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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CHUGIAK SENIOR CENTER SUED TO PREVENT EVICTION OF NINETY YEAR OLD DISABLED RESIDENT**

Anchorage, AK (April 14, 2006) – The Chugiak Senior Center, an Assisted Living Home, is trying to evict 90 year old Helen Winters from her apartment against her wishes. This attempted eviction is also against the wishes of Alaska’s Long-term Care Ombudsman, her Care Coordinator and her physician.

Helen Winters entered the Chugiak Senior Center in September of 2004. She and her daughter, Carol Winters made a number of complaints regarding the quality of her care, including administering the wrong medications; breaching confidentiality; interfering with her ability to exercise religious beliefs; failing to provide her medically prescribed low-salt diet; abusive and rough handling; rudeness and verbal abuse; contamination by cigarette smoke; lack of safety; and lack of kindness and caring.

After receiving no satisfactory response, the Winters family contacted Alaska’s Long-term Care Ombudsman, Bob Dreyer, who began to investigate. Chugiak Senior Center’s response was to send Helen Winters a certified letter evicting her in 30 days.

Alaska Legal Services immediately filed a lawsuit on Ms. Winters’ behalf, asserting that such retaliatory behavior was in violation of state law (the Alaska Assisted Living Homes Act, the Alaska Human Rights Act, and the Alaska Uniform Landlord and Tenant Act) as well as federal law (the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Fair Housing Act of 1988).

Ms. Winters obtained a Temporary Restraining Order preventing the Chugiak Senior Center from filing an FED action by Superior Court Judge Craig Stowers and a hearing was set for a permanent injunction on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00. Friday the Chugiak Senior Center filed a motion removing the case to U. S. Federal District Court.

Nikole Nelson, Anchorage ALSC Supervising Attorney stated “The Senior Center’s actions are outrageous and fly in the face of sound public policy for treatment of our elders. Residents of assisted living homes and their families have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and if there are issues regarding their care they need to be encouraged to seek the help of the Long Term Care Ombudsman, rather than encouraged to remain silent and be put at risk. It is inconceivable that the Chugiak Senior Center or any assisted living home would evict anyone seeking to improve the quality of care of the aged and disabled.”

Ms. Winters' lawsuit asks that the attempted eviction be declared unlawful and that damages be awarded for violations of her civil rights.

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