

**From:** [Charmine Mallipudi](#)  
**To:** [Senate Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Support Alaska WWAMI medical education program  
**Date:** Sunday, March 22, 2015 8:10:14 PM

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Dear Committee Finance,

I am a mother of 2 young children. I would love to remain in Alaska for the rest of my life. I also want to become a medical doctor. My dream is to offer preventive health services as a general practitioner working with underserved, marginalized populations. If the WWAMI program ceases to exist I will likely not pursue that avenue, because I do not want to disrupt the lives of my children more than necessary. Just attending medical school and the work load that goes with it will be enough of a disruption for our family. But to leave the state for 4 years in addition to that is too much. On the other hand, if we were to choose to leave the state for me to pursue my educational dreams, we would choose to stay wherever it is that we move to.

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,

Charmine A. Mallipudi  
4120 Johnny Dr  
Eagle River, AK 99577