

March 26, 2024

The Honorable Mike Prax  
House Health and Social Services  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, 120 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 187, Alaska Gold Card Legislation

Chairman Prax,

On behalf of the Denali Oncology Group (DOG), we write to express our strong support for House Bill 187, legislation that would mark a significant step toward improving health care delivery for Alaskans living with cancer.

DOG is an organization whose primary mission is to promote, plan, support, represent, advocate for, and conduct educational, and scientific activities to facilitate improvements in the practice of oncology and the delivery of care to patients for the benefit of the citizens and residents of the State of Alaska.

While prior authorizations had previously been viewed as a way to curb unnecessary health care spending, the reality is these policies often lead to increased costs for patients and providers. Instead of acting as a safeguard, prior authorizations have become bureaucratic hurdles that often delay and deny patients care, worsening health outcomes, especially for patients battling cancer.

HB 187 prescribes a solution for these challenges by introducing the concept of a "gold card," which grants exemptions to healthcare providers who consistently following evidence-based medical practices. Under the bill, providers who achieve an 80% approval rate for prior authorization requests, are awarded gold card status for their services, valid for a duration of 12 months. This would considerably alleviate delays in care and improve patient access to life-saving treatment.

DOG and our members are committed to ensuring providers are better able to dedicate their time to patients. That is why we strongly urge the House Health and Social Services Committee to pass HB 187 and help us provide Alaskans with timely access to care. If you have any follow up questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tammy Thiel  
Executive Director  
Denali Oncology Group (DOG)