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Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

February 2, 2023

The Honorable Cathy Tilton
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill to allow the expansion of Medicaid coverage in Alaska for postpartum mothers. This takes advantage of recent federal amendments to the Social Security Act of 1935 permitting states to amend their state plans to extend existing coverage for pregnant women up to 12 months postpartum.

Under the bill, the Department of Health (DOH) will be authorized to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage for enrolled pregnant women up to the maximum time authorized under federal law. The bill further requires DOH to submit a state plan amendment to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under 42 U.S.C. 1396a(e)(16), as amended by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, to authorize the extension of coverage for Medicaid-enrolled mothers up to 12 months postpartum.

Under the bill, the coverage expansion will only become effective if the state plan amendment is approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If the department's state plan amendment is approved, the expansion would become effective on the day after the reviser of statutes is notified by the department of the approval.

Because the bill permits extension of postpartum coverage to the extent permitted by federal law, DOH will be able to seek additional extensions of postpartum coverage in the future, should federal law subsequently allow it, without the need of further statutory amendments.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy".

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Enclosure