



#### **Vision**

A Native Community that enjoys physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

#### **Mission**

Working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services.

#### **Customer-Owners**

Serving over 65,000  
Alaska Native and American  
Indian People

#### **Communities Served**

*Anchorage Service Unit  
and 55 Tribes to Include:*

Anchorage	Matanuska-
Chickaloon	Susitna Borough
Eklutna	McGrath
Igiugig	Newhalen
Iliamna	Ninilchik
Kenaitze	Seldovia
Knik	St. Paul Island
Kokhanok	Tyonek

#### **Services Offered**

*Over 90 Community-Based  
Programs Including:*  
Medical  
Behavioral  
Dental  
Co-Own and Co-Manage the  
Alaska Native Medical Center

#### **Board of Directors**

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#### **President and CEO**

April Kyle, MBA

#### **Tribal Authority**

Cook Inlet Region, Inc.

April 6, 2022

Governor Michael Dunleavy

Alaska State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801

*<Delivered Electronically>*

RE: Support for HB172/SB 124 Mental Health Facilities & Meds

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

Thank you for introducing House Bill 172 and Senate Bill 124, the "Crisis Now" legislation. Southcentral Foundation (SCF) supports the passage of the House Judiciary Committee Substitute for House Bill 172 which establishes the legal framework for the operation of crisis stabilization and crisis residential centers throughout Alaska. I share your concern that crisis facilities, programs, and services need to be stood up across Alaska as soon as possible, especially considering the behavioral health impacts of the pandemic.

The behavioral health continuum of care in Alaska is in dire need of investment and reform. The state agencies and private sector groups that have worked to establish crisis services are to be commended. Right now, the continuum of care mostly consists of outpatient clinical services, a few hospital-based facilities, and the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API). Alaskans facing a psychiatric emergency often cannot access care at API or hospital facilities leading to long waits in emergency departments or jails. These crisis programs will help fill major gaps in that continuum and give Alaskans the care they need in the environment that best suits them and creates a "no wrong door" approach to providing medical care to a person in psychiatric crisis.

Southcentral Foundation, together with partners in the health care system, is eager to develop programs and facilities that meet the needs of the community. In fact, SCF is currently planning and designing a crisis stabilization center on the Alaska Native Medical Center campus which we jointly manage with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium as we continue to build out the behavioral health continuum. Additionally, we are planning and developing the concept of an intermediate care facility which could house a crisis residential center.

With these programs in development, the legal framework found in HB172/SB 124 is timely and passage vital for these programs to operate successfully. SCF, along with other program operators standing up these services across the state, will rely on the laws and policies that will be enacted by the legislation to run crisis services safely and effectively. SCF strongly urges passage of this bill during this legislative session to allow crisis services to meet the needs of all recipients—voluntary and involuntary—by giving clinicians the options needed to deliver care in the best way possible.

Thank you for championing House Bill 172 and Senate Bill 124. SCF stands with you and partners to urge all legislators to take the time to understand the issues facing the behavioral health system and why this is so important to accomplish this legislative session. Alaskans depend on it, please act quickly to pass this legislation into law.

Sincerely,  
SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION

  
April Kyle, MBA  
President and CEO