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**From:** Jane and Bill Wiebe <homerwiebe@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 11:26 AM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

Dear Members of the House,

A few of you are opposed to the Medicaid expansion that was proposed by the feds. Some of you think it will cost the State a bundle ten years from now, and others are opposed because of political reasons because it happened to be part of the Affordable Care Act

As Republican Representatives of Alaska, I urge you to get over the national politics. As a small population state your resistance will have almost no impact on the national stage, it wastes your time, and it is just not a high priority Alaska issue.

The impact on the State budget is a definite concern, but there are \$148 million federal dollars hanging out there for you to take this year, more if you play your cards right. Take the money now and deal with the undetermined costs later. They may be smaller than you fear.

I'll just list a few Alaskans who benefit:

- \* Alaska doctors, nurses, and medical staff.
- \* Every hospital in Alaska.
- \* Social service people who have to deal with poor, sick, or unemployed Alaskans

Prominently missing from this list are the medicare patients themselves. If Medicaid is expanded, 40,000 Alaskans will get federal health coverage. They may get healthy enough to get a job, but they don't pocket the payments and they will still be broke.

Oh yea, I forgot the big dog on the benefit list. That would be the State of Alaska. Currently, it is the State that pays for poor folks to visit the ER, the State that subsidizes never to be paid medical bills incurred by broke people, and the State that covers what the feds do not.

Regards,  
Bill Wiebe



Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments  
Health Department  
P.O Box 309  
Fort Yukon, AK 99740  
907-662-2460

April 16, 2015

House Finance Committee  
c/o Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Honorable House Finance Committee

The Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid in July 2015 for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years. We should view Medicaid expansion as an economic driver that will positively impact our state's economy as we are faced with declining oil prices and the resulting budget challenges.

In addition to new federal revenue, savings to the state budget have also been identified in the Department of Corrections, the Chronic & Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) Program and behavioral health grants. In FY2016, the state would realize \$6.1 million in savings. Medicaid expansion is healthy for Alaskans and healthy for the state's budget. We encourage the continued internal evaluation to identify other potential savings and offsets attributable to expansion and reform.

Federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond. We support Governor Walker's position that Alaska's participation is contingent on the federal match remaining at 90%.

Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform. We are pleased to hear that the Department of Health & Human Services has issued an RFP for technical assistance related to reform efforts. Though reform of the current Medicaid

program should be of utmost importance, reform efforts should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

The Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melinda L Peter", with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

Melinda L Peter  
CATG Health Director

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**From:** Ann Bayes <bayes@xyz.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 10:21 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

It is time for this legislation to be passed so Alaskans can take advantage of the financial benefits provided through its enactment, and we can see more Alaskans able to get medical care when they need it.

As it stands now, the local taxpayers and insured individuals are covering the cost of emergency care for the uninsured through our local hospitals. This means there is no preventative care being provided, only the more expensive acute care when a person's condition requires emergency care.

Please bring the benefits of this legislation to Alaska through the enactment of HB 148.

Thank you,  
Ann Bayes

TO House Finance Committee  
RE: HB 148

Dear Legislators,

We urge you to pass Governor Walker's Medicaid Expansion Bill. Please do not play politics with the health of the 40,000 uninsured Alaskans. It could be a matter of life or death. It's the right thing to do, morally and ethically. It also makes fiscal sense as accepting the federal government's \$146 million will save \$6 million from the general fund.

Thank you,

Karen Murdock  
Bill Marshall

Box 1622

55200 East Road  
Homer, AK 99603

Mary A Minor, ND

Dear Representatives Neuman, Thompson and members of the House Finance Committee,

Re: Medicaid expansion

I would like to share my perspective with you on HB 148. In December, 2008, I was working at a clinic in Fairbanks. I was paying \$400 a month for health insurance with a \$3000 deductible. I was in my early 50's. I had never been in the hospital, no injuries, never been sick, didn't smoke but, knowing that no one is invincible, I paid it out of my own pocket. Then I had a skiing accident. My injuries sent me to the hospital in Fairbanks in an ambulance. After paying my deductible, my health insurance kicked in at less than \$10. Ambulance, ER visit, MRI—it is not cheap.

In January, 2009, I was shocked to find out my premiums were going up. Way up. Now I would be paying \$800 per month with a \$5000 deductible. I had no choice. I was going to need major reconstructive surgery to my knee which ended up costing \$60,000, so I just had to pay it.

By 2010 I could no longer afford health insurance at all. I have been able to get my current health insurance through the Affordable Care Act and it has been a real blessing. My premiums are now \$22 for health insurance and \$38 for dental. I am also now unemployed and I don't know how long I can keep paying these premiums but for the moment, I don't fear bankruptcy due to illness or injury and I am grateful.

I realize some conservative legislators worry about waste, fraud and abuse in the healthcare system and I couldn't agree more. But that has to be dealt with separately. Hospitals, whether profit or nonprofit use a "chargemaster" to determine what they will charge for every bandage, every aspirin. It is completely unrelated to what these items cost. These are the costs for the uninsured; the people least likely to be able to pay these exorbitant costs. According to Steven Brill in his book "The Bitter Pill", 60% of the nearly 1 million personal bankruptcies in 2013 were due to medical bills. Insurance companies routinely pay less than these charges because of their agreements with the providers.

The situation is unsustainable. Our country spends more on health care than the next 10 big spenders combined. We spend more on health care than the GDP of France. The health industry stands alone as the only industry where high tech advances have increased costs rather than lowering them.

PO Box 2844  
Homer, AK 99603


(907)699-7346 phone or text  
mminor6@gmail.com

Mary A Minor, ND

I know that fight will be a difficult one but in the meantime, if we can get more people covered by Medicaid, we can address the truly thorny question, why does health care cost so much.

