

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 3/12/25

Referred: Health and Social Services, Labor and Commerce

A RESOLUTION

- 1 **Supporting an all-payer crisis continuum of care and Medicaid reform; and urging the**
2 **Governor to direct the Department of Health and the division of insurance to develop**
3 **recommendations for an all-payer model for crisis care.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **WHEREAS**, statewide and locally, the state has implemented effective crisis
6 continuum services that have the potential to work in both urban and rural communities, as
7 evidenced by mobile crisis teams meeting or exceeding national benchmarks for community
8 stabilization; and

9 **WHEREAS** crisis continuum services, which include crisis call lines, mobile crisis
10 teams, 23-hour crisis stabilization centers, and short-term crisis residential centers, benefit the
11 public by increasing public safety and improving acute behavioral health outcomes; and

12 **WHEREAS**, while the state's Medicaid State Plan services and Section 1115
13 Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder waiver services reimburse some of the costs of
14 crisis care, not all components of care are billable to Medicaid, including transportation to
15 subacute mental health facilities and medication dispensed in 23-hour crisis stabilization

1 centers; and

2 **WHEREAS**, while the state's Medicaid does reimburse many crisis services through
3 its 1115 waiver, the reimbursement often does not adequately cover the cost of operations for
4 mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization services; and

5 **WHEREAS** funding streams for crisis continuum services that are not covered by
6 Medicaid, including crisis call center costs and capital costs of constructing inpatient and
7 outpatient facilities, are not adequate to cover the cost of care; and

8 **WHEREAS** certain health insurance plans are required by the federal Paul Wellstone
9 and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 and the No
10 Surprises Act of 2021 to comply with federal parity laws, including coverage of crisis
11 services, and the state lacks a mechanism to assess and report on compliance with those laws;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS** crisis care providers must rely on short-term, unstable grant funding to
14 provide essential behavioral health services; and

15 **WHEREAS**, because of the uncertain funding mechanisms and billing-related
16 administrative barriers for the cost of care, some providers in the state have discontinued vital
17 crisis services or paused planning for the services; and

18 **WHEREAS** innovative, evidence-based policy solutions that help remove
19 administrative red tape and bring all insurers to the table must be considered to ensure the
20 sustainability of crucial crisis services; and

21 **WHEREAS** policy changes to maximize Medicaid funds and reduce administrative
22 barriers could include updates to the state's Medicaid State Plan, including rolling appropriate
23 1115 waiver services into the State Plan and updating the State Plan to include crisis services
24 offered 24 hours a day and seven days a week and to allow for a wider range of crisis
25 providers; and

26 **WHEREAS**, to help ensure the sustainability of crisis services with commercial
27 insurers while avoiding an unnecessary burden for providers to contract individually with
28 plans, the state may consider establishing a small assessment on commercial health insurers
29 for each member each month instead of requiring commercial health insurers to cover mobile
30 crisis response, and the state may also consider implementing a 988 telecommunications
31 surcharge, similar to the 911 surcharge, to fund the state's 988 crisis lifeline;

1 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature supports an all-payer crisis
2 continuum of care and Medicaid reform to ensure that

- 3 (1) all payers support essential crisis services;
4 (2) red tape and inefficiencies are removed; and
5 (3) flexible solutions that work for local communities, providers, and the
6 people providers serve are prioritized; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Governor to
8 direct the Department of Health and the division of insurance to convene public and private
9 payers, key stakeholders, and legislative leaders to develop recommendations for an all-payer
10 model for crisis care.