



Dahl Memorial Clinic
Municipality of Skagway

GATEWAY TO THE KLONDIKE

P.O. BOX 537 SKAGWAY, ALASKA 99840

PHONE 907-983-2255 - Fax 907-983-2793



February 11, 2014

Dear Honorable Representatives & Senators,

I am writing a letter in support of HB 300/SB159 that would allow air ambulance service providers to provide for "air ambulance membership agreements".

I am the medical director and nurse practitioner providing care in the remote village of Skagway. We operate a 24/7 clinic facility that serves 900 people in the winter and over 3,000 on any given day during the cruise ship season. Juneau is our closest referral facility if a patient needs hospitalization or other indepth medical care that we cannot provide at our clinic. Juneau is accessible by a lengthy boat ride or air only. This requires a medevac by an air ambulance service provider. These flights cost thousands of dollars and frequently are inadequately covered by insurance or not covered at all if a patient does not have insurance. Many community members in Skagway have air ambulance membership agreements to cover flight costs and give them peace of mind that they are not potentially facing financial ruin if a medical crisis occurs.

My experience has been that frequently patients that do not have air ambulance membership agreements will refuse to be medevaced at the potential expense of their health to avoid the financial burden. I have personally witnessed on many occasions that air ambulance membership agreements have made the difference on whether a patient will get the medical care they need.

Please vote yes on HB300/SB159.

Sincerely,

Carol Borg ANP



PeaceHealth
Medical Group

The Honorable Cathy Munoz
State Capitol Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

2/14/2014

RE: Passage of **House Bill 300**, to allow air ambulance membership programs to continue.

Dear Representative Munoz,

My name is Peter Rice and I am a practicing physician and administrator who resides in Ketchikan, Alaska.

I strongly support the passage of House Bill 300. I have practiced here for over 25 years, and initiate multiple medevacs each year. I have seen the huge financial burden these transports place on our patients when they have inadequate or no coverage, and feel that the air ambulance membership programs provide a vital financial safety net.

The last thing a patient or family should be worrying about in a time of crisis is fear of a \$70,000 bill for a medevac.

I would appreciate hearing from you about this issue, and thank you so much for your time in sponsoring and pursuing passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter E Rice", followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter E Rice, MD

Medical Director

PeaceHealth Medical Group

Bernard Massin
Box 1349
Wrangell, AK 99929

February 12, 2014

The Honorable Cathy Munoz
State Capitol Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Passage of House Bill 300, to allow air ambulance membership programs to continue.

Dear Representative Munoz,

Hi, my name is Bernard Massin. My family and I live in Wrangell Alaska. I am a family member who resides in Wrangell Alaska. I am in support of House Bill 300, to allow air ambulance membership programs to continue in Alaska.

I have lived in Wrangell for most of my life and being in a remote town surrounded by water we depend on air ambulances for our life support when things get bad. I understand living where I do things cost more, take longer to get and can cost you everything sometimes. But when a company offers you and your family a program for a small amount per year that may save you all your life savings, house and everything you own for just sending you out for something as small as a broken leg or less. You have to support that program. Air ambulances are our life line to higher medical care. When things are above the local hospitals abilities they ship them to the next level of care. I have heard of travel costing from \$20,000 to well over \$100,000 just for one trip. This will bankrupt anyone without insurance and some people with insurance. If I had to come up with \$100,000 today to pay for an air ambulance ride to Seattle I would lose everything I own. The small amount for the membership programs insures I can live in a small town in Alaska without the fear of losing everything I have if I slip on the ice.

I am also involved with the Wrangell volunteer fire departments ambulance service as an EMT. I have been volunteering for 29 years and I can tell you stories of before Airlift northwest and many since. The more air ambulance we have servicing Alaska the better. We have waited an average of 2 plus hours on a good day for a medevac to come. If there is a high run of other people being transported you can push that up to 24 plus hours, add weather in push it up to days. We had a jet come in to pick up someone and they had a flat tire on arrival. No big deal but it took 2 other jets to come in and take care of the problem. One to complete the medevac, one to change out the crew and the other jet to fly back to Seattle for repairs. That tied up 3 jets for a flat tire. As you see the more air ambulances services in Alaska the better because it doesn't take much to tie them up.

Thank you for your time in sponsoring and pursuing passage of HB 300 this session.

Sincerely,

Bernard Massin



Brook Williams
P.O. Box 2018
Wrangell, AK 99929

February 13, 2014

The Honorable Cathy Munoz
State Capitol Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Passage of **House Bill 300**, to allow air ambulance membership programs to continue.

Dear Representative Munoz,

My name is Brook Williams and I am a concerned community member, Volunteer Fire Fighter, and Volunteer Emergency First Responder who resides in Wrangell Alaska.

I support House Bill 300 because I believe that Medevac Air Service is the only way critically injured patients can receive medical attention in a timely and ethical manner. The Air Medevac responds similar to an ambulance in which they are dispatched immediately to assist when a patient is in need and not on a set time schedule in which help may arrive too late to make a difference. These Island communities in Alaska are located too far from major hospitals and normal travel may take days without providing medically trained personnel throughout transport.

Air Medevac's have highly trained medical personnel that allow First Responders, such as me, and Doctors of these small Alaskan communities to feel that the airlift team is an extended arm that help us conserve life. As a First Responder I feel a high obligation to ensure that I am giving a patient the highest level of care until allowing someone with advanced life support to resume the care of the patient. With these highly trained medical personnel and support of Air Travel I can feel relieved that the patient is in good care and I did my best while successfully getting the patient in route to a facility with resources that may save his/her life.

Affordable medevac coverage is a huge relief to the community in which an accident can happen and a person may be secure knowing that they have a chance to get the help they need without a significant overwhelming financial burden. Providing medevac insurance is an ethical decision in which people are free to know that buying medical insurance and medevac insurance together will allow for the help they need when something unthinkable happens.

Air Medevac's with trained personnel gives medically trained community members the relief they need to know they can send a community member with trained professionals to a reliable facility. Members of the community are not only sharing the town but are often family, close friends, or a failure face that will be missed. Being that these communities are so close knit without the Air Medevac Services and coverage it is not just the individual that suffers but the entire community both emotionally and financially. Medical community members will feel high pressure to potentially

go out of the scope of practice or coverage to provide care needed to sustain life if not provided with a choice for a higher level of care through Air Medevac's with medical personnel.

Please vote yes to House Bill 300 and help support the community of people living in remote settings. We have the ability to make a difference if given the opportunity. Please respond to my request.

Thank you for your time in sponsoring and pursuing passage of HB 300 this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brook Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brook Williams