that the base for other advocacy efforts is established.

Although AARP, AgeNet, and ACoA all work to improve the quality of life for Alaska seniors, each organization has unique missions. While AARP is concerned about senior consumer needs and the focus for AgeNet is provider issues, the commission is a multi-task body focused on all senior issues in Alaska and represents these interests on behalf of older Alaskans to the Governor and Legislature with respect to policies, legislation, and budget items.

The commission coordinates advocacy efforts with several public and private sector agencies including the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (to provide support for seniors with dementia and their caregivers); the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Adult Protective Services (to protect the health and safety of vulnerable seniors); AHFC Senior Housing Office (to promote affordable, accessible and quality senior housing development); Pioneer Home Advisory Board (to improve the quality of life for Pioneer Home residents); UA Trust Training Cooperative (to support workforce training and development of direct service professionals serving Alaska seniors); department of labor's Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training program (to promote workforce training and employment of Alaska seniors); the Alaska Brain Injury Network (to support seniors with brain injury); the Statewide Independent Living Council (to support the needs of older people with disabilities) in addition to the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (to improve systems that deliver home and community-based services and supports for older adults and their caregivers) and the national Alzheimer's Association (to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and their caregivers).


Rather than duplicate, the commission complements the advocacy efforts of other organizations but more importantly, the Commission represents older Alaskans by providing a broad perspective to advocate for the comprehensive needs of older Alaskans across the continuum of care.

Through our interagency collaborative role, the commission participates as a resource in planning activities for other state agencies to ensure that the unique needs of seniors are considered and addressed by providing information, data, and serving on designated committees. (Please see page 16, first paragraph.) Examples include participation with the DHSS and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority in the ongoing development of the Comprehensive Integrated Mental Health Plan; the Healthy Alaskans 2020 Project coordinated by the division of public health and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium; development of the DHSS Long-Term Care Plan

prepared by a contractor; ongoing development of the Aging and Disability Resource Centers as the single point of entry for Alaska's long-term support services serving seniors and disabled persons; and other joint planning efforts.

We truly value the opportunity to contribute to the department's mission in serving Alaska's seniors, particularly older persons who are most vulnerable. Thank you for this opportunity to review and provide response to the ACoA confidential preliminary report. Please feel free to contact the commission for further information.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Shields
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Cc: Valerie Davidson, DHSS Commissioner
Jon Sherwood, DHSS Deputy Commissioner
Sana Efird, DHSS Assistant Commissioner
Duane Mayes, DSDS Director
Linnea Osborne, DHSS Federal Allocation Manager
Denise Daniello, ACoA Executive Director

**APPROVED OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL
OF THE ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING**

Introduction

Section 1

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) Bylaws outline the Commission's responsibilities. These procedures are guidelines to carry them out.

The Mission and Objectives of the Commission are included in its specific statutes. Introduction of business of a motion that falls outside of the Mission and Objectives requires a two-thirds vote of the members listed in AS 47.45.200(a).

Orientation

Section 2

Members of the Commission shall receive an orientation that covers the responsibilities of the Commission members by the Chair and Executive Director at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission following appointment or at a special meeting called for the purpose of orientation.

Meetings

Section 3

Regular or special meetings of the Commission shall occur at the call of the Chairperson, request of a majority of the voting members or at a regularly scheduled time as determined by a majority of the voting members. The beginning time and duration of a meeting shall be set by the Chairperson & Executive Director.

When attending regular or special Commission meetings in a community in which a Commission member maintains a primary residence and when overnight lodging is not required, a meal allowance may be paid in lieu of per diem as allowed in the State of Alaska Administrative Manual Volume II.

Section 4

Executive Session

Executive sessions may be called during a regular meeting as specified in AS 44.62.310. The motion to have an executive session must be made during a public meeting.

No subjects may be considered at the executive session except those mentioned in the motion calling for the executive session, unless auxiliary to the main question. No action may be taken during the executive session.

(a) The following subjects may be discussed in an executive session:

(1) Matters, the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the government unit;

(2) Subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person, provided the person may request a public discussion; and

(3) Matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential.

(b) The above subjects shall be construed narrowly in order to avoid unnecessary executive sessions.

Section 5

Public Comment

The purpose for having public comment is to provide an opportunity for the public to present information and advise the Commission about problems and issues related to older Alaskans. This comment may be provided in-person, by tele-conference, and/or videoconference.

(a) The public comment period will not be considered a hearing and cannot be used for that purpose. Organizations are required to request a hearing in advance in writing and, when granted by the Commission, such hearings must be given public notice in accordance with law.

(b) Public comments will be held to a maximum of five minutes per speaker. Organizations may be represented by not more than three speakers whose combined comments may not exceed ten minutes. A waiver to the time limit may be granted by order of the Chairperson or by motion adopted by the Commission.

(c) The Commission shall not take action during the comment period but may take matters under advisement.

(d) The Commission may consider matters identified during public comment under new business. However, issues the Commission may consider at that time must be balanced against the public's right to be informed.

(e) Responses or comments by Commission members or Commission staff during public comment periods will be held to a minimum.

Committees

Section 6

Committee Structure

The ACoA By-laws designates six standing committees and allows for ad hoc committees as needed for special purposes. Committee membership and goals are generally established for two-years with the first year coinciding with the first year of the legislative session. Committee membership, specified in ACoA's by-laws, includes at minimum ACoA's Chair (voting member) and Executive Director (ex officio, non-voting member).

ACoA's Chair is responsible for selection of each Committee Chair (during the first year) or their confirmation (during the second year) at the last board meeting of the fiscal year for standing and ad hoc committees. Committee members may be selected by the ACoA Chair or by each Committee Chair as determined by the ACoA Chair. All Committees may include public members with the exception of the Executive and Nominating Committees. Committee Chairs and their membership are responsible for developing their two-year committee goals. The Committee Chair is responsible for reporting these goals annually to the Commission during the first meeting of the fiscal year and Committee activities at each board meeting.

Section 7

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate past Chair, and Committee Chair as designated by the ACoA Chair. Three of the four voting members constitute a quorum.

