

April 10, 2015

Senator Pete Micciche
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Room 514
120 4th Street, Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SB 98 Prescription without physical exam

Dear Senator Micciche,

Aetna would like to express our support for SB 98, *an act related to diagnosis, treatment and prescription of drugs without a physical examination*. Aetna strongly supports the effort to expand telemedicine and improve access to clinical services for Alaskans provided by physicians and podiatrists.

Healthcare costs in Alaska are among the highest in the United States and are continuing to rise each year. Research shows that telemedicine can reduce costs by providing care through more efficient means. In addition, telemedicine improves access to care and also in remote locations, whether a patient needs access to a primary care physician or a physician with specific clinical specialties. Telemedicine improves follow-up care for patients with chronic conditions and creates a better patient experience by reducing travel time and absenteeism from work.

Aetna firmly believes that it is beneficial to recognize providers that are licensed in other states to appropriately address access needs and telemedicine availability in a given community. If states mandate that a provider hold a license from that state, often the ability to develop a robust Telemedicine program is hindered and can limit the ability to access a wide array of physicians with specific specialties.

SB 98 is a critical bill to improve access to care, especially in rural communities and to utilize more cost-effective technologies to deliver essential and timely care to Alaskans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Butler", is positioned below the "Sincerely," text. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shannon Butler
Director of Government Affairs, West Region