

**SB 74
LETTERS OF
SUPPORT &
OPPOSITION
(FILE 2)**

<TARGET><BILL>SB 74</BILL><SUBJECT>SB 74 LETTERS OF
SUPPORT and OPPOSITION (FILE
2)</SUBJECT><COMM>SHSS29</COMM></TARGET>



Congregation Sukkat Shalom "Shelter of Peace"

A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF ALASKANS, ALLOWING THEM BENEFITS SHARED BY OUR MEMBERSHIP AND THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE BY EXPANDING MEDICAID

WHEREAS the Jewish virtue of "tikkun olam", repairing our world, calls upon us to fix the injustice of inequality and suffering; and

WHEREAS, the Jewish tradition of "tzedakah", giving to others less fortunate, is not considered charity but "the right thing to do"; and

WHEREAS, the majority of the membership of our congregation and the entire membership of our State Legislature are blessed with the benefit of insurance coverage so that we have access to preventive and healing health care for our families and our children; and

WHEREAS, we have knowledge that tens of thousands of Alaskans do not share our same access to health care; and

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 other Alaskans would have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under Medicaid expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the numbers of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion would help Alaska economically by bringing in over \$1 billion in new federal revenue over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, the State would save \$6.1 million in 2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as an act of "tikkun olam", healing the world, Congregation Sukkat Shalom urges Medicaid expansion in Alaska and deems it imperative that the Alaska Legislature expands Medicaid to take effect in July, 2015.

3/16/15

211 Cordova St. ☆ PO Box 22071 ☆ Juneau, AK 99802

April 1, 2015

Dear Senate Health and Social Services Committee Members:

I urge you to support SB 74 by Senator Kelly to reform Alaska's Medicaid program.

I'm a life-long Alaskan, born and raised in Anchorage. This May I'll be graduating from UAA, and seek to continue living in this state that I love.

As you all know, oil provides nearly 90% of Alaska's revenues. A precipitous drop in oil prices since last June, along with a combination of other factors, has left our state grappling with a \$3.5 billion dollar deficit. At this critical juncture in our state's history, serious efforts to reign in unsustainable programs are desperately needed.

Sen. Kelly's bill takes the right steps to finally begin the process of reforming Alaska's broken and unsustainable Medicaid program. Our Medicaid program costs taxpayers over \$1.8 billion annually, is failing current enrollees and providers, and has been plagued with fraud and abuses for years.

According to a 2013 report done by the Medicaid Budget Group of the Department of Health and Social Services, Alaska will be spending \$2.8 billion on Medicaid services by 2032. Given the discussion surrounding Medicaid expansion, it is worth noting that \$2.8 billion does not include calculations of Obamacare Medicaid expansion. Should Alaska expand Medicaid, the State will likely be spending far more on the program. Even without expansion, total spending on our Medicaid program will quadruple between 2012 and 2032, due in large part to rapid growth in spending on long-term care services. Another worthy piece of data from that report concerns enrollment numbers. By 2032, over 204,000 Alaskans are projected to be enrolled in Medicaid, up from 145,000 in 2012. Again, these numbers do not account for an expansion of Medicaid under Obamacare.

If oil prices remain low, as expected, it's reasonable to ask how the State will pay for essential services like education, infrastructure, and public safety if the majority of our budget is consumed by a non-essential service like Medicaid. In order to contain costs, and protect taxpayers, patients, and providers it is imperative we reform the broken and costly system that is Medicaid. SB 74 does just that. It implements a number of cost containment reforms that have been discussed for years. Some of these reforms include starting a managed care system, greater use of brand-name drugs, creation of health savings accounts, expanded use of tele-medicine,

and enhancement of fraud prevention. SB 74 also kickstarts the dialogue to privatize certain aspects of our Medicaid program

I would like to thank Sen. Kelly for introducing SB 74, as it contains meaningful reforms that do far more than just shift costs to the feds.

Thank you for your service to our great state during these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Hans Rodvik
Field Director, Americans for Prosperity-Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska
Senate District K, House District 22

Bartlett Regional Hospital

3260 Hospital Drive, Juneau, Alaska 99801

907.796.8900

www.bartletthospital.org

APR 02 2015

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BARTLETT REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Serial No. 15-01

A Resolution Urging the Alaska Legislature to Expand Medicaid Coverage to Improve the Health of Alaskans and Alaska's Economy.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, approximately 2400 Juneau residents are eligible for coverage under expansion, and 1140 of those are expected to enroll; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, Juneau enrollees alone bring in \$8.3 million in just the first year; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid currently accounts for 23% of Bartlett Regional Hospital's patient mix; and

WHEREAS, with expansion of Medicaid, the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds, reducing the need to cut public services; and

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Bartlett Regional Hospital suffers charity care and bad debt expenses of \$10-\$13 million per year; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

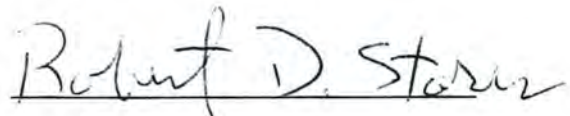
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF BARTLETT REGIONAL HOSPITAL, JUNEAU, ALASKA;

Section 1. Bartlett Regional Hospital endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

Section 2. Bartlett Regional Hospital strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

Section 3. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately after its adoption.

Adopted this 24th day of March 2015.



Robert Storer, Board Chair

Alaska State Medical Association

4107 Laurel Street • Anchorage, Alaska 99508 • (907) 562-0304 • (907) 561-2063 (fax)

April 2, 2015

APR 07 2015

The Honorable Bert Stedman
Alaska Senate
State Capitol, Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 78

Dear Senator Stedman:

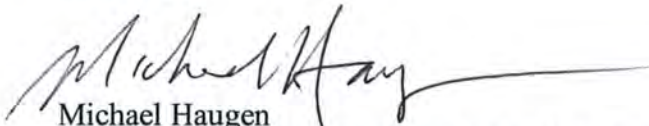
The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of all Alaskans.

As the Legislature debates Medicaid reform and expansion measures this Session we would like to make you aware of our current policy position on access to healthcare in Alaska. ASMA strongly supports access to healthcare for all Alaskans, and in that context supports robust and sustainable payment mechanisms for the Alaska healthcare industry. ASMA supports expansion of coverage of the approximately 30,000 currently uninsured Alaskans.

Improved access to healthcare in Alaska and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system are important to improving the health outcomes of Alaskans.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to further support passage of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Michael Haugen
Executive Director: The Alaska State Medical Association

Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion

by Anchorage Human and Social Services Executive Directors

February, 2015

Whereas, the health and wellness of Alaskans is a Constitutional priority and is vital to each individual, family, community and our entire State;

Whereas, Alaskans have identified 25 Leading Health Priorities providing a science-based framework to guide efforts toward improving health and ensuring health equity for all Alaskans which includes access to health care;

Whereas, an estimated 40,000 of the most vulnerable Alaskans are uninsured and potentially eligible for Medicaid (*Source: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. Healthier Alaskans Create a Healthier State Economy. Anchorage, AK, 2013.*);

Whereas, the State of Alaska budget deficit, due to significantly lower oil prices and declining oil production, calls for all Alaskans to work together to achieve consensus on priorities, long term financial sustainability, program performance and leveraging revenue sources;

Whereas, routine preventive care contributes to life time good health; early treatment of illness and injury make it more likely for an individual to regain their health; and, treatment in an Emergency Room is most expensive;

Whereas, access to primary care and medication is particularly significant for individuals with chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease; and Medicaid patient are 15% more likely to be tested than uninsured. Medicaid beneficiaries with heart disease are twice as likely to take their medication appropriately, compared to those who are uninsured, and are also more likely to have their blood pressure controlled and to have been checked for high cholesterol compared to the uninsured. [*Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, Medicaid: An Important Source of Health Care Coverage for Patients with Chronic Disease.*];

Whereas, lack of health insurance contributes to family stress and financial instability including 154,900 Alaskans served annually by the Food Bank of Alaska network of over 300 partners:

- 56% making choices between medications/meals
- 26% of households report at least one member with diabetes
- 47% of households report at least one member with high blood pressure
- 34% have no health insurance of any kind, including Medicaid
- 56% of households report having unpaid medical bills
- 53% of clients served have incomes that are at or below the federal poverty level (\$15,510 or less for household of two)
- 27% have incomes between \$1-\$10,000 annually; 29% have incomes of \$10,001-\$20,000 annually

Whereas, good health and wellness are supporting factors in children staying and succeeding in school; adults getting and keeping a job; and, in healthy, competitive communities;

Whereas, the State of Alaska has an opportunity now to develop an Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program which meets the needs of vulnerable Alaskans, communities and Alaska as well as being an effective component of the Alaska health care system and is funded by the Federal government at least at 90% and has the potential to provide additional offsets to program expansion administration;

Whereas, Medicaid Expansion would provide a revenue stream covering a portion of the health care costs of vulnerable Alaskans and in doing so support financial stability and organization sustainability of the Alaska health safety net: community health centers, community mental health centers, tribal clinics, rural hospitals, urban hospitals;

Whereas, in FY2014, as partners in caring for vulnerable Alaskans, coalition members contributed directly to customer health or provided supports to increase the likelihood of short term and lifelong health and wellness. We

- provided 18,805 customers health care services 26,529 customers health screenings; 68,841 customers health education; \$17,690,505 donated logistical or financial assistance; 14,848 with a patient centered medical home; and, 31,793 or 84% of customers surveyed demonstrated/reported healthy behaviors and 8,073 or 84% met the terms of their health treatment plan; and,
- Served 994,312 meals/snacks/ box lunches; sheltered 17,103 homeless individuals/families; provided 24,695 households prevention services and/or income boosts; distributed 540,037 pounds of food; and 1,484 or 64% of participating customers demonstrating improved coping skills, better ability to return to daily life, *ability to return to work and/or home after completing crime or violence prevention and/or stabilization programs and 1,532 or 70% of participating customers had increased self-sufficiency levels after exiting a program operating in the community; and,*
- 1,037 children 0-5 screenings; 1,684 children provided with quality care and education services; 109,165 free books distributed to children 0-5; and, 2,167 or 89% of participating parents/families had increased knowledge of parenting and child development
- 20,948 of youth participating in activities that promote youth development; 196 or 67% participating youth decreasing substance use; 6,000 or 69% youth more engaged with education, learning and school; and, 10,860 or 74% youth with conflict resolution skills (*Note: the information above is a sample based on data provided is based on annual reporting by partner agencies to United Way of Anchorage.*); and,
- We, our partners, business people, teachers, students and parents have been working together to increase the Anchorage School District graduation to 90% by the year 2020, and have together increased graduation rates from 59% in 2005 to 74% in 2014 which contributes as a positive determinant in lifelong health.

Therefore, we the undersigned non-profits support the following Medicaid Expansion strategies:

- Approve Medicaid Expansion
- Fix and clear backlogs for
 - the State of Alaska Medicaid eligibility determination system, Alaska's Resource for Integrated Eligibility Services (ARIES), and;
 - the payment system, Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) prior to Medicaid Expansion
- Accept federal money for Medicaid Expansion
- Approve supplemental funding for Medicaid Expansion administration

And;

Commit to being partners in this effort by continuing to care for vulnerable Alaskans and by working with the Governor, State of Alaska Legislature, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the business community and other stakeholders to develop a sustainable Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program.

Hilary A. Morgan, Co-Chair

hmorgan@ywcaak.org

Signatories

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, Inc. (AWAIC)

AK Child & Family

Alaska Injury Prevention Center

Alison Kear, Chief Executive Officer, Covenant House Alaska

American Diabetes Association

Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center

Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC)

Barbara Dubovich, Chief Executive Officer, Camp Fire USA Alaska Council

CCS Early Learning

Food Bank of Alaska

Jerry A. Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services (and Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services)

Lisa Aquino, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services

Francine Harbor, NAMI

Nine Star Education and Employment Services

Pauline P. Smith, Executive Director, Alaska Literacy Program

RurAL CAP

Stephanie Berglund, CEO, thread

Volunteers of America Alaska

YWCA

SUPPORTING MEDICAID EXPANSION IN ALASKA
RESOLUTION NO. 2015-10

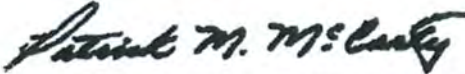
- WHEREAS,** the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides states with additional funding to expand their Medicaid program to cover adults under the age of 65 and children under the age of 18 who live slightly above the federal poverty level; and
- WHEREAS,** the State of Alaska has chosen not to participate in Medicaid expansion; however, Governor Walker is seriously considering it; and
- WHEREAS,** Alaska's Medicaid program is unsustainable as currently designed and needs reform in order to best serve the health of Medicaid beneficiaries, operate more efficiently for providers, and improve value; and
- WHEREAS,** nearly 42,000 Alaskans, including almost 6,000 in the Interior, would be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion in Alaska; and
- WHEREAS,** studies have shown that Medicaid expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling; and
- WHEREAS,** studies have also shown that there are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years; and
- WHEREAS,** Other benefits of Medicaid Expansion include bringing Alaska tax dollars back to Alaska and potentially stabilizing rising insurance premiums and medical prices by reducing uncompensated care that health providers currently provide to Alaskans with no insurance coverage.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Tanana Chiefs Conference Full Board of Directors supports Medicaid expansion for Alaska.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference Full Board of Directors on March 19, 2015 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.

