PREMERA | BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF ALASKA

February 10, 2012

Jack C. McRae
Senior Vice President

Representative Bob Herron
State Capitol Room 411
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HB 310, Temporary Child and Adult Immunization Program

Dear Representative Herron,

I am writing in support of House Bill 310, which seeks to *temporarily reinstate* the child and adult immunization program in the Department of Health and Social Services.

As one of the largest healthcare insurers in Alaska, Premera Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska provides comprehensive, tailored services to our members, including innovative programs focused on wellness and prevention. We agree with you that prevention is important in ensuring a healthier future for Alaskans. Our plans echo that sentiment: Premera currently covers all CDC recommended vaccinations for members under age 19 and certain vaccines for adults. This is provided without cost sharing.

We believe HB 310 and its temporary establishment of a state-funded immunization program is a good approach to the process of determining a permanent solution to the gap in federal funding for vaccinations that Alaska is experiencing. Other states have also realized a decrease in federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Section 317 funding and have created innovative, durable solutions to this funding gap to sustain full vaccination program financing. We look forward to working with you, the Department of Health and Social Services, in conjunction with the Alaska Health Care Commission, on developing a sustainable solution for the State that takes into account Alaska's needs and financial constraints.

In the meantime, we believe that the approach outlined in HB 310, to put in place a temporary, state-funded solution to vaccination access for children and adults in Alaska, is financially sensible and offers the state ample time to develop a carefully planned, fairly funded and permanent program.

Thank you for your time and consideration and please give either myself or Jerry Reinwand (907/586-8966), our lobbyist in Juneau, a call if you have any questions pertaining to this letter.

Sincerely,

Jack C. McRae

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