

STATEMENT OF POSITION REGARDING SOCIAL SERVICE GRANTS

For the past three or four years our newly formed Foundation has been making gifts to worthy charitable organizations that help them achieve their mission with a sustaining program of service to their specific clients, patients or users.

We are grateful that we can provide resources to feed the hungry, house the homeless, comfort the abused or abandoned, educate the left behind, and shelter the addicts. According to the gospels, Jesus noted that “ye have the poor always with you;” We recognize our community responsibility to care for these in need.

On the other hand, must we accept the proposition that we will have poor always with us in ever growing numbers? Is there no effort to go beyond the sustaining programs to programs that are aimed at reducing the population of those in need; that attempt to determine the underlying causes of hunger, homelessness, abuse, illiteracy and addiction and try to reduce or eliminate those causes?

To help us answer these questions, the Foundation has been internally examining how to create the greatest magnitude of social value for the dollars given for social change. Our staff has been meeting with key members of the social service community and, with each visit, we have learned a great deal. We have made some basic conclusions but we are still trying to define our role to play.

As a result of these preliminary inquiries, the paradigm for charitable giving by our Foundation is finding a new direction. Our giving to social service agencies, from henceforth, will be conditioned upon the requesters of gifts from us, demonstrating that they have in place or are developing, some program that addresses underlying causes of the needs they are serving and are making efforts to fix the underlying problem. In short, we welcome the opportunity to continue funding programs that meet the immediate needs of the clients, patients or users, but we wish to place our resources where the goal is the depopulation of the charities' programs.

We would welcome requests for grants that are operational but directed at programs that address causes and we would welcome requests for project or capital grants that will help start or boost a project that is aimed at underlying causes. We also would welcome ideas, information and suggestions that would help our Foundation staff gain a better understanding of the problems of the poor and how we can, as a community, reach our stated mission goal, “To support those resources in Alaska which can most effectively enhance the quality of life of Alaska's people...the social service organizations that lift up the poor so they may permanently and independently share in Alaska's bounty.”