

March 12, 2024

The Honorable Jesse Bjorkman  
Chair, Senate Labor and Commerce Committee  
State Capitol Room 9  
Juneau, AK 99801

**(VIA EMAIL)**

**RE: SB 219 – Prior Authorization Exemption for Health Providers**

Dear Senator Bjorkman:

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 219 sponsored by Senator Wilson, which aims to reduce burdens on healthcare providers by exempting them from prior-authorization requests for certain services under specific conditions. While initially intended to prevent unnecessary procedures, prior authorization has also become a tool to delay and even deny **necessary** medical treatment. Our Patient Financial Services Department navigates the challenges associated with the current prior-authorization system every day. They, along with the providers here at Central Peninsula Hospital (CPH) understand the positive impact this legislation could have on our ability to deliver timely and efficient care to patients in our community.

The current use of prior authorization often leads to delays in treatment as CPH providers and staff navigate the administrative hurdles of securing approval before delivering essential services. This can have a significant negative impact on patient outcomes, particularly in time-sensitive situations. Additionally, the burden of prior-authorization requests translates to increased administrative costs for healthcare institutions and lost productivity for our staff, resources that could be better directed towards patient care.

Senate Bill 219 offers a practical solution by establishing a system where providers with a proven track record of responsible practice can be exempt from prior-authorization requirements for specific services. This would streamline the care delivery process, allowing us to focus on what matters most – providing our patients with the treatment they need, when they need it.

Central Peninsula Hospital is committed to delivering high-quality, cost-effective care to our community. We believe that Senate Bill 219 strikes a necessary balance between ensuring responsible healthcare practices and reducing administrative burdens. This legislation will empower CPH to deliver care more efficiently, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes.

We thank Senator Wilson for introducing this legislation and urge you to lend your support to Senate Bill 219 and pass it from the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping strokes that form a stylized representation of the name Shaun Keef.

Shaun Keef  
Chief Executive Officer  
Central Peninsula Hospital

CC: Alaska Hospital and Healthcare Association  
Senator David Wilson