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Pat McCarty
Secretary/Treasurer





Medicaid Expansion and Reform for Trust Beneficiaries

Medicaid Expansion and Reform will allow more low-income Alaskans, seniors, and people with disabilities who earn less than \$20,314 per year to receive basic health insurance. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Alaska Mental Health Board, Alaska Commission on Aging, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, and Alaska Brain Injury Network support Medicaid Expansion and Reform for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's Medicaid health care service system.

MEDICAID EXPANSION

- Medicaid Expansion will extend basic health coverage to low-income Alaskans who earn less than \$9.76 per hour (up to \$20,314 per year). About 40,000 Alaskans will qualify.
- Most of the costs of Expansion will be reimbursed by federal dollars, freeing up limited state general funds in a time of financial hardship. The State of Alaska currently enters into similar financial relationships with the federal government to pay for our roads, runways, and many other projects.
- Who would be added? Adults without dependent children, who are ages 19-64 years, and who earn less than \$20,314 per year if single, or up to \$27,490 per year if married.
- The State of Alaska will benefit from Medicaid Expansion and Reform:^{1 2}
 - \$1.1 billion in federal dollars will become available to support Expansion;
 - 4,000 new jobs are predicted;
 - \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries to Alaskans;
 - 40,000 uninsured Alaskans will be eligible for basic health care coverage:
 - Anchorage and Mat-Su = 21,124
 - Interior = 5,787
 - Northern = 1,347
 - Southwest = 2,638
 - Gulf Coast = 5,830
 - Southeast = 5,184

¹ *Fiscal and Economic Impacts of Medicaid Expansion in Alaska*. Northern Economics. Feb. 2013

² *Projected Population, Enrollment, Service Costs and Demographics of Medicaid Expansion Beginning in FY16*. Evergreen Economics analysis for the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services. Feb. 4, 2015.

- The State of Alaska currently spends millions of dollars for uninsured, low-income and disabled citizens using emergency levels of care. Alaskans living without adequate health care are more likely to use these expensive acute care services, like hospital emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, and nursing homes. They are also more likely to end up in prison or jail as a result of un-treated behavioral health conditions. State and local governments will always pay — either in the end for more costly acute care, or up front for less costly preventative services.
- Medicaid Expansion will provide coverage for low-income Alaskans with disabilities who currently do not have health insurance and do not qualify for Medicaid. The number of uninsured Alaskans under Medicaid Expansion will be reduced by half, according to research conducted by the Health Policy Center.³
- Services available under Medicaid Expansion will offer more effective and less expensive solutions.
- A person with a disability is more likely to hold down a job, maintain a stable home life, and contribute positively in his or her community when basic health care needs are met.
- Many Alaskans with behavioral health disorders, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer’s disease/dementia, brain injury, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc. are at higher risk for being uninsured. The services available under Medicaid Expansion will offer more effective and less expensive solutions. A person with a disability is more likely to hold down a job, maintain a stable household, and contribute positively to his or her community when basic health care needs are met.
- Medicaid Expansion helps Alaska’s workers and employers. Over 70% of the projected Expansion population is people who are employed or actively seeking employment.⁴ With more employees insured, business owners will experience less turnover and fewer lost work days due to employees with unattended illnesses and injuries.
- The employment status of the Expansion population includes people who currently do not have health insurance through their employer, who are not be eligible for subsidized plans on the Health Insurance Marketplace, or cannot afford to purchase an individual health insurance plan on their own.
- Medicaid Expansion will provide Alaska’s prisoner and parole population better access to behavioral and primary health care upon release into the community. Access to health care has been shown in other states to reduce offender recidivism.⁵

³ *Medicaid in Alaska Under the ACA*. Health Policy Center, the Urban Institute, Feb. 2013.

⁴ Of the projected Medicaid Expansion population, 43.8% are employed, 29.8% are unemployed and seeking work, 21% are not in the labor force (due to disability, retirement, enrollment in school, parenting/family responsibilities, incarceration or other circumstances), and 5.5% are unable to work. *From: Projected Population, Enrollment, Service Costs and Demographics of Medicaid Expansion Beginning in FY16*. Evergreen Economics analysis for the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services. Feb, 4, 2015.

⁵ DiPietro, B., & Klingenmaier, L. Achieving Public Health Goals through Medicaid Expansion: Opportunities in Criminal Justice, Homelessness, and Behavioral Health with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. *American Journal of Public Health*, 25-29.

- Medicaid Expansion will also help Alaska's homeless. In other states, access to health care is contributing broad benefits to homeless individuals, such as improved capacity to gain employment.⁶

MEDICAID EXPANSION IS THE CATALYST FOR MEDICAID REFORM

- Reform efforts will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system and make it sustainable. Innovative models of care and other reforms can create efficiencies that can save money, reduce fraud and waste, remove ineffective services, and reduce unnecessary spending.
- Reforms may include:
 - payment reform
 - patient centered medical/health homes
 - care management
 - expanded telemedicine to improve access to care and reduce travel costs
 - reduced overutilization of emergency room services
 - increased fraud prevention and waste reduction efforts
 - coordination with the Alaska tribal health system
 - interagency and interdepartmental collaborations to leverage human and financial resources
 - improved use of patient health information to achieve positive health outcomes
 - increased access to preventative services and incentives for healthy behaviors
 - cost-sharing requirements for certain enrollees and certain services
 - increased access to supportive services to reduce emergency, institutional, and acute care costs
- One of the Reform strategies being discussed is the 1915(i) Home and Community-Based Services State Plan Option. A person qualifying for 1915(i) state plan option will have access to home and community based services that help him or her maintain a healthy, stable life through supported housing, employment/training, and appropriate health care services.⁷
 - The 1915(i) state plan option opens eligibility for home and community-based services, that were previously not open — including services for people with behavioral health and other brain-based disorders.
 - The 1915(i) state plan option has been used by other states to reduce recidivism by providing appropriate services to people cycling through the correctional system, and by increasing access to trauma-informed care, peer support, supported housing, supported employment, and recovery services.
 - Eligibility requirements for the 1915(i) state plan option will incorporate needs-based criteria that look at medical risk factors and cognitive and adaptive function.
 - Target populations for the 1915(i) state plan option would include elderly individuals and people with disabilities – including Intellectual/Developmental Disorders (IDD),

⁶ *Early impacts of the Medicaid Expansion for the Homeless Population.* Kaiser Family Foundation, Nov. 2014.

⁷ "Section 1915(i) Home and Community-Based Services Rate Plan Option." *Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.* March 2015

Severe Mental Illness (SMI), Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

- Adopting the 1915(i) state plan option, will allow for the state to receive a federal Medicaid match for lower-cost community services and supports which can reduce the utilization of higher-cost emergency and institutional services.
- Medicaid home and community-based services may include:
 - case management
 - in-home assistance with activities of daily living
 - psycho-social rehabilitation services
 - pre-vocational supports, education and training
 - supported employment
 - assistance with getting and maintaining housing
 - peer support
 - mobile crisis intervention
 - intensive crisis respite and short term crisis respite support
 - family and caregiver training and supports
 - transitional services for individuals returning from foster care, juvenile justice, residential treatment, or incarceration

Trust

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Phone: 907-269-7960
www.mhtrust.org

March 31, 2015

Members of the State of Alaska Legislature,

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is pleased to provide a letter of support for the work that is being done on the Medicaid program to both expand Medicaid to the gap population that is currently not eligible and who do not earn enough to qualify for the Affordable Care Act funds and to reform the existing program to be more effective and efficient.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiaries are more likely to be in this gap population due to challenges associated with mental illness and disabilities which might limit work opportunities or not allow for full-time work. We have heard from many of our beneficiaries who are currently, or have in the past been in this uninsured pool which, in its self, causes stress and anxiety about unanticipated medical crises. Our beneficiaries have voiced support for Medicaid expansion and reform and for measures that can bring economic stability to the fragile population of people living on the edge of poverty.

Medicaid Expansion and Reform will allow more low-income Alaskans, seniors, and people with disabilities who earn less than \$20,314 per year to receive basic health insurance. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority along with our advisory boards including the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Alaska Mental Health Board, Alaska Commission on Aging, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, and Alaska Brain Injury Network support Medicaid expansion and reform for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's Medicaid health care service system.

1. Many Alaskans with behavioral health disorders, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease/dementia, brain injury, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, etc. are at higher risk for being uninsured. The services available under Medicaid expansion will offer more effective and less expensive solutions.
2. A person with a disability is more likely to hold down a job, maintain a stable home life, and contribute positively in his or her community when basic health care needs are met.
- ¹ Re-entry from corrections into productive community living is a high priority for Alaska. Medicaid expansion will provide Alaska's prisoner and parole population better access to behavioral and primary health care upon release into the community. Access to health care has been shown in other states to reduce offender recidivism.^[1]

[1] DiPietro, B., & Klingenmaier, L. Achieving Public Health Goals through Medicaid Expansion: Opportunities in Criminal Justice, Homelessness, and Behavioral Health with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. *American Journal of Public Health*, 25-29.

2. Medicaid expansion will also help Alaska's homeless and those at risk of homelessness due to medical crisis. In other states, access to health care is contributing broad benefits to homeless individuals, such as improved capacity to gain employment.^[2]

Medicaid expansion will serve as a critical catalyst for reform due to new options offered for states participating in expansion

- Reform efforts will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system and make it sustainable. Innovative models of care and other reforms can create efficiencies that can save money, reduce fraud and waste, remove ineffective services, and reduce unnecessary spending.

Medicaid expansion and reform is the most critical and substantive change we can make to improve the Alaskan economy and health of its residents, including many Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiaries.

We look forward to partnering with the Legislature on this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Jeff Jessee, CEO

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

^[2] *Early impacts of the Medicaid Expansion for the Homeless Population.* Kaiser Family Foundation, Nov. 2014.

**Advisory Board on Alcoholism
and Drug Abuse**



Alaska Mental Health Board

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD
ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
431 NORTH FRANKLIN STREET, SUITE 200
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801
(907) 465-8920

March 19, 2015

Governor Bill Walker
State Capitol, 3rd Floor
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Governor Walker,

The Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse support Medicaid Expansion and Reform so that more low-income Alaskans (earning less than \$9.76/hour) who experience a behavioral health disorder (mental illness and/or substance use disorders) can receive basic health insurance.

The State of Alaska currently spends millions of dollars for uninsured, low-income and disabled citizens using emergency levels of care. Alaskans living without adequate health care are more likely to use these expensive acute care services, like hospital emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, and nursing homes. They are also more likely to end up in prison or jail as a result of un-treated behavioral health conditions. State and local governments will always pay — either in the end for more costly acute care, or up front for less costly preventative services.

Alaskans with behavioral health disorders are at higher risk for being uninsured. The services available under Medicaid Expansion will offer more effective and less expensive solutions. A person with a disability is more likely to hold down a job, maintain a stable household, and contribute positively to his or her community when basic health care needs are met.

The Boards also support Reform efforts that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system and make it sustainable. We support measures designed to create efficiencies in the Medicaid health care delivery system that will save the state money, reduce fraud and waste, remove ineffective services, and reduce unnecessary spending.

Thank you for your leadership and efforts to support the health of all Alaskans.

Sincerely

J. Kate Burkhart
Executive Director



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of
Health and Social Services

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
& SPECIAL EDUCATION
Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director

3601 C Street, Suite 740
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-5924
Main: 907.269.8990
Toll Free: 1.888.269.8990
Fax: 907.269.8995

Resolution 101

TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.



Medicaid expansion must be balanced with fiscal reality

by Rachael Petro

Alaska businesses will pay for uninsured Alaskans through the proposed Medicaid expansion or continue to pay through increased health care costs. It is for this reason the Alaska Chamber supports Medicaid expansion. The Chamber's support for Medicaid expansion ends when the federal funding ends, falls below its initial promise or if it exacerbates the State's fiscal situation.

