

Public Testimony

SB62 "An Act repealing the certificate of need program....."

The requirement for a Certificate of Need (CON) in Alaska statute is a classic example of how municipal hospitals and large health care organizations use this outdated law as a tool to strengthen their power base and thwart the legitimate medical needs of small Alaskan communities. Obtaining a CON requires professional staff, time, money, and political clout. The community of Delta Junction has demonstrated the need for a Critical Access Hospital, proved the viability of developing a hospital project, has wide community support, and have provided the basic foundations to proceed but we are being stymied by the requirement for a CON.

On a personal level my wife and I and many others want to remain in rural Alaska as we age but the lack of primary and emergency health care jeopardizes that desire. There have been circumstances where local people have been confronted with an accident or critical illness and not survived the 2 hour plus ambulance trip to the closest hospital in Fairbanks. The way medicine is practiced today, if you have a undetermined illness or trauma, the clinics and EMTs are obligated to send you to a hospital for diagnostic testing. For us to be sent to Fairbanks, it is expensive, time consuming, sometimes an overreaction, and places a burden on the hospital ER. Even routine child births necessitate an expensive and cumbersome trip to a Fairbanks hospital.

All Alaskans deserve access to timely qualified health care. The community of Delta Junction is prepared to promote, develop, and obtain funding for a Critical Access Hospital but we can't do that if you retain the outmoded and restrictive requirement for a CON first. I would encourage that you move SB62 out of the L&C committee with a "do pass" recommendation.

Thank You

Bill Ward, Delta Jct.

Gary Zepp

From: djbecker@wildak.net
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2018 1:40 PM
To: Gary Zepp
Subject: SB 62 Dave Becker

I am writing as a 20 year resident of Delta Jct and 16 years as pastor of First Baptist Church in the community. I encourage you to move SB 62 forward in the legislative process for communities like ours the opportunity for better health care. We have many elderly staying in our community with the need for these facilities. We also are a very stable community with Fort Greeley in our community. A new medical clinic has done very well in the community because the need is here. Thank you for your service to the state and its people. I look forward to see the progress of this bill.

Gary Zepp

From: Dean Jazzo <alcan.auto@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 05, 2018 1:31 PM
To: Natasha.mcclanahan@akleg.com; Gary Zepp
Subject: SB 62 and the Certificate of Need

To whom it may concern,

My name is Dean Jazzo and I live and work in Delta Junction, Alaska. I moved here with my wife from Fairbanks back in 2013 and since that time I have become painfully aware of the lack of medical facilities in the immediate area. Since moving here I have had need of professional medical intervention and have consequently gotten to know some of the providers and other medical professionals in the community.

I do not come from a medical background. There is more about medicine and its practice that I do NOT know than I do. I have become a volunteer board member of the Cross Road Health Ministries which serves our community and that of Glennallen, Alaska. I joined the board because as a small business owner, I have some experience with financial management.

I am often surprised to learn of all the legal and legislative hurdles facing medical professionals today. I understand that this field needs some oversight to protect the public at large. But it also needs promote and help provide that service, not stand as interference to it.

A case in point would be the Certificate of Need process as it applies to rural communities. My understanding, while limited, is that the community would incur great expense to justify a Critical Access Hospital for the Certificate of Need (CON) requirement. The CON is primarily concerned about the repeat of services. There is no repeat of any hospital type services for a 100 miles. Just reading the bullet point requirements for a Critical Access Hospital, it is easy to see that this community (and many others in rural Alaska) would qualify for it without the added expense of a Certificate of Need.

The monies spent on the Certificate of Need could and should be better spent on the actual facilities needed than a bureaucratic exercise. Frankly, and without trying to appear too harsh, I find the requirement the epitome of folly under the circumstances.

I plan to be at the hearing tomorrow, February 6th, if there is anything further I can contribute.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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From: Marlene Robinson
To: [Natasha McClanahan](#)
Subject: SB62 in labor and commerce committee
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 12:58:48 PM

Please abolish the certificate of need requirements or at least a rural exemption for a hospital in Delta Junction. Whenever we need urgent care we have a 2 1/2 hour drive to Fairbanks. We are older and that is worrisome. Also we have a 2 year old grandson with breathing problems with a bad cold. A long drive when you have a sick child! It is a concern for anyone living here.

A \$200,000 fee for a certificate is a heavy burden on a small community. Delta Junction desperately needs an urgent care/hospital facility. Thank you.

Marlene Robinson
Delta Junction, Alaska

Sent from my iPhone

From: Maria French
To: [Natasha McClanahan](#)
Subject: SB62
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 1:28:21 PM

I agree with SB62 to abolish the certificate of need program. My family and I live in Delta Junction, Alaska and as you know the nearest MTF is 100 miles away in Fairbanks. It could honestly save lives if we had this in our community. Thank you for your time, Maria French

From: Karen Tony
To: [Natasha McClanahan](#)
Subject: Certificate of need
Date: Monday, February 5, 2018 12:10:05 PM

Please waive the requirements for a certificate of need for a rural facility. We need a hospital with emergency room. The money would be better spent building the facility than studying one. Yes we need it.

Sent from my iPhone