

Emails in Support of Expansion

Included emails from:

Dennis Gall

Michele Brown

Nancy Courtney

Emily Barker

Jan Carolyn Hardy

Beth Hill Bryant

Jane Reilly

Susan Smalley

Linda File

Eric Knudtson

Krista McNeil

Mary McDowell

Martha Mcquiston

Mike McLane

Mindy Hunter

Bill Tremblay

From: Dennis Gall [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 8:40 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton

Subject: Medicaid

Hello...

I am writing today to urge you to move forward with the governor's plan to expand Medicaid, without further delay. This is a pragmatic and well thought out decision that is good for the health of Alaskan's, and also for the Alaskan economy, with state costs off set by savings in medical expenses that the State and medical providers currently are uncompensated for. This just really makes good practical sense. I understand that state government faces tremendous financial difficulties, but all things considered this proposal should be revenue neutral for state government while infusing millions of dollars into the state economy.

Sincerely,

Dennis Gall

From: Michele Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 10:39 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Support of Medicaid Expansion

Dear Representative Seaton,

The time for Medicaid Expansion is now. The reasons to do so are well known:

- **People:** Nearly 42,000 uninsured Alaskans are eligible for basic health care coverage
- **Revenue:** \$1.1 Billion in new Federal revenue for Alaska
- **Jobs:** Up to 4,000 new jobs
- **Wages:** \$1.2 Billion in more in wages and salaries

The reasons against doing so are speculative, and can be addressed when and if they occur.

In the meantime, Alaska is losing out on substantial revenue. The 100% federal contribution is time-bound. Alaska has already lost funds for calendar year 2014 and the first quarter of 2015. We have also lost job growth and health care and services for thousands of Alaskans. Yet, Alaskans are already paying into the national system without receiving the full benefits.

The Healthy Alaskans 2020 report sets a priority to reduce the percentage of adults reporting that they could not afford to see a doctor in the last 12 months. This is a priority because access to health care is a critical societal infrastructure for a high functioning workforce and community. Alaska routinely invests in capital infrastructure expenditures even when future funding is speculative. Unlike road projects, which could be a waste of resources if the expected federal contribution was not fulfilled, access to health care is immediately important and valuable. Even if the worst were to happen and Medicaid expansion eligibility were restricted in the future, it is still better to have had short term health care.

Medicaid Expansion provides downward pressure on health care costs by lowering uncompensated care and helps all Alaskans. This is critical to ensure that the health infrastructure currently provided around the state remains strong and affordable to other users.

Please act now to authorize Medicaid expansion. We offer you our partnership in helping improve health and quality of life outcomes for Alaskans. Together, we can join forces and leverage resources around a shared vision for Alaskans to lead stable, healthy, and safe lives.

Best regards,



Michele Brown / President / United Way of Anchorage

701 W. 8th Avenue, Suite 230, Anchorage, AK 99501 / P: 907. 263.3820 / F: 907.263.3801

From: Nancy Courtney [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 7:14 PM
Subject: Public Comment in support of Medicaid Expansion

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Kevin Meyer
President, Alaska State Senate

The Honorable Mike Chenault
Speaker, Alaska State House

Dear President Meyer and Speaker Chenault,

I am writing in support of Medicaid expansion in Alaska. In these times of severe budget shortfalls and unwanted but necessary budget cuts, Medicaid expansion is a win-win for all Alaskans.

As you know, the federal match for expansion is 100% through calendar year 2016. The only funds the State will need to expend are implementation funds, which I understand the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority has committed to pay the first year. The State of Alaska would be egregiously remiss to forgo 100% federal matching funds to bring health care coverage to over 40,000 of Alaska's working poor.

In watching the legislative debate on Medicaid expansion, a main concern legislators have is that the federal government will break its promise of 100%, 95%, 94%, 93% and 90% match over the next five years. I find it odd that the State of Alaska does not waive to accept 90% federal highway matching funds to build our highways without fear of losing the match funding. Why should we fear losing similar federal match funding for health care? And if the federal government were to break its commitment, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services will have mechanisms in place to end the expansion program and the State will not be left holding the bag to fund the program.

In closing, one of Governor Walker's primary commitments is to expand Medicaid so that over 40,000 of Alaska's working poor can get health care coverage. A majority of Alaskans voted for Governor Walker to lead our state because of his commitment to expand Medicaid. Alaska's legislators are elected to serve and do what's best for all Alaskans and you should support Medicaid expansion as the majority of Alaskans who voted Governor Walker into office do.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical matter that will benefit the health and economy for all Alaskans. I respectfully request your vote in support of Medicaid expansion.

