

# Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion

by Anchorage Human and Social Services Executive Directors

March, 2015

Whereas, the health and wellness of Alaskans is a Constitutional priority and is vital to each individual, family, community and our entire State;

Whereas, Alaskans have identified 25 Leading Health Priorities providing a science-based framework to guide efforts toward improving health and ensuring health equity for all Alaskans which includes access to health care;

Whereas, an estimated 40,000 of the most vulnerable Alaskans are uninsured and potentially eligible for Medicaid (*Source: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. Healthier Alaskans Create a Healthier State Economy. Anchorage, AK, 2013.*);

Whereas, the State of Alaska budget deficit, due to significantly lower oil prices and declining oil production, calls for all Alaskans to work together to achieve consensus on priorities, long term financial sustainability, program performance and leveraging revenue sources;

Whereas, routine preventive care contributes to life time good health; early treatment of illness and injury make it more likely for an individual to regain their health; and, treatment in an Emergency Room is most expensive;

Whereas, access to primary care and medication is particularly significant for individuals with chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease; and Medicaid patients are 15% more likely to be tested than uninsured. Medicaid beneficiaries with heart disease are twice as likely to take their medication appropriately, compared to those who are uninsured, and are also more likely to have their blood pressure controlled and to have been checked for high cholesterol compared to the uninsured. [*Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, Medicaid: An Important Source of Health Care Coverage for Patients with Chronic Disease.*];

Whereas, lack of health insurance contributes to family stress and financial instability including 154,900 Alaskans served annually by the Food Bank of Alaska network of over 300 partners:

- 56% making choices between medications/meals
- 26% of households report at least one member with diabetes
- 47% of households report at least one member with high blood pressure
- 34% have no health insurance of any kind, including Medicaid
- 56% of households report having unpaid medical bills
- 53% of clients served have incomes that are at or below the federal poverty level (\$15,510 or less for household of two)
- 27% have incomes between \$1-\$10,000 annually; 29% have incomes of \$10,001-\$20,000 annually

Whereas, good health and wellness are supporting factors in children staying and succeeding in school; adults getting and keeping a job; and, in healthy, competitive communities;

Whereas, the State of Alaska has an opportunity now to develop an Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program which meets the needs of vulnerable Alaskans, communities and Alaska as well as being an effective component of the Alaska health care system and is funded by the Federal government at least at 90% and has the potential to provide additional offsets to program expansion administration;

Whereas, Medicaid Expansion would provide a revenue stream covering a portion of the health care costs of vulnerable Alaskans and in doing so support financial stability and organization sustainability of the Alaska health safety net: community health centers, community mental health centers, tribal clinics, rural hospitals, urban hospitals;

Whereas, in FY2014, as partners in caring for vulnerable Alaskans, coalition members contributed directly to customer health or provided supports to increase the likelihood of short term and lifelong health and wellness. We

- provided 18,805 customers health care services 26,529 customers health screenings; 68,841 customers health education; \$17,690,505 donated logistical or financial assistance; 14,848 with a patient centered medical home; and, 31,793 or 84% of customers surveyed demonstrated/reported healthy behaviors and 8,073 or 84% met the terms of their health treatment plan; and,
- Served 994,312 meals/snacks/ box lunches; sheltered 17,103 homeless individuals/families; provided 24,695 households prevention services and/or income boosts; distributed 540,037 pounds of food; and 1,484 or 64% of participating customers demonstrating improved coping skills, better ability to return to daily life, *ability to return to work and/or home after completing crime or violence prevention and/or stabilization programs and 1,532 or 70% of participating customers had increased self-sufficiency levels after exiting a program operating in the community; and,*
- 1,037 children 0-5 screenings; 1,684 children provided with quality care and education services; 109,165 free books distributed to children 0-5; and, 2,167 or 89% of participating parents/families had increased knowledge of parenting and child development
- 20,948 of youth participating in activities that promote youth development; 196 or 67% participating youth decreasing substance use; 6,000 or 69% youth more engaged with education, learning and school; and, 10,860 or 74% youth with conflict resolution skills (*Note: the information above is a sample based on data provided is based on annual reporting by partner agencies to United Way of Anchorage.*); and,
- We, our partners, business people, teachers, students and parents have been working together to increase the Anchorage School District graduation to 90% by the year 2020, and have together increased graduation rates from 59% in 2005 to 74% in 2014 which contributes as a positive determinant in lifelong health.

Therefore, we the undersigned non-profits support the following Medicaid Expansion strategies:

- Approve Medicaid Expansion
- Fix and clear backlogs for
  - the State of Alaska Medicaid eligibility determination system, Alaska's Resource for Integrated Eligibility Services (ARIES), and;
  - the payment system, Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) prior to Medicaid Expansion
- Accept federal money for Medicaid Expansion
- Approve supplemental funding for Medicaid Expansion administration

And;

Commit to being partners in this effort by continuing to care for vulnerable Alaskans and by working with the Governor, State of Alaska Legislature, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the business community and other stakeholders to develop a sustainable Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program.



Hilary A. Morgan, Co-Chair

CEO, YWCA Alaska

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## *Signatories*

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, Inc. (AWAIC)

AK Child & Family

Alaska Injury Prevention Center

Alison Kear, Chief Executive Officer, Covenant House Alaska

American Diabetes Association

Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center

Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC)

Barbara Dubovich, Chief Executive Officer, Camp Fire USA Alaska Council

CCS Early Learning

Food Bank of Alaska

Jerry A. Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services (and Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services)

Lisa Aquino, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services

Francine Harbor, NAMI

Nine Star Education and Employment Services

Pauline P. Smith, Executive Director, Alaska Literacy Program

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Stephanie Berglund, CEO, thread

Volunteers of America Alaska

YWCA Alaska

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