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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Tim Cline and I am the Alaska AdvancED Director. AdvancED is the accrediting agency for all education school in Alaska. Today I am writing this letter in support of HB 102 that if passed would provide educational funding for students in residential psychiatric treatment centers.

This year marks my thirty-sixth year in education in Alaska. In that time I have been an educator in three different rural school districts (Yukon-Koyukuk S.D., North Slope Borough S.D., and Galena City S.D). During my tenure I experienced what happens when a child is in crisis and needing care away from their home. I recall times that students left our school only to return at a later date after receiving some necessary care. We did our best to pick up educationally where we left off and continue on but never knew what, if any, education took place while they were away. I was always grateful to have our students back safe and sound but wondered why there was so little communication regarding their academics while away. I simply wrote off the results as if there was nothing that could be done given the circumstances.

In more recent years, I have seen what can happen when a child's education is included in their recovery plan and that education is managed in the residing facility. The success is undeniable and far exceeds any traditional education model being used in these facilities today. All indicators point to allowing the Residential Psychiatric Treatment Centers to take the lead. Teachable moments can become a part of a child's therapy and positively impact their recovery. At a time when a child is most in need of extraordinary care, they can to get it in Alaska, and I believe without sacrificing their education should this bill be passed.

I urge our legislators to pass HB 102 so our children receive the kind of support on the ground that we know can make the difference. These hospital settings are quite unique and the student turnover is often great. Regardless, this bill would put the ownership of educational progress in the hands of those who work with the children in this challenging setting. Let them customize a program for this setting. As a long time educator in Alaska, I know it will make the difference for these children.

It is also worth noting that I have already been approached by several organizations seeking to accredit their organization should this bill pass. You can be assured that those who become accredited will be delivering quality education to their students.

Thank you in advance for your support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "K. Timothy Cline".

K. Timothy Cline  
Alaska AdvancED Director