As taxpayers, all Alaskans are subject to the increased federal taxes established to fund the national healthcare law. If Alaska does not expand Medicaid, Alaskan's taxes will pay for the uninsured in other states. Our concern is that Alaska businesses and all insured Alaskans will bear even higher insurance premiums and health care costs to cover those uninsured.

However, given the federal fiscal situation, and the dismal track record the federal government has with keeping commitments to Alaska and Alaskans, the Chamber supports Medicaid expansion with caveats. These caveats include support for a fail-safe provision and/or supporting an alternative to Medicaid expansion. A fail-safe provision means that if the feds renege on their funding commitment, Alaska *must* automatically contract the expansion.

The Chamber's top priority this year is reducing State spending. Alaskans overwhelmingly agree, it's time for the State to do what we as individuals and Alaska businesses do every day – live within our means. We support limiting total FY 2016 unrestricted General Fund spending to \$4.5B or less, and believe State budget reserves should be used to aid in the transition to a sustainable budget.

Medicaid expansion must go hand in hand with Medicaid reform, limiting the State's fiscal liability today and for future generations. This contrasts with the Walker/Mallott Transition Team goal of using Medicaid expansion as a catalyst for Medicaid reform. Alaska's Medicaid program is a key driver of State spending and is currently on an unsustainable path. We shouldn't need to create a too-big-too-fail Medicaid system before enacting sustainable reforms.

Currently Alaska's Medicaid system provides coverage not required by the Federal government and in many cases more generous coverage than employers are able to offer in employer-sponsored plans. In fact, optional services provided by Alaska's current Medicaid program that go above and beyond Federal requirements, cost the State \$481 million in FY 2013. Alaska doesn't need expansion as a catalyst, our fiscal situation is motivation enough to reform our unsustainable Medicaid program.



Earlier this month Governor Walker unveiled his *Healthy Alaska Plan* to expand Medicaid, and just this week submitted budget amendments reducing the budgeted increase in Medicaid spending in FY 2016.

What does all this mean for Alaska's businesses, which funds 95 percent of the State General Fund budget? It is a red flag warning to proceed with caution. Just like Alaska businesses cannot afford to pay twice for uninsured Alaskans; Alaskans cannot afford the unsustainable and increasing costs of our Medicaid program.

It is crucial we not aggravate the State's fiscal situation. Alaska's Medicaid program must be reformed; and any expansion of the program will need to heed the same reforms.

The Chamber views the State's fiscal situation as an opportunity to right size Alaska's Medicaid program to put it on a more sustainable path. The Chamber is encouraged by the active dialogue in Juneau and around Alaska on this topic – together we can find a solution.

Rachael Petro serves as the President and CEO of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce. The Alaska Chamber's mission is to improve Alaska's business climate.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rachael Petro'. The signature is stylized with a large, circular flourish at the end.

A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, AARP ALASKA endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that AARP ALASKA strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.



The League of Women Voters

A Voice For Citizens, A Force For Change

P.O. Box 90079, Anchorage, AK 99509-0079

March 9, 2015

OFFICERS

Dear State of Alaska Legislators:

President

Pat Redmond

Vice-President

Carol Dickason

Past President

Linda Witt

Treasurer

Shari George

Secretary

Hetty Barthel

DIRECTORS

Judy Andree

Gail Knopf

Diane Mathisen

Marianne Mills

Lois Pillifant

The League of Women Voters of Alaska fully supports the expansion of Medicaid. The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) has long fought for basic health care for all citizens, stating the following in their Position Statement on Health Care: "Every U. S. resident should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long-term care and mental health care." The League also supports cost control efforts for health care that would go hand-in-hand with universal coverage as well as equity in the allocation of health care resources.

The State of Alaska has an opportunity to expand Medicaid at no immediate cost to the State through the federal Affordable Care Act. Reports from Alaska's own Department of Health and Social Services state that an expanded Medicaid program would save the State millions of dollars in Medicaid payments, reduce the number of missed work days, and bring 4000 new jobs to the State. These new jobs would come with \$1.2 billion in wages. All of these projections bring positive results to the citizens of Alaska. Expanding Medicaid seems like a wise choice for the entire State.

In addition, expansion of Medicaid would help up to 42,000 of the State's most vulnerable citizens. There is no more honorable cause for a free and democratic government than to assist the most vulnerable of its citizens. We urge all Senators and Representatives to expand access to quality health care for all Alaskans through Medicaid expansion. We are attaching the full LWVUS Position Statement for your reference.

Thank you for your service to Alaska.

Sincerely,

Pat Redmond, President
League of Women Voters of Alaska

cc: Governor Bill Walker, Lt. Governor Byron Mallott, DHSS Commissioner Valerie Davidson



RESOLUTION NO. #2015-1

Sponsored by: Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood Camp 70
Glacier Valley

TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA AND THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years which will substantially improve the State's fiscal position; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion would benefit health care providers and payers, who are effectively required to subsidize care for uninsured and underinsured patients as well as businesses and other patients who support those subsidies through higher premiums, deductibles and copays; and

WHEREAS, The uninsured and underinsured patients now seek care in the most expensive settings, often after their condition has become more serious and complicated than it would have been if they had access to primary care

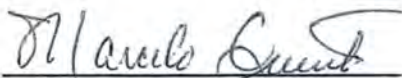
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WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

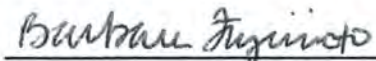
WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska Native Brotherhood Glacier Valley Camp 70 and the Alaska Native Sisterhood Glacier Valley Camp 70 endorse Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Alaska Native Brotherhood Glacier Valley Camp 70 and the Alaska Native Sisterhood Glacier Valley Camp 70 strongly urge the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.



Marcelo Quinto, President
ANB Glacier Valley Camp 70



Barbara Fujimoto, President
ANS Glacier Valley Camp 70

AGENET

Alaska Geriatric Exchange Network
An Association of Advocates and Service Providers for Older Alaskans

Resolution

TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and



UAA Alaska Center for Rural Health
- Area Health Education Center

UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

Strengthening Alaska's primary care workforce and building the future...

March 23, 2015

The Honorable Bill Walker
Governor of Alaska
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Walker,

The Alaska Center for Rural Health- Alaska's AHEC fully supports your efforts to expand Medicaid by July 2015 for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years. We should view Medicaid expansion as an economic driver that will positively impact our state's economy as we are faced with declining oil prices and the resulting budget challenges.

Along with new federal revenue, savings to the state budget have also been identified in the Department of Corrections, the Chronic & Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) Program and behavioral health grants. In FY2016, the state would realize \$6.1 million in savings. Medicaid expansion is healthy for Alaskans and healthy for the state's budget. We encourage the continued internal evaluation to identify other potential savings and offsets attributable to expansion and reform.

Alaska's AHEC Program has a particular interest in strengthening the state's healthcare workforce, and much of that starts with reform. AHEC will continue to partner in these efforts. Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform. We are pleased to hear that the Department of Health & Human Services has issued an RFP for technical assistance related to reform efforts. Though reform of the current Medicaid program should be of utmost importance, reform efforts should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

ACRH-Alaska's AHEC endorsement of Medicaid expansion recognizes we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy.

Sincerely,

Director, ACRH-Alaska's AHEC



Andy Teuber
ANTHC Chairman and President

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
4000 Ambassador Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
907.729.1900
chairman@anthc.org

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Bill Walker
Governor of Alaska
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Walker,

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) fully supports your efforts to expand Medicaid by July 2015 for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years. We should view Medicaid expansion as an economic driver that will positively impact our state's economy as we are faced with declining oil prices and the resulting budget challenges.

In addition to new federal revenue, savings to the state budget have also been identified in the Department of Corrections, the Chronic & Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) Program and behavioral health grants. In FY2016, the state would realize \$6.1 million in savings. Medicaid expansion is healthy for Alaskans and healthy for the state's budget. We encourage the continued internal evaluation to identify other potential savings and offsets attributable to expansion and reform.

Federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond. We support the administration's position that Alaska's participation is contingent on the federal match remaining at 90%.

Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform. We are pleased to hear that the Department of Health & Human Services has issued an RFP for technical assistance related to reform efforts. Though reform of the current Medicaid program should be of utmost importance, reform efforts should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

Governor Walker
March 12, 2015
Page 2 of 2

ANTHC's endorsement of Medicaid expansion recognizes we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy.

Sincerely,



Andy Teuber
Chairman and President



March 25, 2015

Office of the Governor
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Walker and the Alaska State Legislature,

The Alaska Brain Injury Network supports Medicaid expansion and reform. These efforts will allow more low-income Alaskans, seniors, and people with disabilities to receive basic health insurance, while improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's Medicaid health care service system.

The State of Alaska will benefit from Medicaid expansion and reform in many ways. \$1.1 billion in federal dollars will become available to support expansion; 4,000 new jobs are predicted; \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries to Alaskans; 40,000 uninsured Alaskans will be eligible for basic health care coverage.

Medicaid expansion is the catalyst for Medicaid reform. Both efforts will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Alaska's current Medicaid health care service system and make it sustainable. Innovative models of care and other reforms can create efficiencies that can save money, reduce fraud and waste, remove ineffective services, and reduce unnecessary spending.

We support reforms that would include payment reform, patient centered medical/health homes, care management, expanded telemedicine to improve access to care and reduce travel costs, reduced overutilization of emergency room services, increased fraud prevention and waste reduction efforts, coordination with the Alaska tribal health system, interagency and interdepartmental collaborations to leverage human and financial resources, improved use of patient health information to achieve positive health outcomes, increased access to preventative services and incentives for healthy behaviors, cost-sharing requirements for certain enrollees and certain services, increased access to supportive services to reduce emergency, institutional, and acute care costs

The Alaska Brain Injury Networks supports the 1915(i) Home and Community-Based Services State Plan Option. A person qualifying for 1915(i) state plan option will have access to home and community based services that help him or her maintain a healthy, stable life through supported housing, employment/training, and appropriate health care services. The 1915(i) state plan option opens eligibility for home and community-based services, that were previously not open — including



services for people with behavioral health and other brain-based disorders. The 1915(i) state plan option has been used by other states to reduce recidivism by providing appropriate services to people cycling through the correctional system, and by increasing access to trauma-informed care, peer support, supported housing, supported employment, and recovery services. Eligibility requirements for the 1915(i) state plan option will incorporate needs-based criteria that look at medical risk factors and cognitive and adaptive function. Adopting the 1915(i) state plan option, will allow for the state to receive a federal Medicaid match for lower-cost community services and supports which can reduce the utilization of higher-cost emergency and institutional services.

The Alaska Brain Injury Network supports community-based services that include case management, in-home assistance with activities of daily living, psycho-social rehabilitation services, pre-vocational supports, education and training, supported employment, assistance with getting and maintaining housing, peer support, mobile crisis intervention, intensive crisis respite and short term crisis respite support, family and caregiver training and supports, transitional services for individuals returning from foster care, juvenile justice, residential treatment, or incarceration

Thank you for your consideration of this issue, which is very critical to all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Tawny Buck
Executive Director

Dr. Adam Grove
Board Chair



A Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion
March 2015 ACEH Resolution #1501

Whereas, nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion; and

Whereas, the second highest reason for a crisis leading to homelessness in Alaska last year was an injury, illness or maternity (Homeless and At-Risk Data Report, Alaska Housing Finance Corporation); and

Whereas, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

Whereas, expanding Medicaid will improve the access to substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling. Client eligibility for and enrollment in Medicaid will allow community organizations the ability to bill for services they currently provide their clients ensuring sustainability for the safety net services in our communities; and

Whereas, access to Medicaid coverage is already showing a positive difference for people who experience homelessness in other states. A Kaiser Family Foundation report recently showed that Medicaid expansion is contributing to improved access to care as well as broader benefits for homeless individuals, such as the improved capability to gain employment; and

Whereas, the health and wellness of Alaskans is a Constitutional priority and is vital to each individual, family, community and our entire State; and

Therefore be it resolved, the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

Be it further resolved, that the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.



Dave Mayo-Kiely
ACEH Education and Advocacy Committee



Carmen Springer
ACEH Coalition Director



A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, NAMI JUNEAU, the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NAMI JUNEAU strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

Crystal Bourland, Executive Director

Telephone: (907) 463-4251 Fax: (907) 500-9914 [Email: namijuneau@gmail.com](mailto:namijuneau@gmail.com)

Address: 9000 Glacier Highway, Suite 201, Juneau, AK 99801-8032



March 6, 2015

Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Walker,

Bering Straits Native Corporation supports your efforts to expand Medicaid in July 2015 for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years. We should view Medicaid expansion as an economic driver that will positively impact our state's economy as we are faced with declining oil prices and the resulting budget challenges.

