THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING

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February 2, 2021

Senator David Wilson
Alaska State Capitol, Room 121
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Subject: ACoA Letter of Support, SB 56

Dear Senator Wilson:

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is pleased to offer support for SB 56, that would extend the COVID-19 Pubic Health Disaster Emergency until it is determined COVID-19 is no longer a threat to public health or September 31, 2021. Extending the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Disaster Declaration would allow for temporary changes in continued response to the COVID-19 outbreak, many of which would benefit the health and safety of Alaskan seniors.

SB 56 allows for rapid procurement and hiring for the response. Essential elements when it comes to Alaska vaccine distribution plan and enabling the Department of Health and Social Services to set up mass vaccine clinics quickly to put shots in arms – renting of space, hiring of contractors, securing medical personnel.

Extension of the Disaster Declaration also provides the state with flexibility in the delivery of healthcare (telehealth) and maximizing our workforce in Alaska – expedited and courtesy licensing, especially in fields where we are shorthanded in health care providers.

Only under the Disaster provisions in AS 26.23.020(g)(10) can the Governor "allocate or redistribute food, water, fuel, clothing, **medicine,** or supplies" which includes the scare vaccine allocations and therapeutics being used to treat COVID-19 such and monoclonal antibodies. **This has allowed us to have the vaccine tiers which have prioritized seniors.**

The Alaska Commission on Aging applauds the efforts of the Governor and the Department of Health and Social Services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and supports the extension of the Disaster Emergency to continue implementation of an effective response.

Sincerely,

Lisa Morley

Lisa Morley, ACoA Executive Director

Sincerely,

Gordon Glaser

Gordon Glaser, ACoA Board Chair