

# MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE



Department of Health and Human Services

907-343-6718

*Mayor Dan Sullivan*

Senator Cathy Giessel  
State Capitol, Room 427  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Giessel:

Our Department's Clinical Services includes the Disease Prevention and Control Section. This Section works primarily to treatment for tuberculosis as well as prevention through epidemiology. We support Senate Bill 169 which will lead to a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution for those whose insurance does not cover immunizations we consider essential to good public health.

As the State and even moreso, Anchorage, we have one of the lowest immunization rates nationally. Let's work toward becoming a state that is on the cutting edge like other states who have already successfully maintained universal access to state-supplied vaccines.

Our department serves 270,000 potential clients/citizens locally. We oftentimes see clients who are under insured and/or in a difficult situation where they are faced with the personal tough choice of good health for themselves, their children versus food on the table. We support Senate Bill 169 for a more efficient and cost-effective vaccination system that decreases administrative burden for health providers and increases access to all Alaskans.

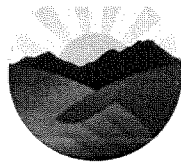
Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Janet S. Vietmeier*

Janet S. Vietmeier

cc: Kenneth Takakuwa, DHHS, Direct Services Division Manager  
Kerre Shelton, SOA, Public Health Nursing, Director



Alaska Primary Care  
ASSOCIATION

February 21, 2014

Senator Cathy Giessel  
[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)

The importance of vaccinations cannot be denied. From childhood immunizations to those for seniors, vaccinations save lives and protect the public's health.

Alaska's Community Health Center (CHC) system of 27 organizations and more than 160 clinic locations across the state serve more than 98,000 patients every year. And our primary care providers administer a very large number of immunizations.

Alaska's CHCs will be financially, administratively, and programmatically negatively affected by the termination of State of Alaska support for the Immunization Program (HB 310, SB 140) in June 2015.

You have proposed a solution, however, in Senate Bill 169 to establish a vaccine assessment account and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution to preserve universal access to State-supplied vaccines.

The Alaska Primary Care Association energetically supports SB 169, as it will save money and time for our CHC primary care providers, as well as helping to ensure universal access to life-saving immunizations for Alaskans at all stages of their lives.

Sincerely,

Nancy Merriman  
Executive Director

# Alaska State Medical Association

4107 Laurel Street • Anchorage, Alaska 99508 • (907) 562-0304 • (907) 561-2063 (fax)

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February 19, 2014

Honorable Cathy Giessel  
Alaska Senate  
State Capital Room 427  
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 169

Dear Senator Giessel:

The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of all Alaskans.

Thank you for introducing Senate Bill 169. It is well documented that vaccines improve the overall health of our communities and can ultimately prove to save future health care costs. ASMA supports your effort to increase the availability of vaccines to Alaskans and supports passage of SB 169.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to further support passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Michael Haugen, JD, MBA.  
Executive Director  
Alaska State Medical Association



Asthma and Allergy  
Foundation of America®  

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ALASKA CHAPTER

**AAFA Alaska Chapter**  
P.O. Box 201927  
Anchorage, AK 99520-1927

February 19, 2014

Dear Senator Giessel,

On behalf of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America - Alaska Chapter, I am writing to you in support of SB 169. This bill, in addition to health promotion would give the state a tool to monitor trends of vaccine usage. In a state with that has many challenges with access to healthcare it is imperative that we can study areas with low vaccination rates to determine if they are caused by a lack of education or by lack of financial access to services.

Adults and children living with asthma are at an increased risk of illness and unfortunate outcomes from a variety of diseases that are currently preventable. Common illnesses like influenza in an asthmatic person can lead to more serious conditions as well as death. However many asthmatics do not receive the flu vaccine either due to a misunderstanding of its benefits or because they do not have the financial resources to do so. It is imperative that patients have access to vaccines at a fiscally appropriate level.

Diseases like pertussis are also preventable with a vaccine however, babies and the elderly are already at risk due to vaccine timing. Asthmatic babies and adults are at even a greater risk as they already live with compromised airways. If these vulnerable populations are exposed to someone with pertussis the outcome can be grim. AAFA Alaska supports any and all programs that will allow the state to study the current levels of pertussis vaccinations in Alaska. While some people make a choice to not get vaccinated, many would like to receive the vaccination but find that their primary clinics do not carry the vaccine. The clinic are making this choice due to the cost of maintaining two sets of documentation for vaccinating children with and without vaccine funding eligibility.