Nancy Courtney

Senate District Q/House District 34

From: Emily Barker [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 10:19 AM
Subject: In consideration of the Medicaid Expansion

Hello.

My name is Emily Webb. I am 22 years old. I am a hardworking stay at home mom whose husband works a job at a small aviation business. He makes less than \$1000 per month. The company is so small that we do not get benefits.

My father is a state retiree, having served as a Firefighter, Fire chief, and Fire Training Administrator for 30 years. My mother is a nurse at the Alaska Native Medical Center, serving in their Emergency room saving countless lives and helping their massive transition over to electronic charting.

I was raised well, but due to the Alaskan darkness, was diagnosed with seasonal affective disorder in my teens. Winter depression is crippling to me as my brain struggles to create the necessary hormones needed to function while under the pressure of darkness. Under ideal circumstances, I can manage my depression with counselling and access to psychiatric medication. This year, however, i cannot do this. I have no medical access.

I am uninsured.

After I quit school in order to raise my 14 month old daughter, despite being under 26, my parents medical insurance refused to cover me after I went below full time student status. The insurance company can do this because they were grandfathered into the system via the Alaskan Legislature. They are not required to keep me on their policy even though the laws should say otherwise.

When we applied for financial aid with insurance, my family is also considered **too poor** to qualify for federal subsidies in order to aid us in obtaining insurance. We were instead given a letter stating that we cannot be fined for lack of insurance. That is nice that we wont be fined, but that still leaves me, a young mother of a one year old baby girl, lacking in basic medical access due to finances.

When we applied for medicaid, we were denied because I am an adult without disability who is not pregnant.

I have slipped through the cracks. Without the medicaid expansion, if anything were to happen, if I were to get into a car accident or break my leg or get ill, my family could not afford it. The debt would be crippling to our family. We have already encountered situations where i have refused needed care due to finances. I live in a constant state of fear that something will happen to me, driving our family into massive debt or rendering me unable to care for my baby girl. That anxiety lingers in my mind every day.

My husband's job has us living in Income based housing as he finishes his Air Traffic Control degree and awaits to be hired by the FAA. We are not just slumming around. We live in poverty now, but our overall life plan has us giving back. We do not believe in my obtaining a job personally due to what we view as appropriate parenting

practices. We personally believe that stay at home parenting is how we want to raise our family. Additionally, the jobs that I am most qualified for are jobs that would pay me the same as quality childcare would cost, so we opt for me to stay home.

My family is a young family that works hard in order to better our situation. We work hard toward education and the betterment of our selves. My husband is currently applying for the FAA this month as an Air Traffic Controller, but even if he gets hired, there are months of waiting and worrying ahead until he can be taken on for training and start receiving a salary and benefits. Other options we are considering heavily is a job in the Airforce, but that has the potential to crush my husbands dream of being an Air Traffic Controller, one that he has worked hard for in his education. We do not like being reliant on the system, but recognize that it is necessary until we are capable of getting on our feet as a young family. We have slipped through the cracks. We are in a loophole that needs to be closed. We desperately urge you to consider the medicaid expansion seriously so that if anything were to happen, we would not need to be afraid of seeking medical attention.

My life, the life of a 22 year old young mother, is potentially on the line.

Emily

From: Jan Carolyn Hardy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 11:41 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Medicaid Expansion

Dear Representative Seaton,

Please fully adopt Medicaid Expansion (up to 138% of federal poverty) to leverage this historic opportunity for Alaska. By expanding access to 41,000 low-income Alaskans we will help keep families and communities strong, secure, and healthy.

Medicare expansion is a great deal for Alaska. We will save millions of dollars from 2015-2020. So let's put federal dollars to work in our own backyard for healthier people and an healthier economy.

Kind regards,

Jan Carolyn Hardy

Jan Carolyn Hardy, Realtor, CRS, GRI, ABR, E-Pro,
VAMRES, Military Relocation Professional,
At Home With Diversity,
Member: NAR, NAGLREP
Real Estate Brokers of Alaska
[REDACTED]
Anchorage, Alaska

From: Beth Hill Bryant [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 1:04 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Medicaid expansion

Dear Mr. Seaton

I have yet to hear a valid reason not to expand medicaid. For the love of God please help these people out and get them on the road to health care. I wish there was some dental care in this provision for these folks also.