In addition to new federal revenue, savings to the state budget have also been identified in the Department of Corrections, the Chronic & Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) Program and behavioral health grants. In FY2016, the state would realize \$6.1 million in savings. Medicaid expansion is healthy for Alaskans and healthy for the state's budget. We encourage the continued internal evaluation to identify other potential savings and offsets attributable to expansion and reform.

Federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond. We support Governor Walker's position that Alaska's participation is contingent on the federal match remaining at 90%.

Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform. We are pleased to hear that the Department of Health & Human Services has issued an RFP for technical assistance related to reform efforts. Though reform of the current Medicaid program should be

To facilitate a united provider voice for best practices, advocacy, partnerships and networking.



AADD
ALASKA ASSOCIATION ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
P.O. Box 241742
Anchorage, Alaska 99524

A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

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WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, AADD (Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities) endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that AADD (Alaska Association on Developmental Disabilities) strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

Dear Senator Stedman,

APR 01 2015

I'm writing today in support of Medicaid Expansion in Alaska. I'm 28 years old and am in the private workforce but I have quite a few friends who would be eligible for and benefit from the proposed expansion. This expansion would potentially help insure 40,000 Alaskans. Just in 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. That incredible burden gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In states that have implemented the expansion a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care has been seen. That's a significant amount that would greatly benefit the state particularly in its current financial climate.

As you probably already know, from 2016-2021, an investment of \$61 million by Alaska will be matched with \$1.2 billion in federal funding (95%) for Medicaid expansion.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I urge your support for HB 148.

Sincerely,

Lila Hobbs



L. Hobbs
525 W 3rd Ave
Anchorage, AK
99501

Dear Senator Stedman,

3/25/15

MAR 30 2015

I'm writing today in support
of Medicaid Expansion for Alaska.

As a 28 year old Alaskan, I have
many friends recently graduating and getting
their first jobs who would be eligible
for Medicaid if expanded. This is an excellent

opportunity to provide crucial health insurance
to young Alaskans who will soon be
fully employed and purchasing private insurance.

As you know, an investment of \$61 million by AK
will be matched with \$1.2 billion in federal
funding, 95%, for Medicaid expansion. As
the chairman of the committee for health and
social services, you have the opportunity to
insure 40,000 Alaskans, an opportunity I urge
you to accept.

JOHN MURPHY
19516 Laura Lee Cir
Eagle River, AK
99577

Sincerely,
JOHN MURPHY
Jerry

MAR 3 0 2015

March 10, 2015

Senator Stedman,

Please expand Medicaid during the 2015 legislative session.

In 2012 I was a passenger in a severe rollover car accident as a result of a reckless driver. I sustained multiple injuries. Up to that point, I was employed in a corporate office which afforded me a good income as well as excellent health benefits, which I didn't have to use because I was perfectly healthy. Within months of injuries sustained during this accident, I was without a job.

Currently my mother graciously allows me to live with her and I am paying for private insurance out of my savings. My medical bills are getting paid and I am not using state-funded services. However my mother is a senior citizen and my insurance company is dissolving and will cease to exist at the end of this year, while my savings will be depleted. My current situation is not realistically sustainable.

Before the car accident, I lived an independent and productive life, contributing to this community, this state and this country. I fully intend to return to an independent life with a job that includes a livable wage and private insurance. In order to be able to do this, I currently require medical maintenance for my chronic but manageable condition, the same way people with diabetes require management and maintenance of their condition in order to function.

Because I did not receive appropriate medical care for over two years despite my efforts, my condition worsened and I am currently unable to work full time. But I've recovered more in the last six months by finally seeing the right medical specialist than in the previous two and a half years. I am looking forward to increasing my currently low volunteer hours and eagerly anticipate rejoining the workforce when I can consistently and responsibly maintain employment. However I may still continue to need medical management for a time.

When my insurance company dissolves, I will not qualify for Medicaid under the current system. If I do not yet have private insurance through employment, my manageable condition will spiral until it is no longer controlled, taking a situation which is currently improving and forcing a backslide so I am not employable. I would deteriorate to the point of needing state-funded services – which I don't want to use – in order to survive. This is frankly ludicrous compared to the reasonable alternative.

Medicaid expansion is the bridge to get me from where I am now to where I could realistically be again, contributing to Alaska's economy. If I am appropriately medically managed, I can obtain and maintain employment, which in turn would allow me to get off Medicaid.

I am currently in my twenties. The trajectory I am on now will determine the rest of my life. Despite my condition, I could have the opportunity to build on my foundation of work experience and my college degree to have a career while contributing to Alaska. To refuse a state responsibility of approximately \$210 million despite a federal payment of \$2.1 billion* is to declare that partisan politicking is more important to you than ensuring a person in her twenties has the medical care necessary to be a productive member of society for decades to come.

There is no question a person with unmanaged diabetes could not realistically sustain employment over time. Similarly, my condition requires medical maintenance for now. I want to work again. The question is: Will you let me?


Thank you for your time. Please do what is right for Alaskans and expand Medicaid immediately.

Sincerely,



Annette Alfonsi

* Based on the 2013 Lewin Group Analysis of a January 2016 Medicaid expansion



Alfonsi
841 Shakespeare Cir.
Anchorage, AK 99503

Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Rm 30
Juneau, AK 99801

1817 Repner Dr.
Anchorage, AK
99504

MAR 27 2015

Dear Senator Stedman,

My name is Breanna James and I am a lifelong Alaskan. I am writing in support of medicaid expansion and asking that you support this bill as well.

As an occupational therapist, I am most concerned with the fact that Alaskans with behavioral health disorders and developmental disabilities are at higher risk for being uninsured and would benefit greatly from the expansion of medicaid. A person who experiences a disability is more likely to hold down a job, maintain a stable home life and contribute positively to society when their basic health care needs are met. Ultimately, medicaid expansion will help to provide basic health care coverage to approximately 40,000 uninsured Alaskans with and without disabilities.

Thank you for all of your hard work and continued efforts to make Alaska an even better state live than it already is.

Sincerely,

Breanna James

Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska legislature
State Capitol Rm 30
Juneau, Ak 99801


Tara Devlin
1200 W. 45th Ave
Anchorage, Ak 99503

MAR 27 2015

March 24, 2015

Dear Senator Stedman,

My name is Tara Devlin, I'm a born and raised Alaskan and want to make my life here. Last year I started a business half-way through the year and didn't qualify for any of the affordable care act subsidies but also couldn't apply for medicaid because it hasn't been expanded. I want my business to grow to a place where I can have more employees and supply my own insurance, but as of now I'm still in the beginning stages and just need coverage to get me through these first few years. Thank you for staying open to the clear choice of expanding medicaid.

Sincerely, Tara Devlin 

Dear Senator Stedman,

MAR 27 2015

As a lifelong Alaskan, I support the Medicaid expansion. I am a practicing physical therapist, and my patient's needs come first. Please give my current and potential patients coverage so I can help them be healthy & productive contributing members of Alaska.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.

Sincerely,

Kendra Higgins, DPT

Kendra Higgins
13385 Ridgewood cir
Anch., AK 99516

Sen. Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stedman,

MAR 27 2015

My name is Whitney Lowell, as a life long Alaskan, I am writing in support of medicaid expansion. I believe medicaid expansion will benefit those in need as well as bring economic growth to our wonderful state. Saying no to 4,000 new jobs, 1.1 billion in new federal revenue is not wise. Everyone should have affordable access to healthcare, everyone should be able to get access to preventative care. The members of our community that are equal to or below the 138% of the FPL need care, medicaid expansion is the most efficient, economical way to accomplish this. Please vote in support of medicaid expansion.

Sincerely,
Whitney Lowell

Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Rm 30
Juneau, AK 99801

MAR 27 2015

David Devlin
1200 W. 45th Ave
Anchorage, AK
99503

Dear Senator Bert Stedman,

My name is David Devlin, I'm a Life Long Alaskan writing in support of medicaid expansion. I'll be finishing up my time at UAA soon and would like to stay in Alaska and start my own business, though I'm aware medical expenses can be high. Thank you for keeping an open mind about medicaid expansion.

Sincerely, David Devlin.

David Devlin

George W. Brown, MD, FAAP

Community Pediatrician

1640 Second St. Douglas, AK 99824 907 364 2726 cell 907 321 0786

gbrow177637@yahoo.com

Senator Bert Stedman
Juneau, AK

May 3, 2015

Honorable Senator Stedman:

As a physician fortunate enough to practice in Alaska since 1965, I want to share a long-term perspective about health care reform. Beginning in our shared past, we who make Alaska home have inherited and so far failed to solve the riddle of economic inequality. It has always been a fact that the poor do not get equal access in health care. Our nation, which still tries to offer a realistic "American Dream" to the downtrodden and desperate immigrants from tortured foreign shores, has made numerous political attempts to achieve fairness in health care for all. Theodore Roosevelt was the first of several Republican leaders to champion a national health care system. Many continue holding dear faith in the private sector economy as superior to what other nations practice as socialized medicine. Global health statistics now indicate we lag behind many of these nations which have lower infant mortality, longer life expectancy, and much lower per capita health care costs. Political preferences and debates will continue in our practice of free speech and openness to economic investment as superior to government controlled health care. My goal now is to convince

our legislators that Medicaid expansion is a real investment in private system health care that will boost our Alaskan economy in a time of budget crisis while improving individual and public health for all.

One of the persistent political complaints about The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is how huge the actual bill was in words and pages which "no one could understand". It is still believed by many to be government controlled socialized medicine. As I understand it, the economic structure is shaped by private, insurance marketplace control within our well established private health insurance and medical practitioner systems. Our Supreme Court upheld a time honored deference to state's rights by denying the ACA required state Medicaid expansion to enroll millions of health uninsured citizens. The court upheld the mandated insurance enrollment with tax penalties. This reflects understanding that health care, like other human needs, can never be entirely free and we all need to pay some so that our health insurance system can remain sustainable. Thirty-six of our 50 states have chosen to expand Medicaid with millions now happy at last to have health insurance. Such states receive federal funding for these increased costs with promise within the ACA that it will continue at no less than 90% for several years.

As our governor and legislature work through the many challenges of Alaska Medicaid reform and expansion, I hope they come to see expansion as a long term

investment for our states economic as well as basic societal health and education opportunity. The recent outbreaks of Measles are but one example of widespread preventive health and disease ignorance. Education and Public Health professionals continue to demonstrate how improved health education and increased use of preventive medicine pay significant dividends. They remind us how much our economic future depends on graduating more students with the critical science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) skills to compete with other states and nations. They also challenge us to invest in expanding medical homes for all our children so that easily treatable conditions in early stages do not fester and worsen to more expensive Emergency Room and hospitalization costs. Prevention and early intervention are critical features of the ACA. Again, the ACA is not government controlled socialized medicine. It is a 21st century investment in both education and health.

Please think in long-term positive investment outcomes. Please support both reform and expansion for our Alaska Medicaid system.

Respectfully,

Mary W. Brown

cc: All Alaska legislators, Governor Walker,
Lt. Governor Mallott

Randy Ruaro

From: Bette Seaman <betteseaman@gci.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 10:09 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicaid expansion

Dear Senator Stedman,

I would like to share 3 things that are important to me.

First and foremost is expansion of Medicaid. Our little hospital in Homer doesn't have a choice as to whether to take risks. By law, anyone who walks through the doors must receive care regardless of the ability to pay. So the people taking the risk are you and I, tax payers of the city and the borough. Since I participate in discharge planning, I am aware of people every week who have no coverage and will probably have no ability to pay for their care.

I will give you one specific example from this fall, of a patient stuck in the donut hole, too rich for Medicaid, too poor for Federal subsidy for healthcare. Since I am a diabetes educator, I will draw from one of those situations.

A young woman, about 24, took a leap of faith and moved from Anchorage to Homer to live with her boyfriend. She got a ½ time job that is expected to become full time this spring. Everything was going well. Then she started not feeling well, did not go to doctor since she had no health care, finally ended up in the ER with diabetic ketoacidosis. This is a life-threatening situation that requires admission to an ICU bed, insulin drip and careful management of electrolytes. She was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. She now requires 2 kinds of insulin every day or she will die. She will need to check her blood glucose 6-10 times a day to make sure her glucose is not too high or low. She will need doctor's appointments. She will need education. Our diabetes ed program applied for a grant from the hospital Foundation, and they pay for education for underinsured individuals, so at least we were able to educate her. A vial of insulin costs \$200. We found a mail order source for a less expensive meter and strips, they will cost about \$50-\$100 a month. If she doesn't do these things, her risk for the bad consequences of high blood glucose are much higher, things like retinopathy (and blindness), nephropathy (and dialysis). Etc. Her ICU and ER bills must be well into the thousands. She will probably be on a payment plan, and then at some point the hospital (you and I) will have to write off this bill.

