



TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

Health Services

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Representative Bill Stoltze, Co-chair
Representative Alan Austerman, Co-Chair
House Finance Committee
State Capital
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support for SB 88 – Alaska Native Medical Center Housing

Dear Representatives Stoltze and Austerman:

The Tanana Chiefs Conference strongly supports passage of SB 88, which will bring construction of a 170 bed residential housing facility on the campus of the Alaska Native Medical Center.

As part of the Alaska Tribal Health System network, Tanana Chiefs Conference sends patients whose medical needs are beyond our capacity into Anchorage for specialty clinic appointments and hospitalization. Coordination of patient appointments includes planning for travel and housing. With limited capacity at the current Quiana House and the challenge of placing people who travel into local hotels, dependent on taxi services, our region strongly supports construction of the on-campus facility.

Campus housing for the tribal health system will ease the anxiety of elders who must travel into a large strange city, especially those for whom English is a second language. With kitchen facilities, extended family will be able to visit and share traditional foods.

For the high risk prenatal mother who can spend several weeks waiting to delivery her baby, campus housing will provide a closer community feel than a hotel, and they will have the added bonus of being close to the hospital when they deliver, supplemental prenatal education and supports.

Patients who can be discharged from the hospital but need follow-up care before returning to their home village will benefit from being on campus, close to the services they need. Our trauma patients receive outstanding care at ANMC, but trauma patients often need post-hospitalization rehabilitative services. Patient recovery times are faster when the patient receives the prescribed follow-up on the prescribed schedule.

If you have questions concerning Tanana Chiefs Conference position in support of this bill, please feel free to contact me at the number listed above.

Sincerely,

Tanana Chiefs Conference

Victor Joseph, Director Health Services