



3100 Channel Dr., Suite 300
Juneau, AK 99801

February 14, 2020

The Honorable David Wilson
State Senate
Alaska State Capital
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Wilson,

This letter is in support of Senate Bill 134, entitled "An Act relating to medical assistance reimbursement for the services of licensed professional counselors."

There is a significant need for behavioral health services. The state of Alaska experiences high rates of suicide, substance use disorder, and mental health issues stemming from adverse childhood experiences. Limited access to basic behavioral health treatment has led to a crisis-driven system and the state paying for therapeutic interventions at the highest level and cost of care. An effective system allows for entry into services through many different doors. Current Medicaid regulations present a barrier to services. Senate Bill 134 opens access to therapeutic care by allowing licensed professional counselors to bill and serve some of Alaska's most needy populations.

Sincerely,

Charles Clement
President and Chief Executive Officer