The health and productivity of the people of Alaska depends on your decision. Vaccines have a real, practical and positive impact on the lives of the adults and children. Prevention of disease not only saves lives, but also reduces missed work time and school absences. All things that are good for the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Dale Knutsen  
Executive Director  
AAFA Alaska Chapter



# ALASKA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

35555 Spur Highway #266, Soldotna, AK 99669 akafp@gci.net www.alaskaafp.org 907 258-2255 office 530 326-5612 fax

January 20, 2014

Re: Alaskan Vaccine Association

Dear Senator Giessel:

The Alaska Academy of Family Physicians supports the development of an Alaskan Vaccine Association. Alaska has had low childhood immunization coverage, leaving our children vulnerable to disease outbreaks. It is critical to develop a long term solution to vaccine access in Alaska and improve our children's health. We support the development of a Vaccine Association. It has proven to be successful in other states. A Vaccine Association is a self sustaining solution which facilitates universal purchase of vaccines by collecting payments from health plans, insurers and other payers and remitting funds directly to the State. A Vaccine Association makes it possible for:

- physicians, clinics and hospitals to receive State supplied vaccines at no charge ,
- all children to have easy access to critical vaccines,
- all payers to participate in one of the most efficient, cost effective systems in the country for purchasing and distributing childhood vaccines.

Currently, several small family practice offices find it burdensome to front the cost of vaccines and maintain separate public and private supplies of vaccines. Creating a Vaccine Association will improve the ability of health care providers throughout Alaska to offer vaccines. We support the development of a Vaccine Association this session.

The Alaska Academy of Family Physicians is a state chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians which was founded in 1947; the AAFP represents more than 100,000 physicians and medical students nation-wide. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care.

Thank you for your attention to this important health matter.

Respectfully,

Triin Minton, MD  
President-Elect

**From:** Tomasoski, Therese [<mailto:Therese.Tomasoski@providence.org>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2014 8:48 AM

**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel

**Subject:** Senate Bill 169

Dear Senator Giessel,

For over 30 years, the State of Alaska Immunization Program had a “universal” vaccine program – distributing childhood and adult vaccines to all Alaskans. Vaccine costs increases and federal funding declines led to a reduction in this “universal” program. In 2012, legislation was introduced to provide \$4.5 million in state general funds to fill the gap left by this reduction in federal funding. The intent of House Bill 310 (Senate Bill 140) was to temporarily reinstate funds for underinsured children and underinsured/uninsured adults while permanent solutions were sought. This funding will no longer be available after June 30, 2015. We support Senate Bill 169 to establish a vaccine assessment account and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution that has been implemented in other states to preserve universal access to state-supplied vaccines. This bill provides for a more efficient cost-effective vaccination system and reduces administrative burden for health providers and increases access to vaccines for all Alaskans.

Please help get this bill passed. As a pediatrician I have seen the cost of vaccines be an obstacle for parents deciding whether to vaccinate their child. It is in the best interest of the child and this state to have a universal access to state supplied vaccines. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,

Therese Tomasoski, MD

Providence Matanuska Health Care

Phone: 907 761-5900

Fax: 907 761-5975

Rosalyn Singleton MD  
22423 Columbia Glacier Loop  
Eagle River, AK  
907-229-1989  
907-729-3418  
[Ris2@cdc.gov](mailto:Ris2@cdc.gov)

February 10, 2014

RE: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 169 to establish a Vaccine Assessment Account

As a long-time Alaska pediatrician I am writing about my concerns regarding gaps in access to critical childhood and adult vaccines in Alaska. House Bill 310 temporarily reinstated funds for a period of 3 years for underinsured children and underinsured and uninsured adults. This legislation is temporary and funding will go away in 2015.

