



February 28, 2024

Senator David Wilson
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: ANTHC Support of Senate Bill 219

Senator Wilson,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), I write in support of Senate Bill (SB) 219. ANTHC is a statewide tribal health organization serving all 229 tribes and all Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) people in Alaska. ANTHC provides a wide range of statewide public health, community health, environmental health, and other programs and services for Alaska Native people and their communities. ANTHC and Southcentral Foundation operate programs at the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC), the statewide tertiary care hospital for all AN/AI people in Alaska, under the terms of Public Law 105-83.

SB 219 aims to limit administrative burdens placed on healthcare providers through prior authorization requirements. Prior authorization is a cost-control process that requires health care professionals to obtain advance approval from health plans before a prescription medication or medical service qualifies for payment and can be delivered to the patient. ANTHC and ANMC rely on multiple payer sources including over a dozen different health plans. Navigating the various authorization criteria of each different health plan requires investment in administrative resources that could otherwise be invested in direct patient care.

SB 219 is a thoughtful piece of legislation because it recognizes the validity of the prior authorization process while finding a way to limit unnecessary, time-consuming administrative hurdles for proven healthcare providers. Specifically, SB 219 exempts a healthcare provider from having to complete a prior authorization if the utilization review entity has approved or would have approved at least 80 percent of the prior authorization requests submitted by the health care provider for that health care service over the most recent 12-month period. As this bill is considered by the legislature, we respectfully request that it be amended to also apply to the Alaska Medicaid Program. Removing red tape through SB 219 will eliminate wasted time and expense, and free healthcare providers to care for their patients.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. Please do not hesitate to contact me at mmartin@anthc.org or 907-365-9334 with any questions or if additional information can be provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monique R. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Monique R. Martin, Vice President
Intergovernmental Affairs

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