



March 6, 2023

Representative CJ McCormick
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Support for House Bill 78

Representative McCormick,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), I write in support of House Bill 78, *an Act establishing September 10 as Alaska Community Health Aide Appreciation Day*. ANTHC is a statewide tribal health organization serving 229 tribes and all Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) individuals in Alaska. ANTHC and Southcentral Foundation co-manage the Alaska Native Medical Center, the tertiary care hospital for all AN/AI people in Alaska. ANTHC also provides a wide range of statewide public health, community health, environmental health and other programs and services for Alaska Native people and their communities.

The Community Health Aide Program is a network of approximately 550 Community Health Aides/Practitioners (CHA/Ps) in more than 170 rural Alaska villages. CHA/Ps are part of an established referral relationship that includes mid-level providers, physicians, regional hospitals, and the Alaska Native Medical Center. Each Community Health Aide is selected for training and then hired by their local or regional Tribal Health Organization.

In Anchorage, ANTHC provides CHA/P training on the Alaska Native Medical Campus, with basic training centers in Bethel, Fairbanks, and Nome providing additional regional support. The training focuses on acute, chronic, preventive, and emergency care, delivered over four separate sessions totaling 15 weeks.

The Community Health Aide Program was developed in the 1960's to address the lack of access to health care services in rural Alaska communities. In many of these communities, the Community Health Aide remains the only source of local care, playing an essential and foundational role in the Alaska Tribal Health System.

On behalf of ANTHC, thank you for sponsoring House Bill 78 and your support of Alaska's Community Health Aides.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Valerie Nurr'araluk Davidson

ANTHC President/CEO
Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
4000 Ambassador Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Main: (907) 729-1900 | Fax: (907) 729-1901 | anthc.org