For over 30 years, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Immunization Program had a “universal” vaccine program – distributing all recommended childhood and adult vaccines to public and private. Vaccines were supplied with federal funding from the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program (an entitlement program which pays for children who meet federal criteria); and Section 317 of the U.S. Public Health Service Act which covered vaccine cost for VFC-ineligible children and adult. In 2008, the federal government notified the state immunization program that they were decreasing the Section 317 funding to the State during 2010 to 2013 from \$4.3 million to \$0.7 million. House Bill #310 attempted to temporarily reinstate funds for underinsured children and underinsured/uninsured adults while permanent solutions were sought but this bill runs out in 2015.

Unfortunately, when faced with the complexities of maintaining two separate vaccine supplies for VFC and non-VFC eligible children, as well as fronting the cost for expensive vaccines, some small medical practices have stopped providing vaccines to their patients.

Alaska has had low immunization coverage rates in children, exacerbated by difficult access to vaccine for some. These low immunization coverage rates increase the imminent threat that our state could experience outbreaks of diseases like measles and hepatitis A which have been well-controlled for many years. Measles outbreaks are occurring across Europe and the Middle East and imported measles cases are increasing in the US. Paralytic polio remains endemic in a few countries and is only a plane flight away.

This is a critical time to develop a long-term solution to vaccine access in Alaska. Other states, including Washington and Idaho, have found a solution in developing a Vaccine Assessment Account which facilitates universal purchase of vaccines. By collecting payments from health plans, insurers, and other payers and remitting the funds to the state, the Vaccine Account makes it possible for:

- Physicians, clinics, and hospitals to receive state-supplied vaccines at no charge
- All children and adults to have easy access to critical vaccines
- All payers to participate in one of the most efficient, cost-effective systems in the country for purchasing and distributing childhood vaccines.

House Bill 310 is a stop-gap measure which is running out. The current system in Alaska leaves many without easy access to affordable vaccines. Our childhood immunization rates are among the lowest in the nation. I urge the legislature to take action and support Senate Bill 169 to increase access to vaccine for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Rosalyn Singleton, MD MPH



3340 Providence Dr. #500, Anchorage, AK 99508 / T. 907-562-2423 / F. 907-563-1170

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
MAILROOM

JAN 30 2014

HV

The Honorable Sean Parnell  
Alaska State Capitol Building  
PO Box 11001  
Juneau AK 99811-0001

23 January 2014

Dear Governor Parnell

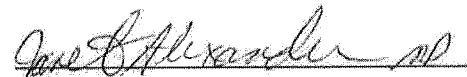
Anchorage Pediatric Group would like to encourage the formation of an Alaska Immunization Association, with the appropriate legislation.

As you are aware Alaska previously was a universal vaccine state. After the decrease in funding and the change to a VFC only State (Vaccines for Children). Our office had to develop a new process of purchasing, maintaining, and delivering private stock vaccines for the rest of our pediatric patients. This was an expensive decision in time, money and office resources. I know that many offices chose not to take on the additional difficulty and stopped providing immunizations.

Alaska has many barriers accessing medical care. Our already low immunization rates paired with a new barrier of a 2 tier system which makes it cumbersome to administer vaccines only adds to the problem. A Vaccine Association will help by streamlining the process for the state, providers, and patients alike. Studies have shown that many states have developed self-sustaining immunization programs that increase immunization rates while decreasing the overall cost(s) for everyone.

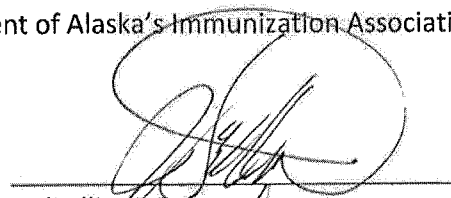
Please give careful consideration to the development of Alaska's Immunization Association

Respectfully,

  
Janet Alexander MD

  
Susan Beesley MD

  
Jody Butto MD FAAP

  
Jodi Elliot DO

  
Willow Monterrosa MD

  
Charles Ryan MD



## Jane Conway

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**m:** Jane Conway  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2014 3:58 PM  
**To:** Jane Conway  
**Subject:** Support SB 169 Atwood

**From:** Atwood, Jesse W [<mailto:Jesse.Atwood@providence.org>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2014 3:48 PM  
**To:** Jane Conway  
**Subject:** Support for Senate Bill 169

