

March 5, 2014

The Honorable Bill Stoltze, Co-Chair
The Honorable Alan Austerman, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 519
Juneau, AK 99801

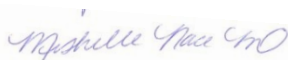
Respected Members of the House Finance Committee & Interior Delegation,

We, the Board of Directors at Tanana Valley Clinic, are writing to support reinstatement of funding for the statewide AHEC system of 5 centers, including the Interior AHEC Center located at Fairbanks Memorial Hospital. The AHEC program has a number of substantial influences in our community which include the engagement, training, recruitment and retention of medical personal in all medical fields including nursing, medical assistant, EMT, physician assistant, laboratory, nurse practitioner, physician and phlebotomist who are entering the workforce in Interior Alaska. Cutting funding to this program will have a detrimental impact on TVC's ability to recruit skilled medical staff to our clinic, as well as impacting the impending health care workforce shortage we face statewide.

AHEC is an extremely significant resource for TVC's recruitment of primary care physicians. Being in a remote location such as Alaska, we face substantially higher recruiting costs to attract skilled providers to our remote geographic location. Students who rotate with us through the AHEC program are more likely to return to Fairbanks to begin their practice than a resident completing their training outside the state.

Please consider our recommendation to reinstate the AHEC budget line item to the UA budget at the full amount of \$652,900. Alaska is facing an impending shortage of skilled medical staff and cutting funding to this program will squeeze the already tight availability of access to primary care that many Alaskans already feel.

Sincerely,



Mishelle Nace, MD
Pediatrics
Medical Director



Clay Triplehorn, DO
Sleep Medicine
Board Chairman



Todd Capistrant, DO
Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine
Chief Medical Officer



Mike Swenson, MD
Internal Medicine
Board Member



James Shill, MBA
Chief Executive Officer



Nicole Soto, MD
Dermatology
Board Member



Grayson Westfall, MD
1st Care
Medical Director



Corrine Leistikow, MD
Family Practice
Medical Director