



American Academy of Pediatrics

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Alaska Chapter

Alaska Chapter Executive Committee

President

Lily J. Lou, MD, FAAP
3200 Providence Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: 907/632-4378
Fax: 907/212-5834
E-mail: lilylou@mindspring.com

Vice President

Anna Ogena, MD, FAAP
15700 Southpark Loop
Anchorage, AK 99516
Phone: 907/250-8427
E-mail: atogena@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Jody Butto, MD, FAAP
10101 Hampton Cir
Anchorage, AK 99507
E-mail: jlbutto@gci.net

Chapter Executive Director

Dale Knutsen
Phone: 907-317-1397
E-mail: lkmoon@alaska.net

Chapter Web site

www.aapalaska.org

AAP Headquarters

345 Park Blvd.
Itasca, IL 60143
Phone: 630-626-6000
Fax: 874-434-8000
E-mail: kidsdocs@aap.org
www.aap.org

To: The Honorable Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol, Room 111
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: LS0162 – Letter of Support for AVAP Reauthorization

Date: January 24, 2019

Dear Senator Giessel,

I speak for the pediatricians of Alaska, as a fellow pediatrician and the president of the American Academy of Pediatrics-Alaska Chapter. I am writing in enthusiastic support of reauthorization of the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program (AVAP), which was created with bipartisan support in 2015, with plans to sunset in January of 2021.

Vaccine preventable disease is one area of health care where there are clear cost-effective savings demonstrated. All Alaskans benefit from high immunization rates. AVAP has operated effectively for the past four years, establishing a workable process, saving Alaskans money on state purchase of vaccines, keeping pace with evidence-based recommendations, and even navigating the recent mumps outbreak with provision of additional MMR doses. After a phased opt-out option ended, there is near universal participation in this successful program, and TRICARE is participating as well. In fact, Alaska was recognized by the CDC in 2018 with an award for most improved coverage for teen vaccines.

I believe it is essential to continue to support AVAP, and the pediatric community is grateful for your leadership on this issue from the very beginning. I feel this program should be reauthorized, with strong consideration for reauthorization without a scheduled sunset date.

Thank you for considering my views. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you further on this or any other children's health issue.

Best regards,

Lily J. Lou, MD, FAAP
AAP-AK Chapter President

