



March 2, 2016

Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Giessel,

The Denali Oncology Group and the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) thank you for leading Alaska Senate Bill 142, which would help ensure that similar policies apply to patient cost-sharing for both traditional intravenous and oral anticancer medications. We strongly support this important legislation.

Denali Oncology Group (DOG) an organization of oncologists and other health care professionals, is the Alaska Affiliate of ASCO, the national organization representing nearly 40,000 physicians and other healthcare professionals specializing in cancer treatment, diagnosis, and prevention.

Increasingly, scientific advances offer opportunities to treat individuals with cancer with oral and other self-administered anticancer medications that provide clinical advantages over more traditional forms of anticancer medications. Oral anticancer drugs may represent the only or best treatment option, in some cases. However, as health insurance products have evolved over time, some health plans have begun to impose significantly higher cost sharing requirements (copayments, coinsurance, etc.) on patients for oral anticancer drugs than for intravenous or injected drugs. The cost sharing burdens imposed on patients for oral anticancer drugs can create insurmountable financial barriers to optimal treatment, even as some of these treatments may have the potential to lower the overall cost of care.

Forty states and the District of Columbia have laws to ensure that cancer patients have meaningful access to oral anticancer medications. We stand ready to work with you to provide these protections to Alaska's cancer patients.

If you have questions or would like assistance on any issue related to providing care of individuals with cancer, please do not hesitate to contact Latha Subramanian M.D. at the Denali Oncology Group or Jennifer Brunelle at ASCO at jennifer.brunelle@asco.org.

On behalf of the Denali Oncology Group and ASCO, we thank you for your attention to this matter and urge the Alaska legislature to enact an oral parity law in 2016.

Sincerely,

Latha Subramanian
President, DOG

Julie M. Vose, MD, MBA, FASCO
President, American Society of Clinical Oncology