The role of the Executive Committee is to orchestrate and keep track of activities of the full Commission through standing and ad hoc committees. The Executive Committee reviews and takes action on the recommendations forwarded by other committees and reports these actions at the next board meeting.

The Executive Committee is responsible for developing board meeting agendas; taking action on budget/policy recommendations that establish ACoA's legislative advocacy platform; providing oversight for development of ACoA's annual report; planning for the rural outreach meeting; preparing an evaluation of ACoA's Executive Director with input from Commission members; in addition to other responsibilities.

Section 8

Legislative Advocacy Committee

The Legislative Advocacy Committee includes a minimum of three voting Commission members that includes a Committee Chair in addition to ex officio non-voting members. A quorum is established by the majority of members. All Commissioners are encouraged to serve on this Committee.

The Legislative Advocacy Committee provides leadership and support to the Commission in its decision-making regarding legislation, budget, and policy matters that impact Alaska seniors. This Committee reviews legislative issues by conducting surveys; assessing information heard through public testimony

presented at board meetings; discussing issues during the Senior Legislative Advocacy Teleconferences; providing testimony on relevant issues to legislative committees; providing oversight for the development and implementation of ACoA's advocacy platform, including position papers and legislator meetings; and other activities as needed.

This Committee convenes the statewide *Senior Legislative Advocacy Teleconferences* with the purpose of educating Alaskans about legislation, budget items, and other issues affecting Alaska's older adults and encouraging public input on senior issues in order to inform the Commission of its decisions to support/not support legislation and budget items. The Senior Legislative Advocacy teleconferences are held every other week during legislative session and weekly during the last month of session. Senior centers and other senior congregate locations are encouraged to serve as host sites for seniors to attend the senior legislative advocacy teleconferences. Commissioners are encouraged to actively participate in these meetings and to advocate for legislation and budget items approved by the Commission with their elected officials.

ACoA staff prepares the "watch list" and "discussion list" of legislation and budget items for review at the Senior Legislative Advocacy Teleconferences. ACoA's Chair and/or ACoA's Legislative Advocacy Chair are required to review and approve the watch list prior to distribution to ensure its content is in accord with the commission's statutory requirements and relates to programs, services, and policies that affect older Alaskans.

Decisions regarding legislation and budget items may be made in one of two ways. First, the Legislative Advocacy Committee may take action on whether to support particular legislation after considering input from public members during Senior Legislative Advocacy teleconferences. This support may consist of, but not be limited to, letters of support and legislative committee testimony. In addition, the Chair and Executive Director may take action to offer the Commission's support for legislation and budget items through letters of support and legislative committee testimony as necessary.

Section 9

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee, comprised of a minimum of three members, has responsibility for developing annual budget and policy recommendations in collaboration with the Legislative Advocacy Committee that are presented to the Department of Health and Social Services, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and serve as the platform for the Commission's legislative advocacy efforts. In addition, the Planning Committee provides guidance and leadership to the State Plan Advisory Committee to develop the four-year Alaska State Plan for Senior Services; reviews the State Plan's implementation activities; gathers public input and other information for the periodic White House Conference on Aging; and guidance for other plans related to the responsibilities of the Commission.

Section 10

Nominating Committee

The Nominating committee, consisting of three Commission members as appointed by the Chair, develops and presents a slate for the election of Chair and Vice Chair for two-years at the last meeting of the fiscal year.

In deciding the slate, Committee members will consider the following attributes:

- Previous experience serving on boards and commissions;
- Knowledge of senior programs/services;
- Time to attend and meaningfully participate in ACoA Board and Committee meetings;
- Understands the role of the board in being a policymaker;
- Possesses a statewide perspective to serve all older people in Alaska;
- Has two years remaining in their term;
- Belief in ACoA's mission; and
- Demonstrated commitment to the organization.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for meeting to discuss potential candidates based on a review of Commission members who are eligible to serve {in accordance with AS 47.45.200(a), (3), and (5)} and their possession of the required attributes. This Committee will design a plan for reaching out to prospective candidates to determine their interest in serving as an ACoA officer including which Committee member will contact the prospective candidate, the means for contacting them, and a date for finalizing the slate.

Election of Officers

The Nominating Committee will provide oversight for the election of officers. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by a majority vote during the last meeting of the fiscal year. New officers shall assume duties at the first meeting of the new fiscal year. The Nominating Committee will issue a secret ballot when multiple candidates are nominated for an officer position.

Section 11

Bylaws Committee

The By-Laws Committee, consisting of a minimum of three members of the Commission, shall be appointed to review the By-laws and Policies and Procedures Manual bi-annually at least once during alternate years and to recommend revisions as appropriate to the full Board.

Section 12

Outstanding Older Alaskans' Recognition Committee

This Committee shall be represented by two (2) members. The responsibilities of this committee consist of planning and implementing activities to recognize older Alaskans.

Section 13

Ad Hoc Committee

This Committee may be appointed by the Chair on an as needed basis to complete the business of the Commission. Past examples include the State Plan Advisory Committee and special conference committees. Future examples may include a special committee to develop a succession process along with events to recognize senior centers.

Section 11

Endorsements

It is the policy of the Alaska Commission on Aging not to:

- (a) Endorse or support candidates for any elective public office, partisan or nonpartisan;
- (b) Seek membership of in-state organizations to avoid a possible conflict of interest;
- (c) Provide letters of support for specific projects that do not have statewide benefit.

Section 12

Authorization

The Chair and the Executive Director are jointly authorized to execute official correspondence from the Commission that includes letters of concern or support to the Legislature, the Governor, and Congressional delegation for proposed legislation. The ACoA Executive Director is authorized to execute official correspondence for other ACoA business purposes.

Adopted: 12.10-2014

Amended & Approved: 05.05.2015

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THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of
Health and Social Services**

Senior and Disabilities Services
Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education
Patrick J. Reinhart, Executive Director

3601 C Street, Suite 740
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Main: 907.269.8990
Fax: 907.269.8995

January 19, 2016

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol
Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

We are pleased to provide this letter of support to the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) for reauthorization for another eight years.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE) fills a variety of federal and state roles, including serving as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. As the state DD Council, GCDSE works with Senior and Disabilities Services and other state agencies to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports that they need, as well as participate in the planning and design of those services.

