

CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 15(HSS)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

A RESOLUTION

1 **Calling on the state's congressional delegation to oppose cuts to federal spending on**
2 **Medicaid.**

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

4 **WHEREAS** more than 250,000 state residents rely on Medicaid and the Children's
5 Health Insurance Program for health care and long-term care coverage; and

6 **WHEREAS** Medicaid helps children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-
7 income adults access hospital, physician, prescription, and nursing home services, as well as
8 behavioral health and home and community-based long-term care services throughout the
9 state; and

10 **WHEREAS** state residents living in rural and remote areas of the state are enrolled in
11 Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program at a higher rate than those residents
12 living in population centers; and

13 **WHEREAS** Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program are vital sources
14 of coverage in rural and remote areas where residents face more barriers to accessing care,
15 including chronic provider shortages, limited connectivity, limited health care infrastructure,
16 expensive travel costs to access care, and fewer opportunities for employer-provided health

1 insurance; and

2 **WHEREAS** nearly 40 percent of all Medicaid enrollees are under 18 years old, 36
3 percent of births are covered by Medicaid each year, and Medicaid and the Children's Health
4 Insurance Program provide health care coverage to nearly 100,000 children in the state; and

5 **WHEREAS** Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program are critical to
6 maintaining the health and well-being of the state's newborns, new mothers, and children
7 under 18 years old; and

8 **WHEREAS** Medicaid is the main source of funding for long-term services and
9 supports for seniors and individuals with disabilities, and thousands of the state's seniors rely
10 on Medicaid to help cover Medicare premiums and co-payments, allowing those seniors to
11 live with dignity and independence in the seniors' own homes and communities; and

12 **WHEREAS** 30 percent of Medicaid enrollees are Alaska Native, and funding from
13 Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program strengthens the Alaska Native Tribal
14 Health Consortium system, helping to improve access to health care in all areas of the state;
15 and

16 **WHEREAS**, unlike other Medicaid costs, which are shared by the federal government
17 and the state, the federal government covers 100 percent of costs for services provided to
18 Alaska Native Medicaid recipients receiving care through an Indian Health Service facility or
19 at a tribal facility operating on behalf of the Indian Health Service; and

20 **WHEREAS** states that have implemented Medicaid expansion under the Affordable
21 Care Act currently receive a 90 percent federal match for adults covered through the
22 expansion; and

23 **WHEREAS** Medicaid drives growth in the health care sector, one of the state's most
24 important sectors in terms of employment and wages, and Medicaid is a major source of
25 funding for high quality union nursing and long-term care jobs in the state; and

26 **WHEREAS** Medicaid plays a crucial role in supporting the state's small businesses
27 and entrepreneurs by providing access to affordable health care coverage for employees,
28 which helps prevent illness, reduces absenteeism, and improves productivity; and

29 **WHEREAS**, by ensuring workers have access to necessary medical services,
30 Medicaid enables small businesses to retain a healthier, more reliable workforce, ultimately
31 contributing to economic stability and growth in the state; and

1 **WHEREAS**, each year, the state receives over \$2,000,000,000, approximately 78
2 percent of Medicaid spending in the state, from federal funding, and those funds provide an
3 economic boost throughout the state; and

4 **WHEREAS** the United States Congress is considering cuts of nearly
5 \$880,000,000,000 to federal spending on Medicaid; and

6 **WHEREAS** spending cuts of this magnitude would force the state to make tough
7 choices about whether to offset reductions with state funding, reduce service levels, cut
8 benefits, or reduce coverage levels, likely leaving tens of thousands of state residents without
9 access to essential health care and long-term services and supports;

10 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature calls on the state's
11 congressional delegation to oppose cuts to federal spending on Medicaid to protect the state's
12 health care system, communities, citizens, and economy.

13 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
14 Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Nicholas Begich, U.S.
15 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.