

Older Alaskans Commission: SB 328

"An Act establishing an Older Alaskans Commission; and providing for an effective date."

This bill would create a new commission within state government to act as the single agency responsible for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of all state programs for the elderly. In addition, the commission would administer the Office on Aging and its programs. The Governor's Advisory Committee on Aging would be abolished.

The Older Alaskans Commission would have 11 members: the commissioners of Administration, Health & Social Services, and Community & Regional Affairs (non-voting); the chairman of the Pioneers' Homes Advisory Board; and seven citizens, six of whom must be over the age of 60 and two of whom must be over the age of 65. Members would be appointed by the governor to represent urban, rural and geographic areas as well as low-income persons and minorities. For budgeting purposes, the commission would be located with the Department of Administration.

The Older Alaskans Commission shall:

- formulate a comprehensive state plan for programs of benefit to older Alaskans;
- each year analyze and evaluate those programs;
- make recommendations to the governor and the legislature regarding possible legislation, regulation and appropriations made for programs or services which benefit older Alaskans;
- help older Alaskans lead dignified, independent and useful lives; and
- employ an executive director.

There is a sunset provision in the bill: June 30, 1984. Also included is a "bill of rights" for older Alaskans (see page 1). Older Alaskans are citizens over the age of 60.



Dental Assistance:

The committee has not recommended any particular piece of legislation regarding the provision of a state program to provide dental assistance for needy persons. However, it is expected that a Committee Substitute for SB 214 will be introduced this session dealing with that subject, and the committee recommends that the legislature give it careful consideration.

Services for Older Alaskans: SB 326

"An Act authorizing state aid for service programs for the benefit of older Alaskans; and providing for an effective date."

This bill would authorize the establishment of an account in the Department of Administration, Older Alaskans' Commission, to which the legislature could appropriate money from the General Fund for distribution by the commission to sponsors of older Alaskans' service programs.

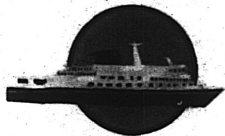
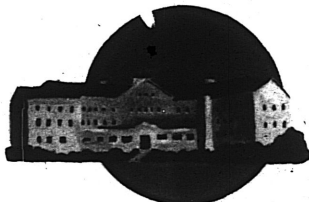
In effect, this bill would allow the legislature to appropriate state funds for certain programs which are presently 100 percent federally-funded through the Older Americans Act. The money would be distributed by the commission either as grants to present providers of services, or as pilot project grants. There would be a required contribution by the sponsor.



Services for Older Alaskans: SB 327

"An Act making a special appropriation to the Department of Administration, Older Alaskans Commission, for programs of benefit to older Alaskans; and providing for an effective date."

This bill would appropriate \$1 million to the above account. This money would be distributed by the commission to sponsors of "service programs" in local communities. Those programs are defined as: nutritional, volunteer, programs for leisure-time and recreational activities, health services, housing services, legal services and assistance, home health and homemaker services, counseling, information and referral services, programs which train persons to work with or assist older Alaskans, and transportation services. Sponsors would be either municipalities or nonprofit corporations.



Free Travel on the Ferries: SCR 40

"Relating to expansion of the period during which older Alaskans may travel free on the state marine highway system."

This resolution would request the governor to direct the division of marine highways to allow Alaskans over the age of 65 to travel on ferries within Alaska without charge from October 1 to the following May 31 annually.

In operation since 1974, this program in the past has only allowed for free travel for senior citizens within Alaska during the months of November to April inclusive. If approved, this resolution would extend that period by two months to correspond to the dates of the "off season" schedules for the ferry system. It would increase the travel on the marine highway system at no cost while increasing revenues from ancillary services onboard the vessels. It is on a space available basis.

Motor Vehicle Tax Exemption: SB 314

"An Act relating to an exemption from municipal property tax; and providing for an effective date."

This is a technical bill intended to straighten out certain problems in existing law. Essentially what is happening at present is that the state is reimbursing municipalities whether or not they exempt senior citizens from paying a property tax on a motor vehicle.

For example, Anchorage, which requires payment of a property tax on motor vehicles, is exempting senior citizens and is being reimbursed by the state. This is right.

Juneau, which also requires payment of a property tax on motor vehicles, is not exempting senior citizens — but is still being reimbursed by the state. This is wrong.

Fairbanks does not require payment of a property tax on motor vehicles for anyone, yet is also being reimbursed by the state. This is wrong.

This bill would insure two things: that all senior citizens are exempted from paying a property tax on their motor vehicle, and that municipalities are only reimbursed for revenue lost due to actual exemptions granted.

For the purpose of this program, senior citizens are defined as those Alaskans over the age of 65.