Similarly, since 1981 the Alaska Commission on Aging has played an important role in improving the lives of Alaska's senior population. They are a major advisory group on issues that impact Alaskan seniors. The Council often partners with ACoA on projects and issues that intersect our two populations, such as Aging and Disability Resource Centers, assistive technology, accessible housing, community transportation, and long-term services and supports. ACoA also satisfies a provision of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) that requires an advisory board to in order to receive nearly \$11 million dollars in federal funds in support of state-sponsored services that impact Alaskan seniors every day, such as in-home supports, senior center programs, adult daycare, home delivered and congregate meals, and more.

The Alaska Commission on Aging develops and monitors the Alaska State Plan on Senior Services and makes recommendations to legislation and policies that benefit older Alaskans. Like the Governor's Council, the Commission on Aging serves as an advisory group to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority on issues concerning persons with Alzheimer's disease and related-dementias (ADRD). Their recent and widely touted publication of *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias* is a great example of the level of commitment and professionalism that we get from both the staff and members of ACoA.

January 19, 2016

Page 2

A 2015 legislative audit of the Department of Health and Social Services concluded that the Commission serves the public interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives, satisfying the requirements of the Older Americans Act. The report recommends reauthorization of the Commission on Aging and the Council concurs wholeheartedly. Alaskan seniors depend on ACoA to be their voice in Juneau, as well as coordinate a multitude of services and programs statewide. We request that the Alaska Commission on Aging be reauthorized before the end of the 2016 legislative session.

Respectfully,



Amy Simpson, Chair



Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

BILL WALKER, GOVERNOR

Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200
Anchorage AK 99508
Phone (907) 334-4480
Fax (907) 334-4486

December 11, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging

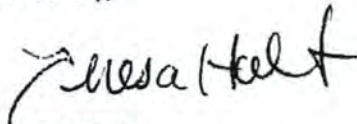
Representative Hawker,

The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman strongly supports the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging. Under the commission's sunset provision, legislation is needed to reauthorize the Alaska Commission on Aging for the next eight years. The Alaska Commission on Aging is required as the state's advisory council under the Older Americans Act and allows the State to receive \$11 million in federal funding.

The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman partners with Alaska Commission on Aging on many projects related to the health and safety of Alaskan over the age of 60. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman worked with the Alaska Commission on Aging and other stakeholders in the senior community in the development of the *Alaska State Plan on Senior Services*. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman also collaborates with the Alaska Commission on Aging to resolve issues as they arise that affect the lives of Alaskan seniors including the development and implementation of *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias* as well as legislation to improve the protection of seniors who use Power of Attorney documents.

As the population of baby boomers will triple the number of seniors in Alaska in the next 20 years, it is more important than ever to have the Alaska Commission on Aging to plan for the needs of this growing population. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman and the Alaska Commission on Aging will continue to work together to identify and resolve issues that directly affect the lives of Alaskans over the age of 60.

Sincerely,



Teresa Holt
State Long Term Care Ombudsman

Cc: Denise Daniello, ACoA



REPRESENTATIVE MIKE HAWKER

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE • DISTRICT 28

Anchorage • Glen Alps • Rainbow • Indian • Bird • Girdwood • Portage

House Bill 226 Index of Support Letters

- ♦ AARP Alaska
- ♦ Access Alaska
- ♦ Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- ♦ Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska
- ♦ Anchorage Senior Activity Center
- ♦ Coalition of Mat-Su Senior Centers
- ♦ Community Care Coalition
- ♦ Denakkanaaga, Inc.
- ♦ Fairbanks North Star Borough
- ♦ Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education
- ♦ Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman
- ♦ Mat-Su Council on Aging
- ♦ Mat-Su Health Foundation
- ♦ Municipality of Anchorage – Senior Citizens Advisory Commission
- ♦ North Star Council on Aging
- ♦ Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc.
- ♦ Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc.
- ♦ Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska
- ♦ Zuyus, Peter

PUBLISHED: 3/11/16

SESSION: State Capitol, Juneau, Alaska 99801 ♦ (907) 465-4949
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Rep.Mike.Hawker@akleg.gov ♦ www.housemajority.org/hawker



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December 14, 2015

Rep. Mike Hawker
Alaska State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: Alaska Commission on Aging - ReAuthorization

Dear Rep. Hawker,

Thank you for your leadership in sponsoring legislation to reauthorize the Alaska Commission on Aging. On behalf of AARP Alaska's nearly 90,000 members, we are pleased to offer our support for statutory reauthorization and to recognize the important function the Commission serves for older Alaskans.

AARP Alaska has been privileged to work with both staff and appointed members of the Alaska Commission on Aging for many years on many worthwhile projects. The partnership with the Commission and other relevant agencies has produced comprehensive and measurable plans for the strategic delivery of services and supports that address the independence, dignity, health, engagement, and economic value of Alaska's older adult population. As our state has one of our nation's fastest growing 65+ demographics, the contributions of the Commission are increasingly vital to our collective wellbeing.

Particularly laudable are the openness and inclusion on the part of the Commission for input by all older Alaskans. Through sponsorship of statewide convenings, regular educational teleconferences, participation in statewide work groups, and informative and regular communications, the opportunities for broad citizen involvement are diligently nurtured. The appointed commissioners well represent the varied geographical, cultural, and socio-economic makeup of our state's seniors. They are effective advocates for an Alaska in which we can all have confidence as we grow older.

AARP Alaska, without reservation, supports the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging. The needs, interests and concerns of our membership are well-served by the work of the Commission. Again, many thanks for your sponsorship of the reauthorization.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ken Helander.

Ken Helander
Advocacy Director

Handwritten signature of Terry Snyder.