I am a nurse practitioner and my husband is a physician. We practice family medicine in Anchorage. The state of health care access is abysmal in Alaska. You have a responsibility to the public and the public health. You can greatly improve the lives of your fellow citizens while helping with the financial situation in this state. The medicaid change will provide jobs and decrease insurance rates for others in the end.

Please do the right thing and pass this bill. Governor Walker was elected on a the platform that included passing Medicaid. This is his proposal. Please do not thwart the will of the people of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hill Bryant
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

From: Jane Reilly [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 1:34 PM
Subject: Medicaid expansion

Dear Sir,

Just another one of these stupid emails from your constituents putting in my ten cents worth of advice. I never liked our last governor, and one of the stupidest things he did was fail to accept medicaid expansion. This is really an easy one...I, as a good Republican, pay federal taxes that go to fund health care for other states. While my fellow Alaskans get nothing. So I pay more for my health care to subsidize our uninsured Alaskans who need care? This is not rocket science you guys...lets expand medicaid!!!!

Jane Reilly

From: Susan Smalley [REDACTED]

Dear Senator and Representatives,

I support the expansion of Medicaid. To use a cliché, it is one of those ways we are continuing to be pennywise and pound foolish as a state, by rejecting this source of healthcare.

When I hear those who are in elected office and who have amazing medical insurance say things like, “They (the uninsured) can just go to the Emergency Room.” or “They (the ERs) have to treat them.” I am confounded. This statement in that context seems to say that we have solved the issue of health care for our friends and neighbors and let's move on.

We, you and I, as taxpayers in the Central Kenai Peninsula Borough, are co-owners of a valuable piece of property in Soldotna. I would hope you pay attention to the financial numbers in the quarterly reports of the Central Peninsula Hospital – the hospital that is our property. People whose only viable access to health care is via the ER, and very often ultimately the hospital stays that follow, are creating financial havoc – both for patients and for us as a borough/community and it affects EVEN those of us who are fortunate enough to have insurance.

More than a decade ago, I was treated for breast cancer. Obviously, I am a survivor. I had access to preventative care in the form of mammograms, and that itself led to the detection of cancer at Stage 1.

We had wonderful insurance, much like you as elected officials have now. Even at that, the out of pocket costs were in excess of \$20,000, with my early diagnosis. That's my story.

I can safely say, because of my time spent as a volunteer with cancer patients, that without access to preventative care, many people are not diagnosed until their cancers become symptomatic, in most cases that would be far beyond Stage 1. Ending up in the ER for one's first glimpse of their cancer is a nightmare for the person, as well as for the rest of us who share the burden in some way. The sad and horrific news is that often the later stage diagnosis is followed by much more drastic (ie expensive) treatment and the chance of death is greater. If you subtract the human suffering aspect, we, as a society/community are paying the cost of ER visits, surgeries, treatments, hospital stays...with death as a more likely result, but with much more financial output. Someone dies. Someone pays.

It's magical thinking to envision the ER as a place where one goes with an emergency and emerges whole on the other side. Its function is as a critical stopgap place that should be framed with care on the preventive side and care on the follow-up side. For those we are excluding it often becomes the only choice. It is expensive for people's health and certainly a financial drain on the rest of us, like you and me and our hospitals. It's the most expensive and least effective method of administering health care.

I admit that my level of concern is about the human beings in my community. Healthy people can be better workers, parents, volunteers etc. The shared reality is that people without appropriate access are costing us a fortune and I trust that for whatever reason, my state government will respond. And you know what? Those federal dollars are mine too and I want them used this way. I have no conflict of interest and nothing to gain except healthier people and communities. I encourage you to reread Becky Hultberg's article from March 13, 2015 ADN.

Sincerely, Susan Smalley

From: Linda File [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 20, 2015 10:06 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Cc: governor@akleg.gov; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Sen. John Coghill
Subject: Medicaid HB148 testimony

Please support Governor Walker's efforts to reform and expand Medicaid. Vote to pass HB148. It is the right thing to do for thousands of Alaskans now and for Alaska's future.

Rep. Seaton, please share this message with the HSS Committee.

Thank you.

Linda File

Alaska resident since 1965

[REDACTED]

North Pole, AK 99705

From: Eric Knudtson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 14, 2015 12:43 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Medicaid expansion

Senator Seaton,

I'm writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska. I believe that Medicaid expansion would enhance the well being of Alaskans and our state's economy. I'd also like to ask you to support the continued funding of the farm to school program.

