

## Daniel George

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**From:** Newman, Anthony (HSS) <anthony.newman@alaska.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 6:06 PM  
**To:** Daniel George  
**Cc:** Heather Shaddock; Laughlin, Wilda J (HSS); Sherwood, Jon (HSS); Ashenbrenner, Chris (HSS); Peterson, Darwin R (GOV)  
**Subject:** DHSS response to S-SA issues  
**Attachments:** Medicaid Support letter Stedman.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Daniel: This is in response to two issues raised in the Senate State Affairs hearing this morning. Please distribute this information to the committee.

1. Commissioner Val Davidson and Deputy Commissioner Jon Sherwood discussed the Department's concerns with Section 5 of the CS for Senate Bill 74 (Version F) in the hearing. Here is more background about the Department's concerns with this section:

*The Department is concerned with Section 5 because it would require legislative approval anytime federal law was changed to mandate coverage of a new eligibility group under Medicaid. While the Supreme Court determined that the Medicaid expansion group added by the Affordable Care Act was effectively optional to states, even though it is mandated under federal law, this is not typically the case with new federally mandated groups. If a state fails to comply with the mandatory coverage group requirements, it can be subject to federal sanction, including loss of federal funding.*

*Section 5 as written would require the approval of any federally mandated group added by the Affordable Care Act or by subsequent legislation. Currently, the Alaska Medicaid program covers the federally mandated group for individuals under the age of 26 who age out of state or tribal foster care in Alaska. This group has never been approved by the Alaska Legislature.*

2. Testimony from a representative of the Americans for Prosperity organization included reference to concerns by Alaska physicians with the Governor's Medicaid expansion and reform legislation. Note that the Alaska State Medical Association, the nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of Alaska's physicians, submitted the attached letter to the chair of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee in support of this legislation.

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# Alaska State Medical Association

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April 2, 2015

The Honorable Bert Stedman  
Alaska Senate  
State Capitol, Room 30  
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 78

Dear Senator Stedman:

The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of all Alaskans.

As the Legislature debates Medicaid reform and expansion measures this Session we would like to make you aware of our current policy position on access to healthcare in Alaska. ASMA strongly supports access to healthcare for all Alaskans, and in that context supports robust and sustainable payment mechanisms for the Alaska healthcare industry. ASMA supports expansion of coverage of the approximately 30,000 currently uninsured Alaskans.

Improved access to healthcare in Alaska and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system are important to improving the health outcomes of Alaskans.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to further support passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Michael Haugen  
Executive Director: The Alaska State Medical Association