

Hi Taneeka,

To get into writing what some of Rep. Tarr's discussion points would be:

-Providing healthcare to those who do not have coverage and over utilize emergency room services

- Anchorage Faith and Action, Congregations Together (AFACT) distributed a statement of support (see attached) that hits on a very good point related to this. That is "the Alaska State Constitution prohibits the creation of a debtor's prison (Article 1.17). Failure to provide a community safety net for emergencies, regular checkups, mental health services, or treatment programs means that many Alaskans are but an accident or diagnosis away from serious debt or bankruptcy. Allowing this to happen creates a de factor debtor's prison, which violates the spirit, if not the letter, of our constitution."

-Impacts to the corrections budget

- We could save millions of dollars when it comes to corrections. Most Alaskans with substance abuse or mental health problems see a judge before a doctor, and the cost to the state to keep one person on a prison bed per night is \$150. If we would get people to see a doctor before a judge, we would reduce our recidivism rates and corrections budget overall.

-The King-Burwell ruling

- If the Supreme Court rules against subsidies, any exchange not operated by the state itself would lose the ability to help people pay for their health insurance. In 2014, 88% of the people who enrolled on the exchange received subsidies. If Medicaid expansion is not a reality for Alaska, what will happen to these Alaskans when the Supreme Court rules against subsidies and Alaskans can no longer afford that coverage?

-Alaska is an "old" state

- Despite its age, Alaska is one of the "oldest states" - Medicaid expansion would provide preventative treatments to seniors that then would reduce cost to the Medicare program and allow the state to subsidize another marginalized group like the non-elderly working poor and the lower middle class.

Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Best,
Ray

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