Thank you,

Eric Knudtson

[REDACTED]

Homer, AK 99063

From: Krista McNeil - Billing Clerk (PCHSAK) [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2015 11:34 AM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton

Subject: Medicaid Expansion

Mr. Paul Seaton ,

I am writing today to ask you to please support Val Davidson and the Alaska State Medicaid expansion.

I work with Peninsula Community Health Services on the Kenai Peninsula and even though we accept Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial insurances, we still have a large number of patients who are not on insurance and make too much to qualify for our sliding fee.

They have worked with our eligibility specialist and are not eligible for Medicaid and do not make enough or work enough hours to be able to afford or be eligible for health insurance through their place of employment.

The Medicaid expansion is greatly needed to help those who fall short of qualifying for Medicaid under the current income and household guidelines and who cannot afford or receive insurance in other ways.

Many people that I know do not make enough to cover their rent, purchase healthy foods, pay for gas let along medical needs.

Your support of the Alaska Medicaid expansion would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: Mary McDowell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2015 2:10 PM
Subject: Support for Governor Walker's Medicaid Reform and Expansion Bill

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to ask for your support and passage this session of the Medicaid expansion and reform bill introduced by Gov. Walker. I think that taking advantage of the opportunity currently available to Alaska to expand Medicaid coverage to more Alaskans, at so little cost to the state, is the fiscally and morally responsible thing to do.

The expansion would provide so many short and long-term benefits to the individuals who could access better medical care and their families, and to the overall state economy, that it seems inconceivable that we would pass it up. It is my understanding that Alaska can opt to bow out in future years if the federal government fails to provide at least 90% of the funding. I doubt that that will happen, but even if it does and the expansion to cover the bigger pool of people does not continue far into the future, I would seem terribly unwise to miss this opportunity to provide better access to health care for so many Alaskans in the meantime. Even a few years of better health care for more Alaskans will pay dividends to the state into the future.

With both the state and federal governments struggling with budget shortfalls, and the costs of medical care and medical assistance programs constantly rising, I don't believe that Alaska taking advantage of the opportunity to expand Medicaid eligibility now will diminish the motivation and pressure to continue making needed reforms to medical assistance programs.

Please work to gain passage of HB148/SB78 in the remaining weeks of this session.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary McDowell
[REDACTED]
Angoon, AK 99820

From: MARTHA MCQUISTON [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 8:10 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: I support Medicaid expansion!

Please support Medicaid expansion. I stand strongly with Governor Walker in this issue.

Sincerely
Martha McQuiston

MARTHA MCQUISTON
[REDACTED]
NINILCHIK, AK 99639

From: Mike McLane [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 10:35 AM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Medicaid expansion please support

As a life long uninsured Alaskan I know personally the devastating effects of illness. Huge costs incurred, bankruptcy and no benefits.

I have worked hard all my life to see my savings disappear due to medical bills and a system over whelmed by the under insured working poor.

Please lend your support to Medicaid expansion in Alaska

Mike McLane
Associate Broker
Jack White Real Estate

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: MINDY HUNTER [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 9:24 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: I support Medicaid expansion!

Please support medicaid expansion in our beautiful state. Make sure our children get their basic needs met, no matter what their family economic status may be. Help stop the cycle of poverty.

MINDY HUNTER
[REDACTED]
HOMER, AK 99603

From: Bill Tremblay [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2015 9:28 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: Support Medicare Expansion

I support the expansion of Medicare. It is way past due for Alaska to expand this to the 25-40,000 Alaskan's who may be eligible. Several reasons for supporting this;

- The Federal Government will pay 100% of these costs this year and eventually 90%
 - Alaskan's generally complain about paying taxes and this is one more way more of our taxes come back to the State
 - I'm also ignoring the fact that Alaska already generates \$2 for every \$1 paid in federal taxes already
- The complaint about how these dollars add to the federal deficit is a "red herring"
 - Many of the same people who say this applaud the delivery of the squadron of F-35's that may be coming to Alaska
 - One F-35 could pay for almost three (3) years of the proposed Medicare expansion
 - While Medicare is broken, we can at least see people helped; as opposed to a \$400 million dollar jet that still isn't certified to fly
- I'm embarrassed that a State that has been so rich for so long still allows for these people to fall through the medical insurance cracks
- The federal dollars expected to come to Alaska should support additional jobs in the State.

I would appreciate your support to expand Medicare. Thank you.

Bill Tremblay

[REDACTED]

Petersburg, AK 99833

[REDACTED]