

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

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Alaska Commission on Aging

March 16, 2012

The Honorable Kurt Olson, Chair
House Labor & Commerce Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 24
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subject: Support for HB 218, Insurance for Specialty Tier Medications

Dear Chair Olson:

The Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) is pleased to offer our support for HB 218, a bill to protect persons with critical and chronic diseases from sudden changes in their prescription medications that may exceed their insurance coverage. HB 218 extends the notification date for insurance companies from 30 days to 90 days providing the patient with additional time to explore other therapy options with their doctor or alternate payment plans. This bill is sponsored by the House Health and Social Services Committee.

Seniors who are not covered by Medicare are at serious risk when the cost of their life-saving medical treatments unexpectedly rises and exceeds their insurance coverage. Pharmaceutical treatments for cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, bleeding disorders, neurological diseases, Crohn's disease and other complex medical conditions are examples of diseases that fall under specialty tiers and may impact senior health.

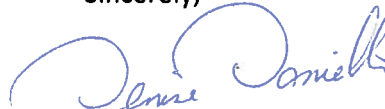
Finding alternate medication regimes and payment plans is complicated and takes time. HB 218 is a good consumer bill that provides 60 additional days of insured treatment for the critically ill patient. Thank you for your consideration and support of HB 218. Please feel free to contact Denise Daniello, ACoA's executive director, by phone (465-4879) or email (denise.daniello@alaska.gov) should you have questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Sharon Howerton-Clark
Chair, Alaska Commission on Aging

Sincerely,



Denise Daniello
ACoA Executive Director

Cc: Representative Johnson
Representative Chenault
Representative Saddler

Representative Thompson
Representative Holmes
Representative Miller
Representative Keller, House HSS Chair