Terry Snyder
AARP Alaska State President

Real Possibilities



1217 E. 10th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
248-4777 (phone); 263-1942 (fax)

Opening Doors to Independence

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

December 11, 2015

Dear Representative Hawker,


As the Executive Director of Access Alaska, it is my pleasure to offer our support for the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA). Since their early days, ACOA has partnered with Access Alaska to advocate for the needs of older Alaskans, ensuring them dignity, health, safety and independence.

ACOA serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and advises the AMHTA on the needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Commission, in partnership with the AMHTA and other agencies, published *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015)*. The Commission also makes recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs for Senior Trust Beneficiaries (older people with dementia and other cognitive impairments) and the use of funds that benefit this vulnerable population.

ACOA and Access Alaska have worked collaboratively on a number of projects over the years, including the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) project, senior and accessible/affordable housing, coordinated transportation, the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Roadmap mentioned above, and many others. As we have supported each other and combined our efforts, these projects have reached fruition, allowing older Alaskans to continue living in their home communities, among loved ones that appreciate and include them in community activities.

We very much appreciate your proposal of legislation for ACOA's reauthorization. Access Alaska will be happy to offer any information or any other means of support for ACOA during this process. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance. .

Sincerely,



James C. Beck
Executive Director



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Labor and
Workforce Development**

Office of the Commissioner

Post Office Box 111149
Juneau, Alaska 99811
Main: 907.465.2700
Fax: 907.465.2784

February 8, 2016

The Honorable Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 226, which extends the Alaska Commission on Aging until June 30, 2024. The Alaska Commission on Aging assists the Department of Labor's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) by formulating and approving the comprehensive State Plan for Senior Services. The best way for any State to provide services to its citizens is by working closely with relevant partners to produce positive outcomes for employment and training and thus improve the comprehensive well-being of seniors.

Alaska's senior population continues to expand at the fastest rate in the nation. Together, the Alaska Commission on Aging and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board develop strategies to keep pace with workforce needs through planning, advocacy, public awareness efforts, and collaboration with other organizations focused on the well-being of older Alaskans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Drygas".

Heidi Drygas
Commissioner



December 8, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99811-1182

Mailed to Alaska Commission on Aging

Dear Representative Hawker,

We support the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging for an 8-year continuation by the Alaska Legislature. The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) provides needed supports to advance the well-being of seniors in Alaska.

Working with the senior community, service providers, Department of Health and Social Services and other key stakeholders, the ACoA leads the development of studies to identify senior needs and policies to address those needs. These policies also seek to achieve accessible and affordable services for seniors. The value of services are recognized, such as Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). As research shows HCBS prevent or delay high cost institutional care and improve the quality of life for both the senior and their unpaid family caregiver. This is critical planning information as the Alaska senior population is growing at a faster rate than any other state in the nation.

Maintaining a healthy population of seniors in Alaska is very important. Seniors provide critical social and economic value to the State. Research shows that children who are nurtured and mentored by their grandparents (in addition to their parents) grow into more responsible adults (*Dr. Bill Thomas, Vision to Reality Conference, November 12, 2014*). Seniors also contribute three billion dollars to Alaska's economy annually (*Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium, May 1, 2014*). Seniors improve the quality of life for all Alaskans.

ACoA provides effective leadership to maintain a healthy senior population in Alaska and we support the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging for an 8-year continuation by the Alaska Legislature.

Sincerely,

Karl Garber
Executive Director

Anchorage

1750 Abbott Rd.
Anchorage, AK 99507
Phone (907) 561-3313
Fax (907) 561-3315

Fairbanks

565 University Ave, Suite 2
Fairbanks, AK 99709
Phone (907) 452-2277
Fax (907) 457-3376

Juneau

3225 Hospital Dr, Suite 101
Juneau, AK, 99801
Phone (907) 586-6044
Fax (907) 586-6084

Mat-Su Valley

10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
Suite 110, Palmer, AK 99645
Phone (907) 746-3413
Fax (907) 746-3412

House Bill 226 - Testimony



Unit of the National Commission on Aging



Anchorage Senior Activity Center

www.anchorageseniorcenter.org

1300 East 19th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Phone 907-770-2000 Fax 907-278-2454

December 5, 2015

The Honorable Mike Hawker
House of Representatives
State of Alaska
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker,

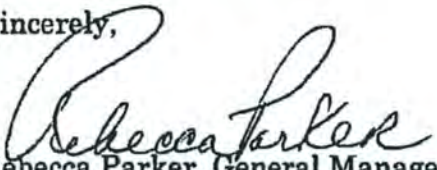
On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Anchorage Senior Activity Center (ASAC), we thank you for sponsoring the bill in support of continuing the Commission on Aging. We would like to go on record that we support the reauthorization of the Commission on Aging for another eight years. We also support the funding that is necessary to maintain the Commission and advance its valuable work.

The Commission on Aging serves as educators and advocates on various issues affecting seniors, our fastest growing population in Alaska. Further, the Commission helps ensure the dignity, health, safety, and independence of Alaska's seniors and assists them in leading useful and meaningful lives.

Alaska receives nearly \$11 million in federal OAA funding in FY2016 thanks to its compliance with the Older American Act. The Commission also meets the federal requirement for each state to establish an advisory council to guide the state on matters related to aging. The Commission released a comprehensive plan on Senior Services, and, in partnership with the Alaska Mental Health Trust and other agencies, recently published "Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015).

Again, thank you for taking the leadership role in sponsoring the continuation of the Commission on Aging.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Parker, General Manager
Anchorage Senior Activity Center

*The Anchor-Age Center, Inc. is a 501c3 non-profit organization that manages the Anchorage Senior Activity Center on behalf of the Municipality of Anchorage
Tax ID 92-0086821*

Coalition of Mat-Su Senior Centers

September 16, 2015

Alaska Commission on Aging
PO Box 110693
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: Support for Continuation of the Alaska Commission on Aging

The Coalition of Mat Su Senior Centers supports continuation of the Department of Health and Social Services Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA), as recommended by the Division of Legislative Audit (Audit Control # 06-20090-15, dated April 10, 2015).

