

From: [Alison Kulas](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Support Alaska WWAMI medical education program
Date: Saturday, March 21, 2015 5:20:07 PM

Dear Committee Finance,

Dear Senate Finance Committee members, thank you for your work. I am writing to you today as an Anchorage resident. Your decisions this session will make lasting impacts on the future of Alaska. I know you don't take these decisions lightly. 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. The intent language included in the House budget will eliminate the program.

My coworker was accepted into WWAMI and NY Medical College. She knew she wanted to return to Alaska to work, but the strength of the new WWAMI curriculum is keeping her in the state. We need to provide proper training for Alaskans to stay in state and grow our economy. A healthy, trained workforce is vital to the future of Alaska. 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 funding for the WWAMI program continues. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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