There are many people in this situation. It is so demoralizing not to be able to pay your bills. I hate it when a carpenter or fisherman is admitted with a broken bone that requires surgery to stabilize, and all he is worried about is how is he going to pay the bill, especially now that he has a broken bone and can't work. These are people that do work, but they are young and don't make much money yet.

The other issues are public radio and daylight savings. I believe intelligent, local radio is very important to every community in Alaska, and worthy of funding! As far as Daylight Savings, I hate it! I don't even care whether we choose to be always 4 hours from East Coast or always on Hawaii time; either would be great!

Thank you for all the time and energy to give to us. I really do appreciate it.
Bette Seaman, RDN, CDE

Randy Ruaro

From: Michael Chambers <chambones@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 10:47 AM
To: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bill Stoltze; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Medicaid Expansion

From: chambones@hotmail.com
To: chambones@hotmail.com
Subject: Medicaid Expansion
Date: Mon, 9 Mar 2015 10:42:00 -0800

Dear Legislators,

An open discussion regarding the expansion of Medicaid and Indian Health Services fundings.

It has come to my attention that the legislature is seriously considering to accept the expansion of Medicaid.

Allow me to ask some questions if I may...

1. Do you know the amount the State of Alaska will be forced to pay based on the shortfall?
2. Do you know the amount the State of Alaska will pay in two years when this program goes to 90% funded?
3. Do you know the rate of decrease over the next ten years regarding the federal governments commitment?
4. Do you know the penalty of "opting out" if this program becomes economically unsustainable at a state level.
5. What additional revenues are you planning in order to meet the increased obligations?
6. Do you know this program may have an adverse effect on employers dropping healthcare on employees who qualify?
7. Do you know the rate Medicaid will pay and if medical institutions and doctors will accept patients at a lower level of reimbursement?
8. Are you aware of the substantial administrative costs to implement such program?

Do you also know...

The Indian Health services through the BIA is currently being funded at approximately 55%. The inability of the federal government to fully fund the Indian Health Services obligation is putting massive pressure on ANMC. They are unable to field the personnel they need so many doctors and nurses in their organization are met with massive overtime and are not compensated at the level of other health services in the area. ANMC is having a very difficult time recruiting and training personnel to stay in their ranks mostly due to the shortcomings of funding through Indian Health Services.

Additionally, Medicaid expansion into the native community is a mechanism to absorb the Indian Health Services into Obamacare.

It is a method for the administration to drive up the numbers in order to present the program as a more viable and necessary program.

I feel it would be far more advantageous for the State of Alaska to demand that the Federal Government fund their own programs

fully before they come calling with their own programs which are substantially suspect.

It is my considered opinion that expanding Medicaid in Alaska is a short sighted gain for a long term loss.

Within a very short period of time

legislators will be forced to legislate revenues to comply to the federal mandate of matching funds. It will be economically impossible to

"opt out." Your term in office may recede into the library of the legislature, but if you legislate Medicaid, your actions will remain with all Alaskans

in perpetuity. What will be your legacy?

Michael Chambers

Chair-Alaska Libertarian Party

Chair- United For Liberty

Alaska resident - 1975

Randy Ruaro

From: Emily Barker <greenesque@ymail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2015 9:43 AM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bill Stoltze; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: In consideration of the Medicaid Expansion

Hello.

My name is Emily Webb. I am 22 years old. I am a hardworking stay at home mom whose husband works a job at a small aviation business. He makes less than \$1000 per month. The company is so small that we do not get benefits.

My father is a state retiree, having served as a Firefighter, Fire chief, and Fire Training Administrator for 30 years. My mother is a nurse at the Alaska Native Medical Center, serving in their Emergency room saving countless lives and helping their massive transition over to electronic charting.

I was raised well, but due to the Alaskan darkness, was diagnosed with seasonal affective disorder in my teens. Winter depression is crippling to me as my brain struggles to create the necessary hormones needed to function. Under ideal circumstances, I can manage my depression with counselling and access to psychiatric medication. This year, however, i cannot do this. I have no medical access.

I am uninsured.

After I quit school in order to raise my 14 month old daughter, despite being under 26, my parents medical insurance refused to cover me after I went below full time student status. The insurance company can do this because they were grandfathered into the system via the Alaskan Legislature. They are not required to keep me on their policy even though the laws should say otherwise.

When we applied for financial aid with insurance, my family is also considered **too poor** to qualify for federal subsidies in order to aid us in obtaining insurance. We were instead given a letter stating that we cannot be fined for lack of insurance. That is nice that we wont be fined, but that still leaves me, a young mother of a one year old baby girl, lacking in basic medical access due to finances.

When we applied for medicaid, we were denied because I am an adult without disability who is not pregnant.

I have slipped through the cracks. Without the medicaid expansion, if anything were to happen, if I were to get into a car accident or break my leg or get ill, my family could not afford it. The debt would be crippling to our family. We have already encountered situations where i have refused needed care due to finances. I live in a constant state of fear that something will happen to me, driving our family into massive debt or rendering me unable to care for my baby girl. That anxiety lingers in my mind every day.

My husband's job has us living in Income based housing as he finishes his Air Traffic Control degree and awaits to be hired by the FAA. We are not just slumming around. We live in poverty now, but our overall life plan has us giving back. We do not believe in my obtaining a job personally due to what we view as appropriate

parenting practices. Additionally, the jobs that I am most qualified for are jobs that would pay me the same as quality childcare would cost, so we opt for me to stay home.

My family is a young family that works hard in order to better our situation. We work hard toward education and the betterment of our selves. My husband is currently applying for the FAA this month as an Air Traffic Controller, but even if he gets hired, there are months of waiting and worrying ahead until he can be taken on for training. We have slipped through the cracks. We are in a loophole that needs to be closed. We desperately urge you to consider the medicaid expansion seriously so that if anything were to happen, we would not need to be afraid of seeking medical attention.

My life, the life of a 22 year old young mother, is on the line.

Emily

Randy Ruaro

From: Nancy Courtney <cabowabo1@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 7:14 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Rep. Mike Chenault
Cc: Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen.Cathy.Geissel@akleg.gov; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen.Leslie.McGuire@akleg.gov; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bill Stoltze; Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Rep. Matt Claman; Rep.Jim.Glover@akleg.gov; Rep. Harriet Drummond; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. Lynn Gattis; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Bob Herron; Rep. Shelley Hughes; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Andy Josephson; Rep. Scott Kawasaki; Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Sam Kito; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Charisse Millett; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Lora Reinbold; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Louise Stutes; Rep. David Talerico; Rep. Geran Tarr; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Cathy Tilton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Liz Vazquez; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Adam Wool; bill.walker@alaska.gov; val.davidson@alaska.gov
Subject: Public Comment in support of Medicaid Expansion

March 12, 2015

The Honorable Kevin Meyer
President, Alaska State Senate

The Honorable Mike Chenault
Speaker, Alaska State House

Dear President Meyer and Speaker Chenault,

I am writing in support of Medicaid expansion in Alaska. In these times of severe budget shortfalls and unwanted but necessary budget cuts, Medicaid expansion is a win-win for all Alaskans.

As you know, the federal match for expansion is 100% through calendar year 2016. The only funds the State will need to expend are implementation funds, which I understand the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority has committed to pay the first year. The State of Alaska would be egregiously remiss to forgo 100% federal matching funds to bring health care coverage to over 40,000 of Alaska's working poor.

In watching the legislative debate on Medicaid expansion, a main concern legislators have is that the federal government will break its promise of 100%, 95%, 94%, 93% and 90% match over the next five years. I find it odd that the State of Alaska does not waiver to accept 90% federal highway matching funds to build our highways without fear of losing the match funding. Why should we fear losing similar federal match funding for health care? And if the federal government were to break its commitment, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services will have mechanisms in place to end the expansion program and the State will not be left holding the bag to fund the program.

In closing, one of Governor Walker's primary commitments is to expand Medicaid so that over 40,000 of Alaska's working poor can get health care coverage. A majority of Alaskans voted for Governor Walker to lead our state because of his commitment to expand Medicaid. Alaska's legislators are elected to serve and do what's best for all Alaskans and you should support Medicaid expansion as the majority of Alaskans who voted Governor Walker into office do.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical matter that will benefit the health and economy for all Alaskans. I respectfully request your vote in support of Medicaid expansion.

Nancy Courtney

5001 Pond Vista Drive, Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 321-2285; cabowabo1@gci.net

Senate District Q/House District 34

cc: Senate and House Legislators

Governor Walker

Commissioner Davidson

Randy Ruaro

From: Hilary Morgan <hmorgan@ywcaak.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2015 10:49 AM
To: Hilary Morgan
Subject: Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion
Attachments: Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion FINAL.docx

Dear Governor Walker, Lieutenant Governor Mallott, Commissioner Davidson, and Alaska State Legislators,

Please accept this letter of support of Medicaid expansion in the State of Alaska from the Anchorage Human and Social Services Executive Directors.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Hilary Morgan, CEO
YWCA Alaska
Ph. 907-644-9601

PICK.CLICK.GIVE.

Consider choosing YWCA Alaska when you
apply for your 2015 PFD!

Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion

by Anchorage Human and Social Services Executive Directors

February, 2015

Whereas, the health and wellness of Alaskans is a Constitutional priority and is vital to each individual, family, community and our entire State;

Whereas, Alaskans have identified 25 Leading Health Priorities providing a science-based framework to guide efforts toward improving health and ensuring health equity for all Alaskans which includes access to health care;

Whereas, an estimated 40,000 of the most vulnerable Alaskans are uninsured and potentially eligible for Medicaid (*Source: Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. Healthier Alaskans Create a Healthier State Economy. Anchorage, AK, 2013.*);

Whereas, the State of Alaska budget deficit, due to significantly lower oil prices and declining oil production, calls for all Alaskans to work together to achieve consensus on priorities, long term financial sustainability, program performance and leveraging revenue sources;

Whereas, routine preventive care contributes to life time good health; early treatment of illness and injury make it more likely for an individual to regain their health; and, treatment in an Emergency Room is most expensive;

Whereas, access to primary care and medication is particularly significant for individuals with chronic disease such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease; and Medicaid patients are 15% more likely to be tested than uninsured. Medicaid beneficiaries with heart disease are twice as likely to take their medication appropriately, compared to those who are uninsured, and are also more likely to have their blood pressure controlled and to have been checked for high cholesterol compared to the uninsured. [*Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, Medicaid: An Important Source of Health Care Coverage for Patients with Chronic Disease.*];

Whereas, lack of health insurance contributes to family stress and financial instability including 154,900 Alaskans served annually by the Food Bank of Alaska network of over 300 partners:

- 56% making choices between medications/meals
- 26% of households report at least one member with diabetes
- 47% of households report at least one member with high blood pressure
- 34% have no health insurance of any kind, including Medicaid
- 56% of households report having unpaid medical bills
- 53% of clients served have incomes that are at or below the federal poverty level (\$15,510 or less for household of two)
- 27% have incomes between \$1-\$10,000 annually; 29% have incomes of \$10,001-\$20,000 annually

Whereas, good health and wellness are supporting factors in children staying and succeeding in school; adults getting and keeping a job; and, in healthy, competitive communities;

Whereas, the State of Alaska has an opportunity now to develop an Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program which meets the needs of vulnerable Alaskans, communities and Alaska as well as being an effective component of the Alaska health care system and is funded by the Federal government at least at 90% and has the potential to provide additional offsets to program expansion administration;

Whereas, Medicaid Expansion would provide a revenue stream covering a portion of the health care costs of vulnerable Alaskans and in doing so support financial stability and organization sustainability of the Alaska health safety net: community health centers, community mental health centers, tribal clinics, rural hospitals, urban hospitals;

Whereas, in FY2014, as partners in caring for vulnerable Alaskans, coalition members contributed directly to customer health or provided supports to increase the likelihood of short term and lifelong health and wellness. We

- provided 18,805 customers health care services 26,529 customers health screenings; 68,841 customers health education; \$17,690,505 donated logistical or financial assistance; 14,848 with a patient centered medical home; and, 31,793 or 84% of customers surveyed demonstrated/reported healthy behaviors and 8,073 or 84% met the terms of their health treatment plan; and,
- Served 994,312 meals/snacks/ box lunches; sheltered 17,103 homeless individuals/families; provided 24,695 households prevention services and/or income boosts; distributed 540,037 pounds of food; and 1,484 or 64% of participating customers demonstrating improved coping skills, better ability to return to daily life, *ability to return to work and/or home after completing crime or violence prevention and/or stabilization programs and 1,532 or 70% of participating customers had increased self-sufficiency levels after exiting a program operating in the community; and,*
- *1,037 children 0-5 screenings; 1,684 children provided with quality care and education services; 109,165 free books distributed to children 0-5; and, 2,167 or 89% of participating parents/families had increased knowledge of parenting and child development*
- 20,948 of youth participating in activities that promote youth development; 196 or 67% participating youth decreasing substance use; 6,000 or 69% youth more engaged with education, learning and school; and, 10,860 or 74% youth with conflict resolution skills *(Note: the information above is a sample based on data provided is based on annual reporting by partner agencies to United Way of Anchorage.); and,*
- We, our partners, business people, teachers, students and parents have been working together to increase the Anchorage School District graduation to 90% by the year 2020, and have together increased graduation rates from 59% in 2005 to 74% in 2014 which contributes as a positive determinant in lifelong health.

