

# Alaska State Legislature

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**Senator Shelley Hughes**

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## **Senate Bill 119 - Alaska Health Care Consumer's Right to Shop Act Price Transparency and Consumer Incentive to Lower Costs in Alaska Over Time**

### **Sponsor Statement**

Alaska's health care costs are among the highest in the nation and continue to rise. Through free market principles, SB119 will bend the cost curve down over time to help relieve the disproportionate burden of health care costs on family budgets, seniors on fixed incomes and employers providing insurance coverage to their employees.

Senate Bill 119 will provide Alaskans with the information they need to plan financially for their health care decisions. The bill requires health care providers and facilities to list meaningful cost information online and onsite. The bill also requires a health care provider and an insurance company disclose full cost information within five days of request by a patient specific to their condition, including any expected out of pocket costs.

The bill also adds a mechanism so insurance companies will provide an incentive – a shared savings check – to policyholders who choose an in-network provider who charges below the average in-network cost. Employers providing insurance coverage for employees will also be eligible for some of the shared savings. This approach will bring down the high cost of healthcare in Alaska by encouraging consumers to shop and providers to compete for Alaska's healthcare dollars.

35 states have either passed or are currently working on healthcare cost transparency legislation. SB 119 is among the most innovative approaches as a result of the incentive provision, and is expected to bend the cost curve more effectively than other efforts because of this.

The Alaska Health Care Consumer's Right to Shop Act will empower Alaskans with the tools needed to make healthcare choices that are right for them.

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