Ms. Conway,

My name is Jesse Atwood. I am a Pediatrician, practicing in the Matsu Valley at Providence Matanuska Health Care Clinic. I have been practicing pediatrics for over 16 years, and have done extensive personal research into vaccines, their side effects, and their benefits. After having given thousands of vaccines to children over the years, and seeing the beneficial results of widespread immunization to both the individual, and society collectively, I am thoroughly convinced that the benefits of vaccines FAR outweigh any perceived or potential risks. It also seems consistent that some financial / governmental support to promote vaccinations improves vaccination rates, and improves the overall health of our communities, likely paying financial dividends down the road. But regardless of any financial benefits, there is almost no medical advancement in the history of the world that has had a greater impact in reducing suffering and death than what immunization programs have achieved. The numbers of people who suffered and even died from many / most of the diseases we vaccinate compared to the numbers suffering or dying from these diseases since the individual vaccines were approved, is staggering. Why wouldn't we want to promote one of the most successful advancements in the history of mankind?

To that end, I am writing to ask that you support in any way possible Senate Bill 169, to establish a vaccine assessment account, and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution that has been implemented in other states, to preserve universal access to state-supplied vaccines. As a pediatrician, I feel that this bill provides for a more efficient cost-effective vaccination system, and reduces the ever increasing administrative burden for health care providers, a burden that can and will eventually result in a deterrent to providing vaccinations for some. I also feel that this bill will increase access to vaccines for all Alaskans, and serve to improve our health and well-being as a state and as a community.

I thank you for your service to our State and our community, and for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Jesse Atwood MD

2250 S Woodworth Loop, Suite #101

mer, AK 99645 Ph: 907-761-5900

**George W. Brown, MD**

**Community Pediatrician**

1640 Second Street Douglas, AK 99824 -5211 907 364 2726

[gbrow177537@yahoo.com](mailto:gbrow177537@yahoo.com)

Senators Stedman, Micciche, Ellis, Kelly, and Meyer  
Senate Health and Social Services Committee  
28<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, AK 99801

February 19, 2014

Honorable Senators:

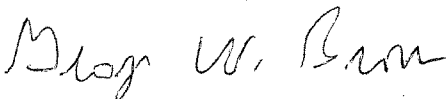
Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in strong support of SB 169 to assure effective vaccines will continue to be available for all Alaska citizens, especially children who are our real future. Thank you for your public service, a somber load where your decisions will guide our public future and where competing voices are respectfully heard as you have to make responsible decisions.

I am unable to speak in person for the Friday, February 21 hearing. Last year, you listened carefully as Dr. Hurlbert and I emphasized our personal 1960's – 1980's experiences of treating many children suffering severe infectious illnesses which are now fully preventable with current immunization resources. Such is an undeniable investment in the future health of our state. The savings in dollar costs and personal agony are magnified many times for the program costs. Establishing a lasting system which assures public and private partnership is a wise choice for which you will look back on your public service career with satisfaction.

As one Alaska citizen, I personally will be happy to pay state tax to underwrite such an investment if that becomes clearly necessary. Next to assuring access to public education for all Alaska children, which is the bed rock support of citizen guided democracy, preventing unnecessary infectious illnesses must remain our top priority.

As Senators Giessel's and French's leadership moves this bill through this session, I will follow its progress and do my best to testify in person as needed.

Respectfully,



George W. Brown, MD

**From:** The Brands [<mailto:brand@mtaonline.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2014 9:45 AM  
**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 169

Dear Senator Giessel:

I have been a Pediatrician in Alaska since 1982. I have seen immunizations fully funded by the CDC, partially funded by the CDC and also a time in the 80's when there was no funding except for Medicaid patients. During that period in the 80's our immunization rates tanked.

Since the reduced Federal funding immunization purchase and fees have yo-yo'd from full to partial and it is unwieldy for all. A consortium with insurances and MC funding a pool would stabilize funding, availability and make for consistent delivery across the board. Please advance SB 169.

Jeff Brand ,

[jbrand@latouchepediatrics.net](mailto:jbrand@latouchepediatrics.net)

## Jane Conway

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**From:** Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2014 10:49 AM  
**To:** Jane Conway  
**Subject:** FW: Senate Bill #169

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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**From:** Doris [<mailto:dorie@alaska.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 20, 2014 10:48 AM  
**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Hollis French  
**Subject:** Senate Bill #169

I strongly support Senate Bill 169 as I have been a supporter of vaccinations for many years. The distribution of vaccines in the State of Alaska in order to insure vaccination of our population, and especially our children, is one of the most important health programs in the State. The idea that it should end is awful. It could so easily cause an epidemic that our State would have to spend a great deal more than the cost of vaccination to try to remedy. The remedy would never erase the suffering an epidemic would cause.

