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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Addressing the Legal Needs of Spanish Speakers**

Anchorage, AK. Monday July 18, 2005. Alaska Legal Services Corporation (ALSC), in partnership with members of its pro bono panel and representatives from state and non-profit agencies, has created a committee to identify and address some of the civil legal problems affecting the Spanish-speaking community in Alaska.

During their first meeting last June, committee members identified some of the problems that could be targeted with current resources. The language barrier was listed as the most problematic issue. Other problems identified range from the lack of community outreach and education, to the dearth of legal materials in Spanish. The committee also noted the great need for professional and accredited interpreters that would be willing to volunteer or reduce their rates to help low-income and indigent persons.

Some of the goals established include the revival of the Spanish Language Clinics in Anchorage and the establishment of a telephone hotline to complement the clinics. The committee also set goals for getting legal brochures and content from AlaskaLawHelp.org translated into Spanish, and the creation of a standard glossary of legal terms.

“Demand for legal services by Spanish speakers has slowly, but steadily, increased. Our current staffing and financial resources are limited to meet this emerging need, but by working together with our pro bono panel members and forging partnerships with other groups in our community, we can begin to eliminate some of our current obstacles”, said Erick Cordero, Director of Volunteer Services and Community Support at ALSC.

Alaska Legal Services Corporation is a non-profit organization established in 1966 and the largest statewide provider of free legal services in Alaska. The Volunteer Attorney Support pro bono program has been assisting low-income Alaskans for over two decades through the generosity of members of the Alaska Bar Association. AlaskaLawHelp.org is a web-based guide to civil legal services and resources for low-income persons and seniors in Alaska.

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