

Alaska State Medical Association

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September 9, 2021

The Honorable Mia Costello
Senate Labor and Commerce Committee Chair
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol Room 119
Juneau, AK 99801

Transmitted via email

RE: Senate Bill 3006 "An Act relating to utilization review requirements; making temporary changes to state law in response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19); relating to telemedicine and telehealth; relating to background checks; and providing for an effective date."

Dear Senator Costello:

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

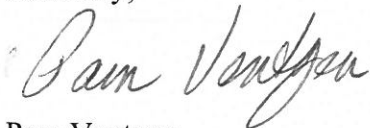
ASMA supports Senate Bill 3006.

With new variants Alaska is experiencing a significant increase in COVID-19 cases and a corresponding impact on health care delivery capacity.

While we expect some disagreement on strategies and tactics and individual decisions on how to address the COVID-19 pandemic, ASMA believes that the items in Senate Bill 3006 will provide temporary tools that can help ensure health care access during this pandemic.

While ASMA recognizes there are legitimate concerns over patient protections with the expansion of telehealth without ensuring Alaska licensing or reducing protections afforded by a robust background check we believe the temporary benefits outweigh the potential harms during this pandemic. ASMA applauds the Governor's action in suggesting these temporary changes and supports quick passage.

Sincerely,



Pam Ventgen
Executive Director
Alaska State Medical Association

Cc: Commissioner Adam Crum