We concur with the findings of the audit, namely that the ACoA serves the public interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives through advocacy, outreach, and education. The ACoA was key to formulating Alaska's comprehensive State Plan for Senior Services, which identifies concerns and needs of older Alaskans, and fulfills a federal prerequisite to Alaska's receipt of grant funds through the Administration on Aging.

The ACoA is an effective advocate for older Alaskans – a role that takes on heightened importance given the state's rapidly rising population of seniors. Through efforts such as the Power of Aging Conference, Senior Housing Summit, and through their on-going efforts to monitor legislative, regulatory, and industry changes important to Seniors, the ACoA serves as a center of excellence for senior issues.

As Alaskans age and remain in the Alaskan community of their choosing, and as Americans choose to make Alaska their home in retirement, the "Senior industry" – now representing about \$3 billion to Alaska's economy – will grow. With this growth, the importance of the ACoA's work, in collaboration with agencies across the state, will also grow.

The members of the Coalition of Mat Su Senior Centers are dedicated to optimum outcomes for seniors in the Mat Su. Like the ACoA, we work to ensure seniors in the Mat Su will be able to remain in the community of their choosing, living as independently as possible for as long as possible, secure in their dignity and respected as valued elders.

Respectfully,



Ingrid Ling
Chair

Coalition of Mat-Su Senior Centers

OFFICERS & MEMBERS OF THE COALITION OF MAT-SU SENIOR CENTERS -2015

CHAIR: INGRID LING, VICE-CHAIR: LARRY DEARMAN, TREASURER: HERMAN THOMPSON, SECRETARY: CHUCK FOSTER
General Member Organizations: Mat-Su Senior Services, Meadow Lakes Seniors, Inc., Mid-Valley Seniors, Inc.,
Upper Susitna Seniors, Inc., Wasilla Area Seniors, Inc., Willow Area Seniors, Inc.



Community Care Coalition

February 3, 2016

Representative Paul Seaton
Chair, House Health and Social Services
State Capitol Room 102
Juneau, AK. 99801

The Community Care Coalition (CCC) is comprised of trade associations who provide care for elderly, disabled and at-risk Alaskans. The Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities, AgeNet, Assisted Living Association of Alaska and the Personal Care Assistant Provider's Association have banded together in a united voice to bring forward our collective message on behalf of our most vulnerable citizenry. As members of the home and community-based long term care industry, we collectively represent all of Alaska with over 50,000 consumers, family members and staff. We want to thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on HB 226 which proposes to extend the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA) to June 30, 2024.

The mission of ACOA is to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them to lead useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation. ACOA satisfies a requirement of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), allowing Alaska to receive almost \$11 million in federal OAA funding in FY2016. These funds help to support older Alaskans in receiving services close to home. Alaska has one of the fastest growing senior populations per capita, many of whom are dealing with or will develop Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). ACOA was instrumental in partnering with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and a wide range of stakeholders to develop *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015)*. This document will provide guidance for services and funding as our society continues to grapple with the health issues presented by ADRD.

The staff of ACOA work diligently to advocate for older Alaskans, their families and community service providers. Their voice is strong and well respected. The association members of the Community Care Coalition fully support the extension of the Alaska Commission on Aging to June 30, 2024. We encourage the House Health and Social Services committee to pass HB226.

Regards,

Sandra J Heffern
Chair



Denakkanaaga, Inc.

"Our People Speak"

December 5, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Denakkanaaga, it is our pleasure to write this letter of support for legislation to reauthorize the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) for eight years as recommended by the Division of Legislative Audit April 2015 audit report.

For over thirty years, ACoA has embarked on a mission to ensure dignity and independence for older Alaskans through planning, advocacy, education, and collaboration with other agencies. As Alaska leads the nation in per capita senior growth, and older adults are the fastest growing age demographic in our state, the value of ACoA for seniors and their family members has never been greater.

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you our reasons for supporting ACoA's extension. By statute, the ACoA is responsible for developing the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services in order to satisfy a federal requirement for all states receiving federal funds for their senior programs. This funding includes Title VI funds for services to Alaska Native Elders. To develop the State Plan, the Commission conducted listening sessions in various areas of the state, including Fairbanks. We were pleased to sponsor one of these listening session with the ACoA to focus on the needs of Alaska Native Elders. We were impressed to find that the comments provided by our Elders expressing the need for culturally appropriate and accessible services in rural Alaska was included in the State Plan's strategic objectives.

The ACoA is a resource and strong advocate for the senior community. We especially appreciate their advocacy efforts promoting greater awareness about senior needs including the importance of funding and legislation to help more Elders and seniors live safely in their homes and communities of choice. Further, the ACoA can also be counted on to provide information on a variety of topics related to aging issues, which is helpful to our agency's planning and grant writing efforts.

Thank you for sponsoring this legislation to reauthorize the Alaska Commission on Aging. The ACoA deserves recognition for their commitment to helping all older Alaskans and is fulfilling its mission. We at Denakkanaaga value the opportunity to work with the commission, as our mission is to be the "elder voice for the people" for Interior Alaska.

Sincerely,

Luke Titus

By: Karl Kassel, Mayor
Introduced: 02/25/2016
Adopted: 02/25/2016

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

RESOLUTION NO. 2016 - 10

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE
ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

WHEREAS, The Fairbanks North Star Borough Senior Citizen's Advisory Commission has reviewed a request of support for the reauthorization of Alaska Commission on Aging and has passed a motion in support of the reauthorization; and

WHEREAS, The Commission requests that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor and Assembly approve and send a resolution of support for the reauthorization; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Commission on Aging develops the comprehensive Alaska State Plan on Senior Services, and provides education and outreach regarding matters related to aging; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Commission on Aging serves as an advocate and educator regarding the needs of Alaska's older people to help ensure the dignity, health, safety, and independence of Alaska's seniors and to assist them in leading useful and meaningful lives; and

WHEREAS, The Alaska Commission on Aging serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and advises them on the needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related dementias ; and

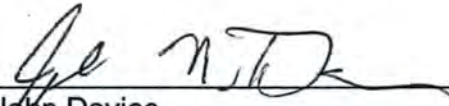
WHEREAS, The Fairbanks North Star Borough's Senior Citizens Advisory Commission works with the Alaska Commission on Aging to disseminate information that bears upon the welfare of senior citizens in our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Fairbanks North Star Borough supports the Reauthorization of the Alaska Commission,

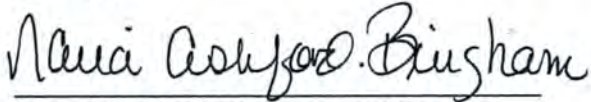
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assembly asks the Interior Delegation to support the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging.

