



Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii

Representative Geran Tarr

Alaska State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Continuing Resolution 2

January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Dear Representative Tarr,

On behalf of Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii, I write today to thank you for sponsoring House Continuing Resolution 2, which would resolve that Alaska establish statewide policies that address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Planned Parenthood is the nation's leading reproductive health care provider, serving over 7,000 patients each year in Alaska alone. We strongly support policies that positively impact all aspects of peoples' health and wellness, with particular attention to policies that improve reproductive and sexual health access and outcomes.

A growing body of research suggests that ACEs have a substantial negative impact on individuals' long-term health, including their reproductive health. Exposure to ACEs has been linked to a wide range of health problems, including drug abuse, depression, cancer, heart disease, and more. ACEs have also been linked to poorer reproductive health outcomes for women in particular, including increased risk of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and an increased likelihood having sexual intercourse before age fifteen.<sup>1</sup> Adopting concrete policies to reduce ACEs is an important step towards improving women's health in our state.

In considering such policies, we encourage the state to consider the important role that access to comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services can play in supporting stable, healthy families. Lack of access to such services that are critical to protecting women's reproductive health and preventing unintended pregnancy can have significant negative consequences to women and their families. An Institute of Medicine Report identifies unintended pregnancy as a risk factor for late or inadequate prenatal care, low birth rate, neonatal death, domestic violence, child abuse, and exposure of the fetus to harmful substances such as tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.<sup>2</sup> Unintended pregnancy is also associated with social and economic co-factors such as economic hardship and failure to achieve education and career goals.<sup>3,4</sup> Helping women avoid unintended pregnancies by improving access to reproductive and sexual health must be a key component of any attempt to reduce ACEs and improve community health.

Taking action to reduce ACEs is a public health imperative and we applaud you for this first step towards fostering healthy communities in Alaska. We look forward to supporting your efforts.

Sincerely,

Alyson Currey

Regional Field Organizer and Legislative Liaison