

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**  
**AR No. 2025-191**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZING AN ONGOING PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY CRISIS RESULTING FROM SYSTEMIC FAILURES IN THE STATE OF ALASKA'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM, ACKNOWLEDGING ITS DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT ON ANCHORAGE'S COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMY, AND DIRECTING THE MUNICIPAL ATTORNEY TO PURSUE ALL LEGAL REMEDIES.**

**WHEREAS** Article VII, Section 4 of the Alaska Constitution requires the State of Alaska to "provide for the promotion and protection of public health," including the development and maintenance of a behavioral health system that meets the needs of all Alaskans; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Alaska has persistently failed to fulfill this obligation, resulting in widespread inadequacy of mental health and substance use treatment services, particularly in rural and remote communities; and

**WHEREAS**, due to its geographic centrality, service capacity, and infrastructure, the Municipality of Anchorage has become the unofficial and unfunded hub for behavioral health crisis response and stabilization for individuals displaced from across the state; and

**WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Anchorage affirms that its response to this crisis is rooted in a core commitment to dignity, public compassion, and humanitarian values; that no person experiencing mental illness, substance dependency, or displacement should be criminalized for their condition; and that Anchorage has stepped into the gaps left by State inaction not out of obligation, but because these actions are consistent with the values of a just and caring community;

**WHEREAS**, Anchorage residents, public safety agencies, and service providers are now bearing the fiscal, social, and human costs of an escalating crisis that stems from statewide system failure, not local policy decisions; and

**WHEREAS**, Anchorage's civic vitality, commercial prosperity, and long-term economic development are increasingly undermined by the public safety concerns and social disorder resulting from untreated behavioral health conditions that should be addressed upstream by State institutions; and

**WHEREAS**, these systemic failures have triggered a cascading series of economic harms, including:

- Disinvestment and increased security costs in downtown Anchorage and

- commercial corridors;
- Loss of revenue among hospitality and tourism-dependent businesses due to real and perceived disorder in public spaces;
- Increased insurance and property maintenance costs tied to vandalism, encampments, and unsheltered crisis behavior;
- Impacts to workforce recruitment and retention across sectors due to deteriorating conditions in Anchorage's core neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS**, the financial burden on Anchorage's local government includes, but is not limited to:

- Over \$6–10 million annually in emergency shelter, encampment abatement, and human services for individuals whose needs originate in untreated behavioral health conditions;
- Behavioral health-related calls comprise nearly 20% of APD patrol activity and over 15,000 EMS calls annually through the Anchorage Fire Department; and
- The Mobile Crisis Team's rising call volume of 400+ calls per month, operating without any sustained State funding or Medicaid reimbursement.

**WHEREAS**, these impacts represent a functional state of crisis already being experienced on the ground, affecting Anchorage's residents, workforce, businesses, and neighborhoods, and threatening the municipality's broader economic development objectives; now, therefore,

#### **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY RESOLVES:**

**Section 1.** Recognition of Crisis Conditions. The Anchorage Assembly hereby recognizes that the Municipality is operating under a sustained and worsening public health and safety crisis rooted in the State of Alaska's failure to deliver adequate behavioral health services.

**Section 2.** Acknowledgment of Disproportionate Impact on Anchorage. The Assembly affirms that Anchorage is carrying an inequitable share of the State's behavioral health burdens—both human and financial—without authority, partnership, or reimbursement, and that these burdens directly undermine the city's economic stability, investment climate, and quality of life.

**Section 3.** Directive to the Municipal Attorney. The Municipal Attorney is directed to investigate and pursue all legal avenues against the State of Alaska, including, but not limited to, tort claims, claims for reimbursement of unfunded mandates, public nuisance actions, and violations of constitutional or statutory duties related to public health.

**Section 4.** Reporting Requirement. The Municipal Attorney shall report back to the Assembly within 90 days with a summary of findings, potential legal theories, and recommendations for litigation or other administrative remedies.

**Section 5.** Intergovernmental and Stakeholder Coordination. The Municipality shall engage with other affected Alaska municipalities, Tribal governments, business organizations, and service partners to explore coordinated advocacy, legal

collaboration, and statewide accountability strategies.

**Section 6.** This resolution shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of the Assembly

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Clerk