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Sent: Thursday, May 13, 2021 3:06:08 PM
To: LIO Fairbanks
Cc: fairbanks_lio@legis.state.ak.us <fairbanks_lio@legis.state.ak.us>
Subject: Alaska Community Health Aide Appreciation Day

In Support of HB 198 establishing September 10 as Alaska Community Health Aide Appreciation Day, and urging the Senate to pass the identical bill, so it can be signed by the governor.

Honorable Legislators,

Community Health Aides are Heroes.

They save lives; they heal; they comfort; they are OF the communities they serve.

I know from first-hand experience: Having been a Community Health Aide who progressed in trainings to be a Community Health Practitioner is the work history I am most proud of, although I went on to become a physician assistant who later trained CHA's and CHP's and served on statewide training committees.

The presentation that accompanies this bill gives a good overview of the program.

Most 'Health Aides' offer the highest-level medical care available in their communities, and do ALL aspects of care: reception; nursing; history; exam; laboratory; diagnosis; treatment including dispensing appropriate patient education, vaccinations, medications in consultation with physicians and mid-level practitioners, sutures, and such things as adaptive equipment and splints, ; receive and maintain emergency training and provide IV's, EKG's, defibrillation, oxygenation, and other forms of stabilization while also preparing patients for emergency transport to hospitals.

'Health Aides' are on call 24 hours a day seven days a week, often for weeks or months on end and too often without respite. They live in the communities they serve and serve everyone equally; they are held to high moral as well as medical standards. It is often a very difficult job that involves many sacrifices.

Again, Community Health Aides are HEROES. Establishing Alaska Community Health Aide Appreciation Day is a very modest but meaningful step in recognizing and honoring them.

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