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PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 25TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2016.


John Davies
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:



Nanci Ashford-Bingham, MMC
Borough Clerk

Ayes: Sattley, Hutchison, Cooper, Golub, Roberts, Lawrence, Dodge, Quist, Davies
Noes: None



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of
Health and Social Services**

Senior and Disabilities Services
Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education
Patrick J. Reinhart, Executive Director

3601 C Street, Suite 740
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
Main: 907.269.8990
Fax: 907.269.8995

January 19, 2016

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol
Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

We are pleased to provide this letter of support to the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) for reauthorization for another eight years.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (GCDSE) fills a variety of federal and state roles, including serving as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. As the state DD Council, GCDSE works with Senior and Disabilities Services and other state agencies to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports that they need, as well as participate in the planning and design of those services.

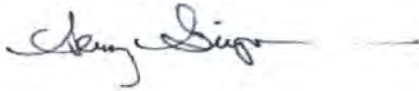
Similarly, since 1981 the Alaska Commission on Aging has played an important role in improving the lives of Alaska's senior population. They are a major advisory group on issues that impact Alaskan seniors. The Council often partners with ACoA on projects and issues that intersect our two populations, such as Aging and Disability Resource Centers, assistive technology, accessible housing, community transportation, and long-term services and supports. ACoA also satisfies a provision of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) that requires an advisory board to in order to receive nearly \$11 million dollars in federal funds in support of state-sponsored services that impact Alaskan seniors every day, such as in-home supports, senior center programs, adult daycare, home delivered and congregate meals, and more.

The Alaska Commission on Aging develops and monitors the Alaska State Plan on Senior Services and makes recommendations to legislation and policies that benefit older Alaskans. Like the Governor's Council, the Commission on Aging serves as an advisory group to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority on issues concerning persons with Alzheimer's disease and related-dementias (ADRD). Their recent and widely touted publication of *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias* is a great example of the level of commitment and professionalism that we get from both the staff and members of ACoA.

January 19, 2016
Page 2

A 2015 legislative audit of the Department of Health and Social Services concluded that the Commission serves the public interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent, and useful lives, satisfying the requirements of the Older Americans Act. The report recommends reauthorization of the Commission on Aging and the Council concurs wholeheartedly. Alaskan seniors depend on ACoA to be their voice in Juneau, as well as coordinate a multitude of services and programs statewide. We request that the Alaska Commission on Aging be reauthorized before the end of the 2016 legislative session.

Respectfully,



Amy Simpson, Chair



Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

BILL WALKER, GOVERNOR

Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200
Anchorage AK 99508
Phone (907) 334-4480
Fax (907) 334-4486

December 11, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging

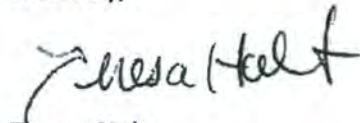
Representative Hawker,

The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman strongly supports the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging. Under the commission's sunset provision, legislation is needed to reauthorize the Alaska Commission on Aging for the next eight years. The Alaska Commission on Aging is required as the state's advisory council under the Older Americans Act and allows the State to receive \$11 million in federal funding.

The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman partners with Alaska Commission on Aging on many projects related to the health and safety of Alaskan over the age of 60. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman worked with the Alaska Commission on Aging and other stakeholders in the senior community in the development of the *Alaska State Plan on Senior Services*. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman also collaborates with the Alaska Commission on Aging to resolve issues as they arise that affect the lives of Alaskan seniors including the development and implementation of *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias* as well as legislation to improve the protection of seniors who use Power of Attorney documents.

As the population of baby boomers will triple the number of seniors in Alaska in the next 20 years, it is more important than ever to have the Alaska Commission on Aging to plan for the needs of this growing population. The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman and the Alaska Commission on Aging will continue to work together to identify and resolve issues that directly affect the lives of Alaskans over the age of 60.

Sincerely,



Teresa Holt
State Long Term Care Ombudsman

Cc: Denise Daniello, ACoA



MCoA

MAT-SU COUNCIL ON AGING

August 12, 2015

Alaska Commission on Aging
Ms. Denise Daniello, Executive Director
PO Box 110693
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0693

Ms. Daniello:

At the direction of the Mat-Su Council on Aging (MCoA), it is my pleasure to provide you with this letter of support specific to the findings of the recent Legislative Sunset Review Audit wherein they recommended the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) be extended eight years to June 30, 2024.

While MCoA concurs with the April 10, 2015 audit findings, we also believe it is imperative we take time to address some of the reasons why we support extension of ACoA and to take a moment to say thank-you. As Alaska leads the nation in per capita Senior growth, the value of ACoA for Seniors and their family members has never been greater. You, your staff and each Commissioner deserves recognition for your polite commitment and heartfelt passion in helping Seniors and Elders wherever they may reside across the Last Frontier. For that, we are extremely pleased and we express our sincere gratitude.

Since its legal inception 33 years ago, ACoA has embarked on a mission to ensure dignity and independence for older Alaskans. Over those years, individuals have enjoyed more useful and meaningful lives through the countless hours of planning, advocacy, education, policymaking and interagency partnerships developed by the Commission. Put another way, ACoA has been the eyes and ears of many Seniors in Alaska since 1982.