Therefore, we the undersigned non-profits support the following Medicaid Expansion strategies:

- Approve Medicaid Expansion
- Fix and clear backlogs for
 - the State of Alaska Medicaid eligibility determination system, Alaska's Resource for Integrated Eligibility Services (ARIES), and;
 - the payment system, Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) prior to Medicaid Expansion
- Accept federal money for Medicaid Expansion
- Approve supplemental funding for Medicaid Expansion administration

And;

Commit to being partners in this effort by continuing to care for vulnerable Alaskans and by working with the Governor, State of Alaska Legislature, the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, the business community and other stakeholders to develop a sustainable Alaska Medicaid Expansion Program.

Hilary A. Morgan, Co-Chair

CEO, YWCA Alaska

Signatories

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, Inc. (AWAIC)

AK Child & Family

Alaska Injury Prevention Center

Alison Kear, Chief Executive Officer, Covenant House Alaska

American Diabetes Association

Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center

Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC)

Barbara Dubovich, Chief Executive Officer, Camp Fire USA Alaska Council

CCS Early Learning

Food Bank of Alaska

Jerry A. Jenkins, Chief Executive Officer, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services (and Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services)

Lisa Aquino, Executive Director, Catholic Social Services

Francine Harbor, NAMI

Nine Star Education and Employment Services

Pauline P. Smith, Executive Director, Alaska Literacy Program

RurAL CAP

Stephanie Berglund, CEO, thread

Volunteers of America Alaska

YWCA Alaska

Randy Ruaro

From: Michele Brown <mbrown@ak.org>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 10:14 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Support of Medication Expansion

Dear Senator Stedman,

The time for Medicaid Expansion is now. The reasons to do so are well known:

- **People:** Nearly 42,000 uninsured Alaskans are eligible for basic health care coverage
- **Revenue:** \$1.1 Billion in new Federal revenue for Alaska
- **Jobs:** Up to 4,000 new jobs
- **Wages:** \$1.2 Billion in more in wages and salaries

The reasons against doing so are speculative, and can be addressed when and if they occur.


In the meantime, Alaska is losing out on substantial revenue. The 100% federal contribution is time-bound. Alaska has already lost funds for calendar year 2014 and the first quarter of 2015. We have also lost job growth and health care and services for thousands of Alaskans. Yet, Alaskans are already paying into the national system without receiving the full benefits.

The Healthy Alaskans 2020 report sets a priority to reduce the percentage of adults reporting that they could not afford to see a doctor in the last 12 months. This is a priority because access to health care is a critical societal infrastructure for a high functioning workforce and community. Alaska routinely invests in capital infrastructure expenditures even when future funding is speculative. Unlike road projects, which could be a waste of resources if the expected federal contribution was not fulfilled, access to health care is immediately important and valuable. Even if the worst were to happen and Medicaid expansion eligibility were restricted in the future, it is still better to have had short term health care.

Medicaid Expansion provides downward pressure on health care costs by lowering uncompensated care and helps all Alaskans. This is critical to ensure that the health infrastructure currently provided around the state remains strong and affordable to other users.

Please act now to authorize Medicaid expansion. We offer you our partnership in helping improve health and quality of life outcomes for Alaskans. Together, we can join forces and leverage resources around a shared vision for Alaskans to lead stable, healthy, and safe lives.

Best regards,



Michele Brown / President / United Way of Anchorage

701 W. 8th Avenue, Suite 230, Anchorage, AK 99501 / P: 907.263.3820 / F: 907.263.3801

[Visit us at liveunitedanc.org](http://liveunitedanc.org) / [Like us on Facebook](#)



United Way of Anchorage



Randy Ruaro

From: Janice Hotch <janice.hotch@ak.net>
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2015 2:03 PM
To: Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. Bill Stoltze; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Cc: kaaxkwhei@gmail.com; Edward Hotch; rpeteron@ccthita.org; 'Barbara Fujimoto'; 'Alice Bagoyo'; 'Andrea Cadiante-Laiti'; 'Andrea Cesar'; Andy Ebona; 'Bill Martin'; 'Debra O'Gara'; 'Dionne Cadiante-Laiti'; 'Doug Chilton'; 'Ed Kunz'; Ella Bennett; 'Ernie Hillman'; 'evelyn myers'; 'Gerald & Arlene Bennett'; gjackson46@gci.net; 'Gloria Sarabia'; 'Harold Houston'; 'Harold Jacobs'; 'Harold Martin'; 'Jacqueline Johnson Pata'; 'James Jack Sr.'; 'Janice Hotch'; Jerry Bennett; 'John Martin'; jojo6456@netscape.net; 'Jon Duncan'; 'Judy Helgesen'; koowaal@gmail.com; 'Lance Twitchell'; Leona Santiago; lkadinger@thrha.org; 'Michaelyn Kunz'; 'Mick Beasley'; 'Mike Corpuz'; nd10001d@aol.com; 'Norman Sarabia'; 'Ozzie Sheakley'; 'Patricia Walker'; Patricia Walker; 'Royal Hill'; 'Sandra Cross'; 'Selena Beierly'; 'Selina Everson'; 'Sue Ann Lindoff'; 'Susitna King'; 'Valerie'
Subject: Medicaid Expansion
Attachments: JTHCC Medicaid Expansion 02-2015.pdf

Honorable Senators:

Last night, the Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council held its regular meeting and annual meeting in Juneau at our community hall located at 3235 Hospital Drive, and passed the attached JTHCC Resolution 02-2015 entitled: A Resolution Urging the Alaska Legislature to Expand Medicaid Coverage to Improve the Health of Alaskans and to Improve the Alaskan Economy.

As you will see in the resolution, the Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council is a federally recognized tribal political subdivision and subordinate entity of the Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. The Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council represents 6,746 tribal members of Tlingit and Haida descent living in the greater City and Borough of Juneau.

Medicaid Expansion is very important to our tribal members and we would like to see the Legislature approve the legislation that will provide Medicaid Expansion coverage for the underserved tribal members as well as all Alaskans. We believe expanding Medicaid will enable coverage for those underserved who have fallen through – and in some cases, have fallen out of the system entirely.

Thank you for your time, your service and on behalf of the 6,746 tribal members in the greater city and borough of Juneau, we appreciate your consideration of our attached resolution. If you feel letters from individuals

would have a bigger impact, please advise, and I will be most happy to rally our tribal members to inundate the Representatives with individual letters urging your support of Medicaid Expansion.

Sincerely,

Janice L Hotch, President

Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council

3235 Hospital Drive, Juneau, AK 99801

janice.hotch@ak.net

mobile: 907.723.8869



Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council
P.O. Box 020770, Juneau, Alaska 99802
Physically located at: 3235 Hospital Drive, Juneau, AK 99801

A T & H Community of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska



Resolution 02-2015

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID
COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE
ALASKAN ECONOMY**

WHEREAS, Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council) is a federally recognized tribe of more than 28,000 tribal citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council (JTHCC) is a federally recognized tribal political subdivision and subordinate entity of Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. The JTHCC tribal member enrollment as of January 2015 is 6,746;

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid reform and expansion will provide for underserved tribal members: children in need of aid, pregnancies and birthing, people in prisons, mentally ill persons and veterans; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

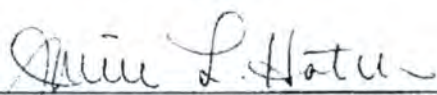
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Juneau Tlingit & Haida Community Council strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

Passed and approved this __12th__ day of March 2015, at Juneau, Alaska.

APPROVED DISAPPROVED TABLED

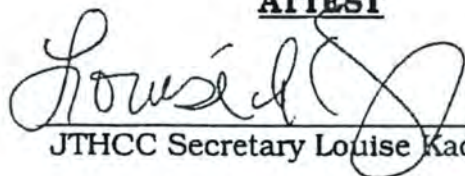
26 AYES NAYS 19 ABSENT

CERTIFY



JTHCC President Janice L Hotch

ATTEST



JTHCC Secretary Louise Kadinger

Randy Ruaro

From: Alaska Common Ground <info@akcommonground.org>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 1:12 PM
To: Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Anna MacKinnon; Sen. Bert Stedman; Sen. Berta Gardner; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Charlie Huggins; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Donny Olson; Sen. Gary Stevens; Sen. John Coghill; Sen. Johnny Ellis; Sen. Kevin Meyer; Sen. Lesil McGuire; Sen. Lyman Hoffman; Sen. Mia Costello; Sen. Mike Dunleavy; Sen. Pete Kelly; Sen. Peter Micciche; Senator.Stolze.Bill@akleg.gov
Subject: Letter in support of expanding medicaid
Attachments: Medicaid support letter.pdf

March 19, 2015

Dear Senators and Representatives:

On March 18, 2015 the Board of Directors of Alaska Common Ground voted to express their support for the expansion of Medicaid. This letter is to communicate our support to each of you.

Our reasons are twofold:

First, Medicaid expansion will have a **positive fiscal impact** at a time when it is greatly needed. As your economists have explained, the infusion of new money into the state will have multiple positive ripple effects, benefiting not just the health care industry, but other businesses, employees and families.

Secondly, and most importantly, many of our fellow citizens are suffering and dying because they cannot afford health care without insurance. Other than last minute, often too late, emergency treatment, they do not have care. As the nun from Anchorage Faith & Action Congregations Together (AFACT) expressed so well, we all have a **moral imperative to be our brother's keepers**.

In conclusion, **we want to emphasize that your approval of Medicaid must happen this session or Alaska will lose another whole year of potential economic and social benefits.**

Thank you for your service for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Mary Lu Harle

Acting Chair, Board of Directors

Alaska Common Ground

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Alaska Common Ground

An Engaged Alaskan Democracy

www.akcommonground.org



ALASKA COMMON GROUND
P.O. Box 241672 • Anchorage, AK 99524-1672 •
www.akcommonground.org

March 19, 2015

**BOARD OF
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info@akcommonground.org

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Our reasons are twofold:

First, Medicaid expansion will have a **positive fiscal impact** at a time when it is greatly needed. As your economists have explained, the infusion of new money into the state will have multiple positive ripple effects, benefiting not just the health care industry, but other businesses, employees and families.

Secondly, and most importantly, many of our fellow citizens are suffering and dying because they cannot afford health care without insurance. Other than last minute, often too late, emergency treatment, they do not have care. As the nun from Anchorage Faith & Action Congregations Together (AFACT) expressed so well, we all have a **moral imperative to be our brother's keepers.**

In conclusion, **we want to emphasize that your approval of Medicaid must happen this session or Alaska will lose another whole year of potential economic and social benefits.**

Thank you for your service for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Mary Lu Harle
Acting Chair, Board of Directors
Alaska Common Ground

Randy Ruaro

From: E CFigus <ecfigus@alaska.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2015 8:57 AM
Subject: Medicaid reform

Dear HSS Committee Chairs and Members,

I am a Juneau resident, and a graduate student at UAF. I am 28 and moved to Juneau three years ago. I love living in Alaska, and plan to live here for the rest of my life. As I near a time in my life when I plan to start my own family, I am concerned about the accessibility of high quality health care to all Alaskans.

I am writing to urge you to support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill, SB 78. I hope that you consider the health of all Alaskans during the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Figus



March 11, 2015

The Honorable Bert Stedman
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

MAR 16 2015

Dear Senator Stedman:

The Aleutian Housing Authority (AHA) is the Tribally Designated Housing Entity for the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Region of Alaska. Our mission is, in part, to contribute to the building of healthy, stable and sustainable communities throughout our region. AHA strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid in July 2015, or as soon as possible for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which will bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years. We should view Medicaid expansion as an economic driver that will positively impact our state's economy as we are faced with declining oil prices and the resulting budget challenges.

In addition to new federal revenue, savings to the state budget have also been identified in the Department of Corrections, the Chronic and Acute Medical Assistance (CAMA) Program and behavioral health grants. In FY2016, the state would realize \$6.1 million in savings. Medicaid expansion is healthy for Alaskans and healthy for the state's budget. We encourage the continued internal evaluation to identify other potential savings and offsets attributable to expansion and reform.

Federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond. We support Governor Walker's position that Alaska's participation is contingent on the federal match remaining at 90%.

Medicaid expansion may serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform and we support these discussions. We are pleased to hear that the Department of Health and Human Services has issued an RFP for technical assistance related to reform efforts. Though reform of the current Medicaid program should be of utmost importance, reform efforts should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion.

The Aleutian Housing Authority endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing that we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Duame", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan Duame
Executive Director



8 March 2015

Senator Bert Stedman
State Capitol Building, Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

MAR 16 2015

Dear Senator Stedman:

Following are recommendations addressing four of five distinct populations/groups of Alaskans based on the lens of where I sit as the leader of the community behavioral health services in Anchorage and Fairbanks. The populations are severely emotionally disturbed children; transitional aged youth; severely mentally ill adults; adults with substance use disorders (SUD) and persons with Alzheimer's or related dementia. Comments will exclude Alzheimer's as it is covered under Senior and Disability Services and recovery is not an expectation at this time.

The focus will be on behavioral health and specifically addressing severely emotionally disturbed children (SED); transitional aged youth (TAY); severely mentally ill (SMI) adults and adults with substance use disorders (SUD) which is often in conjunction with serious mental illness. These are often referred to as the 'priority populations' as they are considered vulnerable/high risk populations. These have been chosen due to the potential for recovery from the impacts of mental illness and substance use/addiction as well as being fully aware of the cost of not addressing their issues.

Couched in several reports listed at the end of this letter are opportunities in my opinion to transform the current behavioral health care system. The proposed opportunities recognize and endorse reducing the financial burden to the State of Alaska; increasing access to care; increasing effectiveness and increasing provider resiliency.

Some items will require political will. Some will require defining expectations of various governmental bodies in Alaska, various communities, populations and healthcare providers. Alignment of expectations and resources will be part of determining the political will. The vastness and diversity of Alaska also requires the ability to use novel approaches based on local/regional nuances, expectations and resources.

Premise: People with untreated or undertreated behavioral issues are expensive. The data indicates they gravitate to high cost locations. It can be acute psychiatric and long term residential care or Juvenile Justice for children and youth. It is Department of Corrections, emergency rooms as well as acute psychiatric services for adults. This does not include law enforcement and emergency responders who normally get the first call. This premise does not take into consideration the other health care costs impacts including injuries and illnesses.

Following are recommendations with partial justifications including cost savings/shifting strategies.

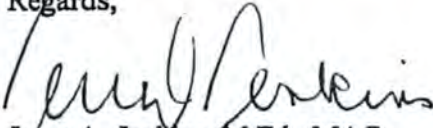
Recommendations:

1. Expand and repackage Medicaid, particularly for the behavioral health priority populations. Expanding allows persons exiting Department of Corrections to have immediate access to health insurance. The potential savings for DOC is on the Assess, Plan, Identify and Coordinate (APIC) funding. APIC currently supports mental health services for a period of time for SMI exiting DOC.
2. Use Permanent Fund Dividend for helping to offset the cost of Medicaid as it is a high value health insurance.
3. Identify and manage the high utilizers of behavioral health care Medicaid. Focus on asking why there is such a level of utilization and what can be done differently to reduce. If the questions and science are not pursued, the results will likely remain the same. One reason for this recommendation is a Community Mental Health Center Medicaid expenditures report that indicated that 10% of adults accounted for 69% of expenditure while 14% of the youth accounted for 80% of expenditures. As the largest community based provider in the state knowing my daily average cost to serve hard cases is less than \$30, I think there are opportunities. This was evidenced in the Brings the Kids Home Initiative.
4. Pursue a Medicaid Waiver for the highest risk, highest need. The group will include those deemed not competent and not restorable and may be part of the previous group. The goal is identifying resources/strategies to address the behaviors that result in frequent DOC and/or Alaska Psychiatric Institute contact. Pursue behavioral health homes in the same manner as health homes. Recognized in this is the need to have standardized assessment instruments with which to determine needed level of care. Addiction treatment providers have it through the American Society of Addiction Medicine Patient Placement Criteria, aka, ASAM.
5. Repackage Behavioral Health Medicaid to where it can pay for housing which is medically necessary for persons in need of accommodations/supports. There are housing continuum models which accommodate where people are in the recovery process. The offset is the opportunity to move individuals currently supported by General Relief in Assisted Living Facilities to supported housing funded via Medicaid. Such housing should routinely evaluate barriers that keep people from moving into independent living. Along with this, I fully recognize the need for expanding safe, affordable and accommodating housing options. That is a discussion for another day.
6. Pursue an exemption from the federal Institute of Mental Disease (IMD) Exclusion. This could be part of a Medicaid Waiver request. The purpose is to permit substance abuse providers and acute care providers with more than 16 beds to bill Medicaid. One off set here will be reducing the transportation costs incurred when there is not access to acute psychiatric beds in Juneau or Fairbanks resulting in transfer to Anchorage to the Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API). This could also be a funding mechanism for API. As noted, it also allows substance abuse treatment centers to access Medicaid resulting in an opportunity to reduce General Fund expenditures. In a related matter, devise/promote mechanisms whereby non-Indian Health Services providers can subcontract with Alaska Native providers to provide services through IHS entities. This increases the Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP), access and promotes integrated care.

7. Recognize that alcohol use is a public health issue in Alaska. Tobacco is currently recognized and use has dropped. A similar approach with alcohol could have phenomenal impacts at reducing crime, child abuse, domestic violence and behavioral health costs.
8. Last, share lessons learned. One example is promoting trauma informed care. Data indicates many of the individuals utilizing SED, TAY, SMI and SUD services have extensive trauma/adverse childhood/life events. There is also evidence that behavioral health services become much more effective when the impact of past events is considered on individuals. This is an evolving area of science that has great potential at improving overall health in Alaska.

Senator Stedman, thank you for your time and considerations. I will close restating I think the previous are part of the opportunities at reducing the financial burden to the State of Alaska; increasing access to care; increasing effectiveness and increasing provider resiliency.

Regards,



Jerry A. Jenkins, M.Ed., MAC
Chief Executive Officer

Abridged Listing of References:

1. Legislative Budget and Audit Committee Report Control Number 06-4544-97 dated September 1997
2. Options for Cost Savings, Medicaid Task Force, dated May 2011
3. An Analysis of the Impact of Medicaid Expansion in Alaska – Final Report – April 2013
4. FY2014 DHSS Budget Overview, Pages 89-160
5. 2015 Recidivism Reduction Plan: Cost Effective Solutions to Slow Prison Population Growth and Reduce Recidivism.
6. Quick review of IMD – 42 USC 1396d(a) and(i) and http://www2.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Issue_Spotlights&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=44050
7. Adverse Childhood Events Study quick references:
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>
<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/findings.html>

Randy Ruaro

From: Dennis Gall <gall_dennis@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 7:48 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicare

Hello...

I am writing today to urge you to move forward with the governor's plan to expand Medicare, without further delay. This is a pragmatic and well thought out decision that is good for the health of Alaskan's, and also for the Alaskan economy, with state costs off set by savings in medical expenses that the State and medical providers currently are uncompensated for. This just really makes good practical sense. I understand that state government faces tremendous financial difficulties, but all things considered this proposal should be revenue neutral for state government while infusing millions of dollars into the state economy.

Sincerely,
Dennis Gall

Randy Ruaro

From: Lindsay Duckworth <lduckworth@peacehealth.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 3:11 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Duckworth
877 Jackson St
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Randy Ruaro

From: Lynn Carter <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 1:30 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help close the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care, resulting in less expensive emergency room visits. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost.

Access to health care enables people to stay healthy and join or stay in the workforce. Individual Alaskans who earn \$20,314 (about \$9.76 an hour) a year or less, or married couples earning a combined \$27,490 a year or less qualify for Medicaid expansion. Medicaid gives them the freedom to work for a living without worrying about whether an unpreventable accident or illness will make them bankrupt.

I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lynn
690 S Yorktown Dr Apt 18
Ketchikan, AK 99901
aknana12345@yahoo.com

Randy Ruaro

From: Business Manager <larryb@gci.net>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 2:29 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicaid expansion
Attachments: Senator Bert Stedman.pdf

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please accept the attached letter and Catholic Community Service Board of Directors' Resolution #15-12 as Catholic Community Service's support of Medicaid expansion.

Catholic Community Service provides a variety of services throughout Southeast Alaska, including services to seniors, services to children and families, and hospice and home care. It is clear that some of the agency's clients receiving these services and their clients would benefit from Medicaid expansion.

Thank you for your consideration of our support of expansion.



March 23, 2015

Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska State Senate
120 4th Street, Room 3
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Stedman:

During its March 18 meeting, the Catholic Community Service (CCS) Board of Directors approved Resolution #15-12, "A Resolution urging the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid coverage to improve the health of Alaskans and to improve the Alaskan economy." That resolution, signed by Board President John Greely, is attached.

Catholic Community Service supports efforts to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans, in particular for the vulnerable Alaskans who CCS serves.

Nearly 42,000 of our fellow Alaskans will be eligible for health coverage under Medicaid expansion. Expansion improves health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventative and primary care access, and providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.

There are significant economic benefits associated with Medicaid expansion, which is expected to bring more than \$1 billion in new federal revenue to our state, 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity over the first five years.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this issue. The mission of Catholic Community Service is "Strengthening families and individuals in Southeast Alaska, with dignity, care, and compassion. We believe our support of Medicaid expansion speaks to every element of our mission.

Sincerely,

Larry J. Bussone
Interim Executive Director

attachment



Catholic Community Service

**BOARD RESOLUTION
(#15-12)**

TITLE: A RESOLUTION URGING THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID COVERAGE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALASKANS AND TO IMPROVE THE ALASKAN ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, nearly 42,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors have the opportunity to gain health care coverage under expansion; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will improve health outcomes by reducing the number of uninsured Alaskans by half, improving preventive and primary care access, providing substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, and reducing the mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion brings over \$1 billion in new federal revenue into Alaska over the first five years; and

WHEREAS, studies project expansion will likely yield 4,000 new jobs, \$1.2 billion more in wages and salaries paid to Alaskans, and \$2.49 billion in increased economic activity throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, with expansion the State would save \$6.1 million in FY2016 by using federal funds to pay for health services currently paid for with state general funds; and,

WHEREAS, federal funds will pay for 100% of services provided to the expansion population through 2016 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, the State's continued participation is contingent upon maintaining the 90% match; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will significantly reduce the burden of uncompensated care, which was over \$90 million at non-tribal Alaska hospitals in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid expansion will serve as a catalyst for meaningful Medicaid reform; and

WHEREAS, leveraging the federal resources that come with expansion is the State's biggest opportunity to finance reform efforts; and

WHEREAS, the State has the option of various Medicaid expansion demonstration projects it may also consider as part of reform; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid funding has provided CCS and other non-profits the means to deliver needed medical, transportation, mental health, and nutrition services to Alaskans; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Catholic Community Service endorses Medicaid expansion, recognizing we all have an interest in ensuring that Alaskans are as productive as possible so they can contribute to our communities and economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Catholic Community Service strongly urges the Alaska Legislature to expand Medicaid for the benefit of Alaskans and the Alaska economy to take effect in July 2015 and, though reform efforts should be of utmost importance, this work should not delay health care coverage for those Alaskans who would be eligible for Medicaid under expansion. The undersigned President of Catholic Community Service hereby certifies that the CCS Board of Directors duly adopted this resolution on March 18, 2015.



John Greely
President - CCS Board of Directors

3-19-15
Date

Randy Ruaro

From: Kathy Inman <kathyi@sitkahospital.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 3:59 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help close the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care, resulting in less expensive emergency room visits. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost.

Access to health care enables people to stay healthy and join or stay in the workforce. Individual Alaskans who earn \$20,314 (about \$9.76 an hour) a year or less, or married couples earning a combined \$27,490 a year or less qualify for Medicaid expansion. Medicaid gives them the freedom to work for a living without worrying about whether an unpreventable accident or illness will make them bankrupt.

I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kathy Inman
1307 Edgumbe Dr
Sitka, AK 99835

Randy Ruaro

From: Lori Trout <ltrout@searhc.org>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2015 7:16 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

lori trout
PO BOX 293
KAKE, AK 99830

Randy Ruaro

From: Lisa Brooks <lbrooks@searhc.org>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2015 10:00 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

Lisa Brooks, RN
108 Toivo Cir
Sitka, AK 99835

Randy Ruaro

From: Marla Sanger <msanger@wmcmail.org>
Sent: Sunday, March 29, 2015 2:58 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help our communities by closing the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care to obtain the right level of care at the right time. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost. At Wrangell Medical Center we see first hand the consequences when members of our community are caught in the health insurance gap.