Thank you for all you do for our beautiful State and thank you for supporting this legislation. Following this personal comment I am including some boiler plate information which I have received and which has induced me to let you know of my personal support.

For over 30 years, the State of Alaska Immunization Program had a "universal" vaccine program – distributing childhood and adult vaccines to all Alaskans. This universal program insured that all Alaskans had equal access to vaccines. Vaccine costs increases and federal funding declines led to a reduction in this "universal" program. In 2012, legislation was introduced to provide \$4.5 million in state general funds to fill the gap left by this reduction in federal funding. The intent of House Bill 310 (Senate Bill 140) was to temporarily reinstate funds for underinsured children and underinsured/uninsured adults while permanent solutions were sought. This funding will no longer be available after June 30, 2015. *We support Senate Bill 169 to establish a vaccine assessment account and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution that has been implemented in other states to preserve universal access to state-supplied vaccines. This bill provides for a more efficient cost-effective vaccination system and reduces administrative burden for health providers and increases access to vaccines for all Alaskans.*

Doris Bailey [dorie@alaska.net](mailto:dorie@alaska.net)

Barrow, Alaska

Dear Senator Giessel,

As you know, I have been practicing pediatrics in Anchorage for over 30 years, and have seen the benefit of the the State of Alaska's universal vaccine program. This ensured that all Alaskans had equal access to vaccines. Vaccine cost increases and federal funding declines have led to a reduction in this program.

Temporary solutions are fine for the interim, but our children need a permanent solution to this problem.

The benefits of vaccination are undeniable. vaccines (along with clean water and good nutrition) have saved more lives than any other public health intervention.

I support Senate Bill 169 to establish a vaccine assessment account.

This bill provides for a more efficient, cost-effective, and self-sustaining vaccination system, reduces administrative burden for health care providers and increases access to vaccines for all Alaskans.

The risks of having a less-vaccinated, less protected population are clear, as some vaccine-preventable diseases are re-emerging in areas of this country and of the world where vaccination rates have declined.\*

Thank you for working to get this legislation passed.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Kiehl, M.D.

\*See this map showing outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases.

And be aware, it is not completely up to date, as it does not include some of these diseases reported in Alaska (among undoubtedly other areas). (For example, we know that Pertussis has been increasing here).

[http://www.cfr.org/interactives/GH\\_Vaccine\\_Map/#map](http://www.cfr.org/interactives/GH_Vaccine_Map/#map)

**From:** Elizabeth Galloway <[gall\\_eliz@hotmail.com](mailto:gall_eliz@hotmail.com)>

**Date:** February 19, 2014 at 8:19:11 PM AKST

**To:** "[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)" <[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)>

**Subject:** Support for senate bill 169

Senator Giessel, thank you for your time. I am a pediatric ICU doctor at providence. I wanted to lend my support to senate bill 169. Vaccinations work when every child has access to them. Any program the state can enact to help our population stay vaccinated will keep more children out of my ICU. Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely

Elizabeth Galloway MD

PAMC PICU

907 306 5929

**From:** Tsao-Wu, George [mailto:[GTsao-Wu@SouthcentralFoundation.com](mailto:GTsao-Wu@SouthcentralFoundation.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2014 1:14 PM  
**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Subject:** Bill 169

Hello Cathy Giessel,

I just want you to know that I support the new bill 169 that you have introduced. As a pediatrician in Alaska since 1996, I have had the privilege of taking care of many children. I am thankful that only a handful of them were infected and injured by bacteria or viruses for which we have vaccines. This is in part because of the generous program that the State of Alaska has had in providing vaccines for children. In order to keep our populace as healthy as possible we definitely need a more permanent solution to vaccine funding and this bill 169 seems like a proven and effective methodology to do just that.

Thanks for taking up the cause for vaccinating our kids!