In recent years, the Commission has addressed several additional areas in an effort to recognize the many issues facing Alaska's aging population. They include, among others: Senior Housing Summit; Power of Aging Conference; Healthy Body/Healthy Brain campaign; Fall Prevention Coalition; Workforce Development; Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias; and, a report on the Economic Well-Being of Alaska Seniors. Through exploration of each of these very important topics the ACoA has opened doors; initiated dialogue; and, provided much needed education to fellow Alaskans and elected officials on the vast needs of Seniors in our state. Likewise, the Commission was instrumental in calling attention to the fact that Seniors represent an approximate \$3 billion industry within Alaska

today – and for the state to retain that economic benefit – Alaska must be willing to continue to invest in programs and services that allow our elderly to remain here as they retire and enjoy their golden years.

Now, as Baby Boomers continue to retire in earnest and our Senior population expands to record highs, we ask that you continue to abide by your guiding principles of allowing Seniors to live with dignity and respect; remain independent for as long as possible; age in place in the least restrictive setting possible; and, assure Seniors remain connected as valued members of their families and communities. As one of your partners, MCoA is equally committed to these principles and we look forward to working with you in achieving success.

Our warmest regards to you, your staff and all of the Commissioners.

Respectfully,



Jim McCall
Chair, Mat-Su Council on Aging

PO Box 2754
Palmer, Alaska 99645





MAT-SU HEALTH
FOUNDATION

950 East Bogard Road, Suite 218 • Wasilla, AK 99654
Phone: (907) 352-2863 • Fax (907) 352-2865
www.matsuhealthfoundation.org

March 4, 2016

Senator Bill Stoltze
State Capitol Room 119
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stoltze,

On behalf of the Mat-Su Health Foundation and its Board of Directors, I am writing to express support for reauthorization of the **Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA)**.

The Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) shares ownership in Mat-Su Regional Medical Center and invests its profits from that partnership back into the community in order to improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in the Mat-Su.

In 2011, MSHF produced the Mat-Su Regional Plan for Delivery of Senior Services. This invaluable report has been updated in 2016 as the Mat-Su Senior Services Environmental Scan. The updated scan reconfirms the rapid population growth by seniors in the Mat-Su valley, which has been 7.3 percent per year since 2003. In fact, the Mat-Su borough has the 2nd-fastest growing senior population in the nation. As stated in the recent Alaska State Plan for Senior Services FY2016 – FY2019 published by the Alaska commission on Aging:

“The population growth rate of seniors also varies across the state. While Anchorage has the largest number of seniors, the fastest rate of increase was in the Mat-Su Borough, an increase of 117% in the 60+ population from 2000 to 2010.”

The population of Mat-Su seniors is expected to grow by 41.3 percent between 2015 and 2020 to an estimated total of 14,100 by 2020. Over this same period, the U.S. senior population is expected to grow by only 17.7 percent. Clearly, adequate planning and resources to address the needs of our aging population is of vital concern to the Mat-Su valley and the MSHF. The presence of the ACOA results in Alaska receiving over \$11 million in federal Older Americans Act funding which ends up in local areas like the Mat-Su valley, supporting older Alaskans.

The MSHF works in partnership with senior services providers to build capacity and address service needs identified in the research we’ve conducted. To this end, the work of the ACOA is vital in terms of statewide and regional planning as well as leveraging the federal funding used by the providers to help older Alaskans lead safe, dignified and meaningful lives.

As you likely know, Legislative Audit has recommended the commission be extended the maximum term – eight years – based on the positive audit results. The MSHF supports this recommendation and urges you to do the same.

If you have any questions or would like copies of the reports mentioned in this letter, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly via email: eripley@healthymatsu.org.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ripley
Executive Director



Municipality of Anchorage

Ethan Berkowitz, Mayor

Senior Citizens Advisory Commission

January 14, 2016

Senator Bill Stoltze
Alaska Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Stoltze,

As the Chair for the Senior Citizens Advisory Commission (SCAC), it is my pleasure to offer our support for the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA). Since their early days, ACOA has partnered with the SCAC to advocate for the needs of older Alaskans, ensuring them dignity, health, safety and independence.

ACOA serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and advises the AMHTA on the needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The Commission, in partnership with the AMHTA and other agencies, published *Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015)*. The Commission also makes recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs for Senior Trust Beneficiaries (older people with dementia and other cognitive impairments) and the use of funds that benefit this vulnerable population.

ACOA and SCAC have worked collaboratively on a number of projects over the years, including the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) project, senior and accessible/affordable housing, coordinated transportation, the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Roadmap mentioned above, and many others. As we have supported each other and combined our efforts, these projects have reached fruition, allowing older Alaskans to continue living in their home communities, among loved ones that appreciate and include them in community activities.

We very much appreciate your proposal of legislation for ACOA's reauthorization. The Commission will be happy to offer any information or any other means of support for ACOA during this process. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Carol Jackson
Chair, Senior Citizens Advisory Commission



**North Star Council on Aging
Meals on Wheels**
1424 Moore Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
Phone: 907-452-1735 / Fax: 451-9974
nscoa.manager@alaska.net

December 15, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capital, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182


Dear Representative Mike Hawker,

North Star Council on Aging (NSCoA) completely supports the reauthorization of Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) and urges the legislature to approve an eight-year extension allowing ACoA to continue having a positive impact on our state. ACoA provides essential services to Alaska by satisfying the federal Older Americans Act requirement of having a council to receive federal OAA funding, which was almost \$11 million in FY16. It is their mission to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them in leading useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.

The comprehensive Alaska State Plan on Senior Services, developed by ACoA, gives beneficial educational and outreach to the senior providers in Alaska while making recommendations on legislation and appropriation benefiting the fast growing senior population of Alaska. With tremendous growth in the senior population the time to support ACoA is crucial. Every senior deserves the support of the services ACoA provides, directly or indirectly, through the senior providers throughout our state.

Thank you for your support of the ACoA bill allowing the valuable work to continue for another eight years. ACoA's support of NSCoA has enabled our daily efforts to serve the Fairbanks North Star Borough's seniors ensuring they never go hungry or without.

Respectfully,


Darlene Supplee
Executive Director
North Star Council on Aging
aka Fairbanks Senior Center



SENIOR CITIZENS OF KODIAK, INC.

302 Erskine Avenue, Kodiak, AK 99615

Phone: (907) 486-6181

Fax: (907) 486-4503

E-mail: scokinc@ak.net

December 15, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

On behalf of the Senior Citizens of Kodiak, Inc., (SCOK) I would like to voice support for continuing the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA) .

