From: Elise Sorum-Birk
To: House State Affairs; Grace Kubitz
Subject: FW: please add to packets for today HB 82 committee members
Date: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 2:54:58 PM

From: Maureen Longworth <ahfm@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2019 2:38 PM
To: Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>
Cc: Maureen Longworth <ahfm@gci.net>
Subject: please add to packets for today HB 82 committee members

Andy,
I am sick and feverish today! Sending this at 2:35 because don't think I can make it through the meeting. Trying to call in a testimony too, if I can figure out how. Thank you for your good work.
Mo

I am Doctor Maureen Longworth and first came to Juneau to work in 1992 and have served most of my physician career in Juneau and greater Alaska. I retired here and am concerned about the health of Alaskans and our economy.

Medical research studies repeatedly show that the healthiest communities are communities where equality resides. Disparities in rights for segments of the population wear down members on both sides of the divide.

HB 82 puts in place measures to equalize the playing field and treat all Alaskans the same, as equals. There is nothing special about equality, and equal protection under the law. These are not special rights, but inclusive rights, finally granting equality to all Alaskans.

Members of our Juneau assembly and management have verified that there has been no harm or negative economic impact since Juneau CBJ adopted a similar ordinance years ago. In fact having this ordinance in place attracts and retains much needed skilled individuals to our Juneau community and labor force.

In this age of difficulty retaining our younger skilled work force, and with the rising cost of health care, we need structural frameworks that support retention of economy and well being in all Alaska communities, not just the larger cities. In order to level the playing field, to include our villages it is important to consider them in voting yes on HB 82.

I have worked in Juneau, Skagway, Tenakee Springs, Yakutat, Bethel, and Anchorage and I assure you that the patients I see in the smaller communities struggle with the same issues as the larger cities, but without the supports of community organizations or the sanctuary of anonymity the larger cities offer.

Universally young people have at times reported they would rather be dead than be gay, and that

they do not see hope of survival in their communities, from Juneau to Yakutat.

Passing HB 82 is a health measure at a time when our Alaskan suicide rate is sky high. We need to restore hope in gay Alaskan youth that they are included as equals in their communities and their state.

Thank you for voting yes to pass HB 82.
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