Sincerely,

George Tsao-Wu, MD

Pediatric Clinic Medical Director

Alaska Native Medical Center

Southcentral Foundation

4320 Diplomacy Dr Ste 2300

Anchorage AK 99508

(907) 729-8913

## Jane Conway

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**m:** Thad Woodard <twoodard@AKPeds.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 14, 2014 9:23 AM  
**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel; Jane Conway  
**Subject:** self-sustaining vaccine financing solution

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Senator Giessel and Ms Conway, I am writing to strongly support the adoption of Senate Bill 169 designed to develop a vaccine assessment account providing a sustainable vaccine financing solution for Alaska. One of the most beneficial public health achievements of mankind has been the use of immunizations to prevent life threatening illnesses. There is abundant evidence of the safety, efficacy, cost effectiveness and success of this effort. However the cost of vaccines and the ease of providing them to patients has been a worsening burden over time and as a result Alaska's immunization levels and health care costs related to vaccine preventable diseases are rising. Vaccine assessment accounts have been shown in other states to relieve the problems related to increased costs and help to increase immunization rates. I support Senate Bill 169 for these reasons.

T Woodard, MD

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Thad Woodard, MD  
Alaska Center for Pediatrics  
1200 Airport Heights Drive Suite 140  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508  
907.777.1800  
www.akpeds.com



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**From:** "Mary Ann Jacob, M.D." <jacobmd@mac.com>

**Date:** February 12, 2014 at 3:25:09 PM AKST

**To:** <Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>

**Subject: Vaccine Assessment Bill**

Dear Senator Giessel:

Thanks so much for your interest in Senate Bill 169. As a pediatrician in Anchorage, I have seen firsthand many of the diseases that are vaccine-preventable. I've also struggled to continue to provide vaccines at my small private practice, due to the difficult requirements that we keep duplicate stocks of these expensive vaccines for differently insured patients. It's my understanding that the proposed bill will end up costing everyone less money by doing away with multiple "layers" of bureaucratic requirements and paperwork. I believe that if this bill becomes law, small practices like my own will be more likely to continue offering vaccines to our patients. This increased availability translates into higher vaccination rates. Children will be healthier (and their parents will miss less work). Employers will pay less for insurance (polio vaccine is much cheaper than treating a case of polio!); and since many children are insured directly or indirectly by state funds, Alaska will save money, too.

I strongly encourage you to support this bill.

Sincerely,  
Mary Ann Jacob, M.D.

-----Original Message-----

From: Dave Bomalaski [<mailto:dbomalaski@gci.net>]

Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 8:56 AM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Cc: Jane Conway; Singleton, Rosalyn J. (CDC/OID/NCEZID)

Subject: Senate Bill 169

Dear Senator Giessel,

One of the greatest assets of our state is the vast expanse of wilderness that is the envy of the world. At the same time, it imposes significant challenges to the delivery of healthcare in terms of cost, access and quality. We are still obligated to provide the same quality of healthcare to Alaska's children as is given in the lower 48 where they do not face our additional burden of geography and environment. Children's vaccines save lives. It is one of the most cost effective means of preventing disease and reducing healthcare costs.

Other states in the Pacific Northwest have recognized this and established partnerships between practitioners, industry and government to meet this moral obligation. Senate Bill 169 is to establish a vaccine assessment account and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution that has been implemented in other states to preserve universal access to state-supplied vaccines. This bill provides for an efficient cost-effective vaccination system, reduces administrative burden for health providers and increases access to vaccines for all Alaskans.

The Alaska medical community strongly supports Senate Bill 169 to provide access to vaccines for Alaskans in all communities.

Sincerely,

M. David Bomalaski, MD, FAAP

Alaska Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatric

Alaska Urology

3841 Piper St., Ste. T300

Anchorage, AK 99508

907-563-3103

**From:** William Saltonstall <[willsaltonstall@gmail.com](mailto:willsaltonstall@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 11:29:48 PM AKST  
**To:** <[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject: Senator Giessel:**

As a physician and one of your constituents please let me support you in encouraging Senate Bill 169. Vaccination rates are down. We are seeing pertussis and other preventable diseases. A universal state organized vaccine program would help improve accessibility and reduce administrative costs by providing a single vaccine source. Vaccination is one of the positive, preventative services we offer reducing illness and costs in the future.