ACOA has played an important advocacy role in all senior issues across the state. They, along with other senior advocacy groups, are watchdogs for policies, regulation, fiscal notes which effect Alaskans 60 and older. ACOA works well with other state departments as well as all providers of senior services.

Please consider extending ACOA and the work it does on behalf of all Alaska seniors.

Sincerely,

Susan Brockman, President
SCOK Board of Directors



Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc.

197 West Park Avenue ★ Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Phone: (907) 262-2322 ★ Fax: (907) 262-2147 ★ salsrctr@alaska.net



January 11, 2016

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

I am writing this letter on behalf of recommending Legislation on reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging for eight more years, and support of HB224.

The Alaska Commission on Aging satisfied a requirement of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA). States receiving OAA funding are required to have an advisory council that

- ✓ Must be comprised of older individuals eligible to participate in OAA-funded programs;
- ✓ Advises the "state unit on aging" regarding matters of aging issues. In Alaska, The Department of Health & Social Services is the state unit on aging as designated by the Governor. The Alaska Commission on Aging serves as the advisory council to DHSS and satisfies this federal requirement.

Alaska is receiving almost \$11 million dollars in Federal OAA funding in FY2016 thanks to its compliance with the Older Americans Act.

The Alaska Commission on Aging develops the comprehensive Alaska State Plan on Senior Services, makes recommendations on legislation and appropriations beneficial for older Alaskans, and provides education/outreach regarding matters related to aging.

The Alaska Commission on Aging also serves as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA) and advises the AMHTA on needs of older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, including Alzheimer's disease and related Dementias. The Commission, in partnership with the AMHTA and other agencies published Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (2015). The Commission also makes recommendations to the AMHTA Board of Trustees regarding mental health programs for Senior Trust Beneficiaries (older people

with dementia and other cognitive impairments) and the use of funds that benefit this vulnerable population.

The Alaska Commission on Aging services as an advocate and educator regarding the needs of Alaska's older people to help ensure the dignity, health, safety, and independence of Alaska's seniors and to assist them in leading useful and meaningful lives.

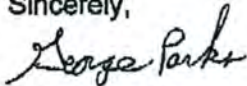
Legislative Audit conducted a sunset audit of the Commission in 2015, concluding that the Commission is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead dignified, independent and useful lives, and that the Commission meets the federal requirement or each state to establish an advisory council to advise the state on matters related to aging.

The Commission's FY2016 budget is \$542,700 (\$45.9 GF; \$348.1 Interagency Receipts that include federal pass-through funds; \$29.6 GF/MH; and \$119.1 MHTAAR). The Commission consists of eleven seats and has a staff of four full-time employees.

The Alaska Commission on Aging was established in 1981 under AS47.45.200-.290, and is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2016 under AS 44.66.010(a)(4). The proposed legislation would amend AS.66.010(a)(4) to extend the Commission's sunset date by eight years to June 30, 2024.

The Alaska Commission Aging is a vital partner of Soldotna Area Senior Citizens, Inc., in its mission in providing year-round, well-designed, programs and services that help support the health, well-being and independence of Alaska seniors. We would highly recommend that Legislation for the Alaska Commission on Aging be a top priority to extend its sunset date through June 20, 2024.

Sincerely,



George Parks
President

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING
COUNCIL of ALASKA



February 2, 2016

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker,

The Statewide Independent Living Council of Alaska works closely with the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACOA) to improve the lives of Alaskans with disabilities and our Elders, and we are writing today to encourage you to support the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging (HB226). As you know, the number of Elders in Alaska is growing. Matter of fact, the number of seniors in Alaska is expected to triple between now and 2020. Luckily for Alaska, the ACOA is there to help us navigate Alaska's growing need, as well as satisfy the requirement in the Older Americans Act to have an advisory council.

Additionally, the ACOA also serves as the statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (the Trust) and works on issues surrounding those most vulnerable, older Alaskans with cognitive impairments, such as Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. Recently, the ACOA created the *State Plan on Senior Services*. The process used by the ACOA was the most comprehensive and collaborative process I've seen, and guaranteeing that all persons would be heard. The state plan works to ensure that our Elders live as independently as possible and, by highlighting best practices, works to reduce the overall cost. It was advisory groups like the ACOA that explained how and why institutional care is more expensive than aging in place. That realization not only saved state dollars but also gave dignity back to seniors. And finally, a recent legislative audit concluded that the ACOA is serving the public's interest by helping older Alaskans lead independent, dignified, and useful lives while meeting the federal requirement.

The need for the ACOA has never been clearer than now. Alaska's senior population is estimated to continue to grow until 2037. This is why the Statewide Independent Living Council strongly supports the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging.

Sincerely,

Heidi James Frost
Executive Director

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Dec. 15, 2015

Representative Mike Hawker
Alaska Capitol Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: Support for the Alaska Commission on Aging; Re-authorization

Dear Representative Hawker,

Often we take the time to criticize, but seldom do we take to opportunity to praise good works, especially those of governmental agencies.

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) provides information and resources to everyday Seniors as well as many agencies at the borough and local level. Only a few boroughs have their own Senior agency and even those rely heavily on the ACoA to accomplish their support for the Senior community.

Personally, the ACoA has provided support and assistance with my efforts to create a Senior Commission for the Kenai Peninsula Borough. This effort should come to fruition in the near future.

In many cases, the ACoA is the only resource for Seniors to contact. The ACoA , its employees and Commissioners contribute to the enrichment of the lives of our Seniors and that enrichment , in many cases, extends both longevity and quality of life.

Please accept this letter as my request, recommendation, encouragement that you re-authorize the Commission, so that it may continue its great work on behalf of Alaska's Senior population. The ACoA advocacy and support of the Senior community is a necessity for all of us.

Thank you in advance for your support and re-authorization of such a necessary agency to the State of Alaska Senior community.

Sincerely,

Peter T. Zuyus
Peter T. Zuyus
Senior Citizen

cc: ACoA