

From: [John Totten, MD FRCS](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: WWAMI Medical Education
Date: Thursday, March 26, 2015 5:20:07 PM

Dear Committee Finance,

Senators.

I am concerned about funding for the WWAMI Medical Education which the House Finance Committee has decided to cut entirely from the State Budget (\$3m). You will have a chance to review this decision when HB72 comes out of the Senate Finance Committee. As currently under review, HB0072b includes this text:-

"It is the intent of the legislature that the Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission give notice of termination of the WWAMI agreement. The termination clause requires a three years' formal written notice to the other parties and that no new students would be admitted to the WWAMI program."

I have reviewed the Fact Sheet provided to the House Committee by the Alaska Commission on Post Secondary Education. By their estimation the House Proposal will :-

- 1) End Alaska's 40 years relationship with the only Medical School in this five state area.
- 2) Withdraw support from 20 Alaskan Medical Students currently accepted for the 2015-16 Academic year.
- 3) Abandon the most successful recruiting tool we have for assuring quality Primary Care physicians in Alaska.
- 3) Within three years, demolish entirely the supply of physicians available to meet the needs of Alaska's population

In considering where WWAMI can fit in the budget process as it evolves, I ask you to consider amending HB72 to reflect a 10% cut in funding and not wholesale cancellation of the program. This is a more balanced approach and one that maintains crucial infrastructure while we wait for the price of oil to recover.

I write to you personally because I know you personally, you are our Sitka Senator and also because I am not on Facebook and therefore unable to comment through the channel that is provided for this bill.

Please let me know if Medical Education can count on your support.

John Totten
MD FRCS
Sitka AK.
40 year Alaska Physician and Surgeon

Sincerely,

John Totten MD FRCS
311 Erler St
Sitka, AK 99835