

Alaska State Senate
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SPONSOR STATEMENT

SB 276: Insurance Coverage for Contraceptives

Having access to contraceptives is an essential part of reproductive healthcare. Women in Alaska, especially rural Alaskans, face many obstacles in accessing reproductive health care and prescription contraceptives for a variety of reasons. Alaska's geography and lack of infrastructure makes easy access to contraceptives more difficult than anywhere else in the country.

Having inconsistent access to prescriptive contraceptives increases the chances of accidental pregnancies and other adverse health effects resulting from disrupted use. Senate Bill 276 requires health care insurers, including Medicaid services, to provide coverage for prescriptive contraceptives and medical services necessary for those products or devices. SB 276 also requires for the dispensing of 12 months of prescriptive contraceptives at a time.

This bill provides Alaskans with easier and more accessible family planning options and allows individuals to self-direct their medical needs. One in four women say they have missed contraceptive pills because they could not receive the next pack in time. Studies show that providing one-year supply of prescription contraceptives, including long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs), reduces unintended pregnancies by 30%. It also increases family planning options while reducing costs related to unintended pregnancies such as pregnancy tests, follow-up visits, and other associated long-term costs.

With greater access and increased options to reproductive health care, Alaskan women will have the necessary support to improve family planning while decreasing health care costs.