



Representative Lindsey Holmes

House Bill 222 Sponsor Statement

HB 222 is a bill that will update several sections of Alaska's health insurance code to comply with recent changes made in federal law. If we do not update Alaska's code to reflect the federal changes, our Division of insurance will not be able to enforce the law when the federal changes go into effect. These updates include:

- Prohibiting health care insurers from discriminating against individuals on the basis of genetic information.
- Requiring that insurers continue to cover college students under their parent's health insurance coverage when the students take leave from school for medical reasons.
- Requiring insurers to provide parity in mental health and substance abuse treatment coverage.
- Requiring insurers to allow eligible employees and their dependents to enroll in the employer's health insurance plans when the employee or dependent loses Medicaid or state child health coverage or when an employee or dependent becomes eligible for assistance for their employer plan.
- Updating the definition of dentist for insurance purposes to include dentists who are licensed outside the state of Alaska

HB 222 also updates the law to bring substance abuse treatment coverage in line with the new mental health parity requirements. It would replace the mandate that insurers provide coverage for substance abuse treatment. In place of the mandate, it would require that insurers offer coverage for substance abuse treatment and prohibit insurers from placing extra restrictions on substance abuse treatment coverage.

Please join me in supporting HB 222 to ensure that our Division of Insurance can continue enforcing insurance law in the state of Alaska.