



**ALASKA NATIVE
TRIBAL HEALTH
CONSORTIUM**

March 28, 2025

Representative Genevieve Mina, Chair
House Health & Social Services Committee
State Capitol Room 106
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: ANTHC Support of House Bill 144

Chair Mina,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), I write in support of House Bill (HB) 144.

ANTHC is a statewide Tribal health organization serving all 229 tribes and all Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) people in Alaska. ANTHC provides a wide range of statewide public health, community health, environmental health, and other programs and services for Alaska Native people and their communities. ANTHC and Southcentral Foundation operate programs at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC), the statewide tertiary care hospital for all AN/AI people in Alaska, under the terms of Public Law 105-83.

At ANMC and across the Alaska Tribal Health System, the current prior authorization process serves as an administrative challenge to our ability to provide needed health care services and medications in a timely and efficient manner. To preserve limited health care resources for direct patient care, it's critical that we work together to improve the existing prior approval process through a collaborative and coordinated effort. HB 144 is a product of this effort, representing a significant step in strengthening our care delivery system and the health of the patients we serve.

Thank you for your leadership in sponsoring HB 144 and appreciate the opportunity to provide written support of this important legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at mmartin@anthc.org or 907-444-8808 with any questions or if additional information can be provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monique R. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Monique R. Martin, Vice President
Intergovernmental Affairs

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
4000 Ambassador Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Main: (907) 729-1900 | Fax: (907) 729-1901 | anthc.org

March 25, 2025

Representative Justin Ruffridge
State Capitol Room 424
Juneau AK, 99801
Representative.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov

RE: AHHA Supports House Bill 144 – Prior Authorization

Dear Representative Ruffridge,

For over 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and a growing number of healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

AHHA strongly supports HB 144, and we thank Representative Ruffridge for introducing this important piece of legislation.

Prior authorization is a review process commonly used by insurers that essentially requires healthcare providers to obtain express authorization to provide a specific treatment or procedure for their patients. While prior authorization can be useful for reviewing the appropriateness of medical care, it can also cause significant delays in necessary, urgent patient treatment.

We hear story after story about time-consuming appeals, endless paperwork, lack of consistency and transparency, and needless interruptions to treatment when patients are at their most vulnerable. This has contributed to a contentious relationship between providers and insurers in Alaska and across the country.

AHHA spent the interim working to align insurers, providers, and regulators around shared priorities. To start, we partnered with our member hospitals to identify practical, workable solutions to the prior authorization challenges. We then engaged with the Division of Insurance to assess feasibility and impact from a regulatory perspective. From there, discussions with insurers revealed common ground, making it clear that we could agree to concrete reforms to improve the prior authorization process.

HB 144 is the result of this collaborative effort. The bill has the strong backing of Alaska's hospitals through AHHA, physicians via the Alaska State Medical Association, and the state's major health insurers. The bill prioritizes system automation and injects a new level of transparency for prior authorization, including policies, peer review and appeals, enforcement, and accountability.



HB 144 also includes the following reforms that will have an immediate and positive impact on patients:

- Faster turnaround times for decisions – from five working days to 72 hours
- Long-term approval for treatments concerning chronic conditions
- Prohibit restrictions on key therapies for Stage Four Advanced Metastatic Cancer
- A clear process for requesting exceptions to step therapy requirements

Finally, AHHA is proud of the work that went into HB 144 and is grateful to Representative Ruffridge for bringing this legislation forward. This bill exemplifies effective, stakeholder-driven reform that will create lasting improvements in patient care. We strongly support HB 144 and urge the committee to swiftly consider and pass this bill.

Thank you for considering this request and for your commitment to advancing healthcare for Alaska.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.C. Kosin', written over a circular scribble.

Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA
President & CEO

March 21, 2025

The Honorable Genevieve Mina
Chair, House Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building, Room 106
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Subject: Support for House Bill 144 – Prior Authorization

Dear Chair Mina:

I am writing to you on behalf of Central Peninsula Hospital to express our strong support for House Bill 144, which aims to improve the prior authorization process.

Central Peninsula Hospital is committed to providing high-quality, efficient care to our community. However, the current prior authorization process often creates unnecessary delays and administrative burdens for our patients. House Bill 144's provisions, such as the establishment of clear timelines for responses, the requirement for transparent and evidence-based standards, and implementation of a prior authorization application programming interface, will streamline the process and enhance patient access to timely care.

This legislation makes prior authorization standards that ensures transparency, establishes a process for health care providers to request a clinical peer review of a prior authorization request. In addition, it ensures that clinical expertise is considered in the decision-making process, mandates that prior authorizations for chronic conditions are valid for a minimum of 12 months and reduces the administrative burden associated with ongoing care. These are all positive improvements over today's prior authorization process!

We believe this legislation will have a positive impact on the delivery of care in Alaska, and we urge you hear and move this legislation as quickly as possible. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Shaun Keef
CEO
Central Peninsula Hospital

CC: Representative Justin Ruffridge

April 1, 2025

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[Representative Mina, Chair](#)
[House Health & Social Services Committee](#)
[State Capitol Room 106](#)
[Juneau, AK 99801](#)
House.Health.And.Social.Services@akleg.gov

RE: Heritage Place Supports House Bill 144 – Prior Authorization

Dear Chair Mina and Committee Members,

Heritage Place is a 60-bed Long-Term Care Facility centrally located on the Kenai Peninsula, dedicated to serving our community's most vulnerable residents. Our mission is to provide the highest quality of care, and to this end, we strongly support **HB 144**.

Currently, the prior authorization process causes significant delays in providing timely care for our residents. These delays are particularly concerning given that our residents often have frail, compromised health, and lack the physical reserves to endure the wait for essential treatments. Each delay in care puts our vulnerable population at further risk, underscoring the urgent need for reform.

HB 144 is important because it brings much needed reforms to the prior authorization process that will help our residents. Speeding up turnaround time for prior authorization decisions, providing long-term prior authorization for treatment of chronic conditions, prohibiting restrictions on key therapies for advanced cancer, requiring an exception process to step therapy, increasing transparency and accountability, and prioritizing automation, are all positive steps for improving access to timely, quality care in our state. Please pass HB 144.

Thank you for your work in addressing healthcare challenges for Alaska.

Sincerely,

Cathy Reaktenwalt MSN, RN-BC, LNHA
Administrator, Director of Nursing

Heritage Place
232 W. Rockwell Ave.
Soldotna, AK 99669
907-714-5072

creaktenwalt@cpgh.org



April 4, 2025

Representative Justin Ruffridge
State Capitol Room 425
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Ruffridge,

Thank you for the opportunity to express Alaska Regional Hospital's support for House Bill 144 and our gratitude for your leadership and commitment to the healthcare of all Alaskans by the introduction of this legislation.

While we recognize the importance of the prior authorization process in reviewing and validating the appropriateness of medical interventions, we must also acknowledge that it often causes significant challenges to ensuring Alaskans have timely access to potentially lifesaving treatments, medications and procedures.

Alaska Regional Hospital exists to provide patients with healthier tomorrows and it is our mission to be committed to the care and improvement of human life. This has guided our organization for decades and it illustrates our dedication to ensuring that patients we serve have access to the treatments they need and the quality they deserve.

This is the basis for our strong support of House Bill 144. In addition, we recognize and appreciate the collaborative efforts of many stakeholders who have been working together to improve the prior authorization process to the benefit of all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Opsut
Chief Executive Officer