

**From:** [Christina Magill](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Support Alaska WWAMI medical education program  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 24, 2015 11:10:16 AM

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Dear Committee Finance,

I am a surgeon with 8 years of sub-specialty training AFTER medical school. I trained in the medical field for 12 years before RETURNING to Alaska - where I initially attended medical school via the WWAMI program. I have brought state of the art training and surgical techniques "home" - and am able to provide countless procedures and services which are otherwise only available out of state. My return to Alaska is due to the support at the outset from the WWAMI program.

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.

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.

Sincerely,

Christina Magill, MD.  
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