

**From:** [Ilona Farr](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Support Alaska WWAMI medical education program  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 25, 2015 1:40:14 AM

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Dear Committee Finance,

WWAMI is a collaborative medical school among universities in five NW states. Operating for over 44 years, the program has consistently provided some of the best and brightest Alaskans access to the medical education and training necessary for them to return home and serve their communities, helping to address our state's shortage of physicians. It has been a success with over 200 of us that are currently practicing in the state now providing care to thousands of Alaskans now over 4 decades. The problem that confronts us is intent language included in the House budget that will eliminate the program.

The elimination of this program will have long term impacts for Alaska's health care system. Without the program, physician shortages will worsen and recruitment challenges will increase. The result will be an increase in health care costs and a decrease in health care quality as we are no longer able to "grow our own" physicians. The WWAMI program is a success and a critical part of the state education and health care infrastructure.

To protect the health of all Alaskans, remove the intent language to eliminate the program from the budget. This program represents one of the most efficient and cost-effective tools Alaska has available to invest in our health delivery system and the health of our people.

Please ensure the WWAMI program continues by eliminating the intention to end the program language in the house budget bill.

Sincerely,

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