

Jody Simpson

From: Sen. David Wilson
Sent: Sunday, March 24, 2019 8:22 PM
To: Jody Simpson
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From: no-reply@alaskasenate.org <no-reply@alaskasenate.org>
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2019 7:35 PM
To: Peter Torkelson <Peter.Torkelson@akleg.gov>; Sen. David Wilson <Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov>
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David Wilson

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Thomas Hunt, MD

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Question or Concern
Alaska State Legislature

Senator Wilson

I support the SHARP-3 efforts. I speak today as a practicing hospitalist in Anchorage but also one who -- in prior positions as Medical Director of the FQHC Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center and then CEO of the Providence Medical Group, Alaska -- recruited over a hundred providers to Alaska. I've also worked in resource-poor rural Alaska settings (Bethel, Unalaska, Kodiak, Cordova). I've been practicing in Alaska for 25 years.

SHARP 1 and 2 were very helpful in recruitment and I helped qualify a few recruits through the process. Alaska is the better off for their retention.

SHARP-3 is complementary, targeting those specialists who provide niche specialty services that make Alaskan healthcare equivalent to large urban Lower-48 centers of excellence. We've forgotten the recent past, when

patients needing tertiary care flew to Seattle or beyond. This is now rare thanks to an trickle of specialists who make it possible for Alaskans to receive care close to home. Unlike mainstream specialties like orthopedics or cardiology, these more rare species don't have a large referral base for high-volume practice and proportionately high reimbursement. Many of them are employed because that's what it takes to recruit and retain them. These specialists deserve our support as much as do the courageous and under-recognized primary care providers supported by earlier versions of SHARP.

Thank you.

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