Thanks again for your support of this vital expansion. Regardless of what some may think, none of us is invincible. We should not have to face bankruptcy because of that fact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary A Minor, ND".

Mary Minor, ND  
Mminor6@gmail.com

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**From:** Rob Lund <summersong@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 5:23 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

Please expand medicaid. You are making a life or death decision for many Alaskans—the wrong choice could haunt you for the rest of your lives.

Thank you.

Rob Lund  
Homer



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**From:** Griswold Mary <mgrt@xyz.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 6:41 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

I enthusiastically support Medicaid expansion. It will provide health insurance for a critical segment of our residents. It will lower bad debt and charity charges at our hospitals. It will help our economy with an infusion of federal funds. If Alaska does not accept Medicaid expansion, these federal dollars will go to the enlightened states who do.

Mary Griswold  
Homer

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**From:** Lund Judy <jclhomer@xyz.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 8:17 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148 - In support

The South Peninsula Hospital Service Area Board has moved to support the South Peninsula Hospital Operating Board's resolution 2015-07 urging the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid coverage to improve the Health of Alaskans and to Improve the Alaskan Economy. We, as a group, strongly urge the Legislature to approve HB 148 and to expand Medicaid.

On behalf of the entire board  
Sincerely  
Judith Lund, Chairperson  
South Peninsula Service Area Board

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**From:** Lund Judy <jclhomer@xyz.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 8:24 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

I would like to personally urge passage of HB 148 expanding Medicaid Coverage in the State of Alaska. As an Enrolled Agent preparing taxes for individuals in Homer, Alaska I have personally encountered many individuals who need this coverage. Further as a volunteer for the South Peninsula Service Area Board and for the South Peninsula Hospital Foundation, Inc. I know the problems of the uninsured and the bad debt burdens. These would all be greatly eased with Medicaid expansion. With the influx of substantial Federal Funds at a time of financial stress it seems to be a win-win situation. Please vote to support HB 148.

Sincerely  
Judith Lund, E.A.  
Sundog Consultants, Inc.

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**From:** Stan Anderson <stan@stananderson.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 09, 2015 11:12 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

HB 148, Medicaid expansion makes dollars and sense for Alaska by providing health and hope which are fundamental to making a go of things in life. Alaskans want Medicaid expansion, now.

Stan Anderson  
59835 Tern Ct  
Homer, AK 99603

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**From:** Jeff Pearce <jp7seas@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 3:16 AM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** What you propose is horrible

Honorable Representative Paul Seaton.

I appreciate your work in Juneau thus far. However, that being said, please do not consider a state income tax. I know that state revenues are down. Please do not use this as an excuse to tax Alaskan's income. There are other ways to derive an income than this. American founding fathers based the financing of their government on excise taxes, NOT income taxes. Do not go there. The price of crude oil will go back up again. Whether it does or does not is irrelevant. DO NOT tax Alaskans income. There are other ways to procure needed finances. Thank you and may God bless. -Jeff Pearce, Anchor Point

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**From:** Mike and Cathy McCarthy <cathmac@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 9:06 AM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** Medicaid Expansion

Dear House of Representative Legislators,

We are strongly supporting HB 148. It's the right of every Alaskan to have a medical insurance safety net. No one should lose their home or life savings because of illness or injury. The 40,000 Alaskans who would be covered by this bill are mostly people who are working low paying jobs and have difficulty just paying their rent and food! It is imperative that their needs be met! What's more, it is far more expensive to provide medical care through emergency room services than to take care of medical needs early in less expensive clinics.

We do not buy the argument that the federal government can't be trusted to pay. It is apparent that we trust the federal government to pay for many services in the State of Alaska. Those who oppose this bill on those grounds are the same representatives who want the federal government to pay for Kabata and also a variety of state roads and services that THEY would like to see! Citizens of Alaska are far more important than these items. Give up that argument! It is totally invalid!

There are many organizations in the State that favor this bill including the Alaska Chamber of Commerce! Listen to your citizens!

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike and Cathy McCarthy

Homer, Alaska 99603

Alaska State Legislature  
120 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Steve Thompson,

Thank you for your service to our great state. As your constituent, I respectfully ask that you read this letter and honor my request. As you and your colleagues consider whether to expand Medicaid under Obamacare, I ask that you vote against any legislation that includes expansion. I know special interests have been lobbying you and your colleagues in an attempt to influence your vote. I may not have the ability to travel to Juneau to deliver this message in person but I still hope that you give my request equal consideration. I will remember how you vote on this issue.

The Obamacare Medicaid expansion may provide additional federal taxpayer money for special interests in the health care industry but it comes at a cost to Alaskans in the long run. Expanding Obamacare in Alaska supplants the private sector with more government. We don't need more government here, we need less of it. Most of the time it feels like we are powerless in pushing back on the endless encroachment of government in our lives. But on this issue, you have the opportunity to say no to more government.

Say no to the Obamacare Medicaid expansion. Don't give in to the special interests short-term desire for more taxpayer money. I'll be watching to see who you represent.

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**From:** Nancy Osborne <petero1951@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 3:53 PM  
**To:** House Finance Legislation  
**Subject:** HB 148

Our wish is to address the incredible government waste that comes with Medicare Expansion. That is critical! Just adding more poor folks onto a broken government handout is NOT something we want to see our State do! It only makes them more dependent and that does not bode well for anyone despite what they think! There has to be a better way to get health care to needy folks!

Nancy and Tom Osborne  
102 Madison St Box 2375  
Seward, AK 99664