



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 20, 2021**

**Statement on the Governor's Budget**

The Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (AKCH2) and the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) commend the Governor for his leadership reflected in the FY 2023 budget proposal and the People First Initiative.

AKCH2 and ACEH are grateful to the Governor for listening to needs of Alaskans and proposing a budget that reflects our shared mission to improve homelessness response. The decision to assist Mental Health Trust beneficiaries through Special Needs Housing Grants and investing in a statewide data system are important steps towards making homelessness rare, brief and one time.

Meg Zaletel, Interim Executive Director of ACEH said, "All housing is critical right now, as the state continues to see very low availability."

"We look forward to collaborating with the Alaska Council on the Homeless to improve the homeless response system and coordinate future efforts," said Christopher Kolerok, AKCH2 Board Chair.

Brian Wilson, AKCH2 Executive Director commented, "The Governor deserves credit for coming to the table and proposing funding to enhance our ability to address homelessness in Alaska. When we work together there are better outcomes for people experiencing homelessness."

AKCH2 and ACEH believe that accurate and comprehensive data about homelessness is necessary to understand the scope of the problem, and to track how programs and initiatives impact outcomes. Sharing information can improve peoples' lives and reduce unnecessary barriers to accessing services. The solution to homelessness is housing and we welcome this foundational step to that end.

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