Thanks for pursuing this bill.

William Saltonstall M.D.

**From:** <[mcuster@alaska.net](mailto:mcuster@alaska.net)>  
**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 11:04:05 PM AKST  
**To:** <[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject: Senate Bill 169**

Dear Senator Giessel,

Thank you for introducing Senate Bill 169. This bill will help improve access to vaccines across the state, and will bring us closer to the universal access we once had. The model for a vaccine account has worked well in other states, and reduced costs.

Sincerely,

Marcy Custer, R.N.

**From:** [LPNAKA@aol.com](mailto:LPNAKA@aol.com) [<mailto:LPNAKA@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 22, 2014 7:50 PM  
**To:** Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Cc:** [ris2@cdc.gov](mailto:ris2@cdc.gov); [ringleton@anthc.org](mailto:ringleton@anthc.org)  
**Subject:** SB169

Honorable Senator Cathy Giessel,

I am writing to you in strong support of your efforts to promote SB169. Prior to my retirement in the year 2001, my active years in clinical pediatrics, public health, and administrative medicine included four years on the staff of the Alaska Native Health Hospital, two years as the director of the health program for the

residents of Bethel and the fifty native communities receiving medical services through the now replaced "old" Bethel hospital and its supportive rural public health services. On leaving Alaska in 1974, I served as the medical director for the health services for the Navajo Nation and subsequently in the same capacity for the Native people in the States of Oregon, Idaho, and Washington States. I returned to Alaska in 1991 at the request of the administration of Governor Walter Hickel to serve four years as the State Director of Public Health. I subsequently served six years in the same capacity under the Governorship of Tony Knowles before finding retirement being dictated by personal health problems.

I state the above only to demonstrate that I do have experience and credentials to speak on the critical requirement of a strongly based and supported immunization program for all residents of the State of Alaska. Access to strong adult and childhood immunization services were instrumental in the positive gains to the improved health of Alaskans witnessed since my initial introduction to the health needs of its citizens in 1969. The contents of SB169 will help to assure the well demonstrated benefits of a universal adult and childhood vaccination service in a time of increased vaccine costs and decreased federal support. A proposal to assess insurance companies and various agencies responsible for making access to medical and health services and the bulk acquisition of vaccines by the State of Alaska should decrease the cost of vaccines as well as reduce the probability of any increased costs to the State.

Thanks to you and your fellow Colleagues for introducing and supporting the proposed SB 169

Peter Nakamura M.D. Ped. MPH Retired.

-----Original Message-----

From: David Baines [<mailto:bumlegbaines@hotmail.com>]  
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2014 4:08 PM  
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel  
Subject: SB 169

For over 30 years, the State of Alaska Immunization Program had a "universal" vaccine program – distributing childhood and adult vaccines to all Alaskans. This universal program insured that all Alaskans had equal access to vaccines. Vaccine costs increases and federal funding declines led to a reduction in this "universal" program.

In 2012, legislation was introduced to provide \$4.5 million in state general funds to fill the gap left by this reduction in federal funding. The intent of House Bill 310 (Senate Bill 140) was to temporarily reinstate funds for underinsured children and underinsured/uninsured adults while permanent solutions were sought. This funding will no longer be available after June 30, 2015.

While I support Senate Bill 169 to establish a vaccine assessment account and implement a self-sustaining vaccine financing solution that has been implemented in other states to preserve universal access to state-supplied vaccines as a vast improvement, I feel the state could go one step further. As an Alaska Native and Physician I felt it should cover all Alaskan including uninsured adults.

I used to work in Dutch Harbor (2005-2009) and the vaccine program helped us vaccinate the large foreign born workforce there for Hepatitis B, a big public health issue. Thanks to the program that provided the vaccines free of charge we could pass those savings on to our patients who had no medical insurance and otherwise would have not been immunized. That coverage allowed us to break the cycle of passing Hepatitis B from generation to generation. This bill still charges providers who see uninsured

adults which would be a barrier to that vulnerable population getting immunized. Thanks for your hard work in improving access to vaccinations but I think it should be that our wonderful state can provide this basic service to all of us who call Alaska home regardless of financial status.

Sha aam dza waan (Wishing you well), David R Baines MD