Access to health care enables people to stay healthy and join or stay in the workforce. Individual Alaskans who earn \$20,314 (about \$9.76 an hour) a year or less, or married couples earning a combined \$27,490 a year or less qualify for Medicaid expansion. Medicaid gives them the freedom to work for a living without worrying about whether an unpreventable accident or illness will make them bankrupt.

I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marla Sanger, CEO, Wrangell Medical Center PO Box 1646 Wrangell, AK 99929

Randy Ruaro

From: Kerry Lee Kruckenberg <lee1231980@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2015 1:02 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicaid expansion

I'm not going to type out some long detailed letter why it just makes sense to expand medicaid. THIS IS JUST SOMETHING ALASKA NEEDS TO DO!

Randy Ruaro

From: Mary Hlcoske <frieds4@gci.net>
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2015 12:13 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicaid Expansion

As a small business manager, I want to urge you to vote for Medicaid expansion. Our firm provides health care coverage for our employees, but we know that, the more people are covered by a plan, the more ALL of us benefit, even businesses which pay all or a portion of the premiums to cover their employees, because this will result in overall healthcare savings for the insurers, which in turn results in lower premiums for all of us. This fact was relayed by the insurance commissioner under Governor Parnell.

We also hear of way too many hard-working Alaskans whose employers do not provide healthcare coverage, but who do not qualify for Obamacare credits, so cannot afford health coverage – why should they be penalized?

Third, with the current fiscal crisis in Alaska, and the impending necessary cuts in the state budget, why would we turn our backs on this funding from the Federal government? It is the fiscally responsible thing to do.

Thank you for voting for all Alaskans.

Mary Hilcoske

Randy Ruaro

From: Doris Clarke <rclarke@sitkahospital.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 1:31 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

Doris Clarke
209 Moller Ave
Sitka, AK 99835

Randy Ruaro

From: Mark Tuccillo <drt@rescue-doc.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 1:35 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

Mark Tuccillo
PO Box 556
Petersburg, AK 99833

Randy Ruaro

From: Lynn Carter <user@votervoice.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 1:30 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help close the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care, resulting in less expensive emergency room visits. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost.

Access to health care enables people to stay healthy and join or stay in the workforce. Individual Alaskans who earn \$20,314 (about \$9.76 an hour) a year or less, or married couples earning a combined \$27,490 a year or less qualify for Medicaid expansion. Medicaid gives them the freedom to work for a living without worrying about whether an unpreventable accident or illness will make them bankrupt.

I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lynn
690 S Yorktown Dr Apt 18
Ketchikan, AK 99901
aknana12345@yahoo.com

Randy Ruaro

From: Wendy Weston <wweston@peacehealth.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 4:06 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it is good for our local economy. Medicaid expansion could bring \$145 million a year of new federal money into our state and create 4,000 jobs.

According to Jonathan King of Northern Economics, the state's economy is headed for recession and federal Medicaid expansion money is one of the few bright spots on the horizon that could help mitigate that recession.

In 2013, Alaska's hospitals had more than \$92 million in uncompensated care costs. This gets passed on to all of us through higher health insurance rates. In other states, Medicaid expansion has resulted in a 20-30% decrease in uncompensated care.

Please help grow Alaska's economy and keep our health care costs under control.

Sincerely,

Wendy Weston
82 Shoup St
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Randy Ruaro

From: Carolyn Corrao <ccorrao@peacehealth.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 11:49 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help close the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care, resulting in less expensive emergency room visits. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost.

Access to health care enables people to stay healthy and join or stay in the workforce. Individual Alaskans who earn \$20,314 (about \$9.76 an hour) a year or less, or married couples earning a combined \$27,490 a year or less qualify for Medicaid expansion. Medicaid gives them the freedom to work for a living without worrying about whether an unpreventable accident or illness will make them bankrupt.

I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carolyn H. Corrao
3316 Arnold Ave
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Randy Ruaro

From: Shannon Updike <supdike@peacehealth.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 11:23 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Close the health insurance gap

Dear Senator Stedman,

Please help close the health insurance gap in Alaska.

I support Medicaid expansion - which will provide more Alaskans health care for less state money by maximizing use of available federal dollars. When people have insurance they are able to access primary care, resulting in less expensive emergency room visits. People are also better able to manage chronic diseases, resulting in better health at a lower cost.

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I encourage you to support the governor's proposal to implement Medicaid expansion with smart reforms. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shannon Updike
1442 Water St
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Randy Ruaro

From: Cindi Lagoudakis <trembladakis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2015 11:41 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Comments on issues before the legislature

Dear Honorable Senator Stedman,

I wish to offer some comments to actions under consideration by the Legislature this session. I first would like to express my enthusiasm and support for the Governor's bill to establish reforms in Alaska's Medicaid program, and to accept federal funding that would expand Medicaid coverage to low income Alaskans. Insuring the health of all our citizens makes fiscal sense for the State, and it is the humane thing to do. I am pleased to know you are in support of this bill.

It was with some dismay, however, that I heard the news that the funding for the Knik Arm bridge and Juneau Access Road was not completely eliminated. These projects should not be deferred for one year--it is time to put them to bed for good. The problems with these projects far outweigh any imagined benefits. The Juneau Access Road in particular is environmental folly and engineering hubris. Aside from that, Juneau is ill-prepared for an influx of traffic, parking demands, emergency services impacts, increase in pressures on water treatment and waste disposal, and additional competition for restorative outdoor experiences free from crowds and noise that would result from road access.

However, there is another road project of more immediate concern to me and one that is very familiar to you--namely, the Kake - Petersburg Road. This past week, representatives of the Federal Highways Administration and the Alaska State Department of Transportation traveled to Petersburg and Kake to hold public meetings on this project. I was quite surprised to see that the State had not pulled or at least put the funding for this controversial project on hold. Other area residents had similar concerns.

Several years ago Andy Hughes of DOT had appeared here at a borough assembly meeting to provide an overview of the project. At that time, I noted that the State draft transportation plan, which was readily available on DOT's website, acknowledged that State and Federal road maintenance dollars would be declining in the future. At a public and recorded borough assembly meeting, I asked Mr. Hughes why he thought a low volume use road in an isolated location would rise in priority to successfully compete for limited maintenance dollars over other roads in the state, and he did not have a good answer. (A subsequent recorded meeting also captured Kake's concern for impacts to subsistence resources if the road was built. The audio of that meeting is archived and available on the Petersburg Borough website).

My surprise at the other night's presentation turned to incredulity when the presenters started going through statistics that were, frankly, completely removed from reality. For example, projections for Kake's use of the road had half the population using the proposed road every single day. That is fully half of every man, woman and child in town, every single day. The analyst said that many of those expected "trips" might just be someone stepping on the road but not actually traveling on it (but they were counted anyway). Monthly travel projections were even more imaginative. When the audience questioned the presentation, we were given a number of excuses and qualifications for the numbers, but no assurance that they would not be used to incorrectly justify building the road.

The only part of the presentation that made sense was the admission by Mr. Hughes that the analysis had determined what area residents had tried to tell transportation planners two years ago: namely, that there was no compelling need for the road. Analysis concluded that Kake residents don't consider Petersburg as a primary

destination for services, and building the road wouldn't make an appreciable change in travel patterns between the communities. I'm fairly certain that most people familiar with this project would concur with those conclusions.

If that had been the end of things, that would have been waste enough of state transportation funds. However, Mr. Hughes went on to say that DOT would now look to "refine the Purpose and Need for the project" to keep things moving along. This was not well-received by the audience in attendance, and is completely outside of my own past experience as a project planner and NEPA reviewer for the US Forest Service.

Normally, if a project is determined not to meet its Purpose and Need, an agency doesn't keep trying to find a way to complete the project in the face of facts. The determination to construct an unneeded road completely befuddles me, particularly because DOT, SEAPA and the USFS insist its real intent isn't to build a service road for a proposed power intertie project; and that the two projects shouldn't be analyzed as one. Stated simply, there does not appear to be any good alternative reason to construct this road.

Like many others, I'm not so certain the road and intertie really are separate projects. And if a maintenance road *is* the real intent, that would seem to be a misappropriation of federal transportation funds. In any case, acknowledging that this project will not meet the purpose intended should be reason alone to pull the funding for the project and redirect those funds to more critical programs.

I urge you to reconsider your support for the road project and truly scrutinize what it can and cannot provide to area residents. The fact that a trans-island road also relies on a shuttle ferry across Wrangell Narrows that is neither constructed nor funded makes this project wildly speculative at best. At its worst, it is a threat to Petersburg's potential access to mainline ferry services if the State pursues its long-term plan to remove our terminal and require Petersburg residents to drive to Kake to board the ferry. The economic impacts to Petersburg of such a change would be negative and would be significant.

In every sense of the word, this road project is a complete waste of limited State funds. The safety concerns, inconvenience and lack of compelling reason make this road completely unnecessary, and another potentially embarrassing "road to nowhere" project for the State. I urge you to redirect the funding allocated to this project toward needs that are far more pressing.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these comments.

Cindi Lagoudakis
Petersburg

*"How we walk with the broken,
speaks louder than how we sit with the great."*

3/20/2015

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am watching Governor Walker and Val Davidson make history. I am so proud to be part of the Alaskans who support their efforts for Medicaid Reform and Expansion. Senate Bill 78 and House Bill 148 reflect the hard work and integrity of Governor Walker, his administration and the majority of Alaskans.

The current Medicaid system desperately needs reform; there is so much documented waste. Many suggestions regarding ways to save money have been forwarded to previous administrations and have been ignored. Now is the time for everyone to stand up; reform a system that is wasting our tax dollars and implement a system that is more accessible to the working poor and utilize the federal match that our federal tax dollars are already paying for.

There is abuse of any system; whether it is private insurance or the current Medicaid system, Denali Care, Housing assistance; even the credit card expenses for some of those in the Department of Education. This effort doesn't guarantee it will continue, in fact, with the suggestions for reform; the opportunities to abuse the Medicaid system will be less than before.

I am respectfully requesting that you support the Medicaid Reform & Expansion Bill as transmitted by Governor Walker on 3/18/2015; without further delay. There are Alaskan lives and families depending on you to do the right thing.

Sincerely,



Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich
Proud Alaskan
Advocate for the Special Needs & Disabled Community

8411 Berry Patch Dr.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502
(907)223-4102
vendettis@aol.com

LIO Mat-Su

From: fran seager-boss <fseagerboss@gci.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2015 7:03 PM
To: LIO Mat-Su
Subject: Medicaid

It is hard to believe that the Alaskan legislative body continues to haggle over the implementation of Medicaid for the people of Alaska. The Republican Party's mantra is always about "Family Values" – In order for families to thrive they need shelter , food and health. Health is a basic need for families to thrive. It is atrocious that a western country of this size and wealth cannot provide basic health to our people. I strongly urge Alaskan State house and Senate to provide basic health services to Alaskans and accept and support the Medicaid Bill. –
Regards – Fran Seager-Boss

I support Medicaid Expansion because...

EVERYONE

Provides access to health care
A human right

Sincerely,
Hoges Coyle
NAME
3326 Wesleyan Dr
ADDRESS
Anch. AK 99508
CITY STATE ZIP



The Hon. Bert Siedman
State Capitol Building
120 4th Street, Room 3
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

APR 03 2015

I support Medicaid Expansion because...

A. access to healthcare is a human right
B. healthy people are productive people
C. preventative care is less expensive than illness

Sincerely,
Marie Rozak
NAME
1201 Menalida St, #303
ADDRESS
Anchorage, AK 99501
CITY STATE ZIP



The Hon. Sen. Bert Siedman
State Capitol Building
120 4th Street, Room 3
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

APR 03 2015

ANCHORAGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP • AMAZING GRACE LUTHERAN • BETHEL CHURCH
 "Is there no balm in Gilead?"
 FIRST EVANGELICAL COVENANT • CATHOLIC NATIVE MINISTRY • CENTRAL LUTHERAN • LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HOPE • CATHOLIC
 ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL • YOUTH MAKING A CHANGE
 ST. MARK LUTHERAN
 OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
 HISPANIC MINISTRY • ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC • GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN • NEW HOPE

"Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?"
 -From Jeremiah 8:22

Dear Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Amber Stubbs DPT

(Name)

3521 Alamosa Dr

(Address)

Anchorage AK 99502

(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau AK 99801

Dear Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Peder Reiland

(Name)

2700 W 31st

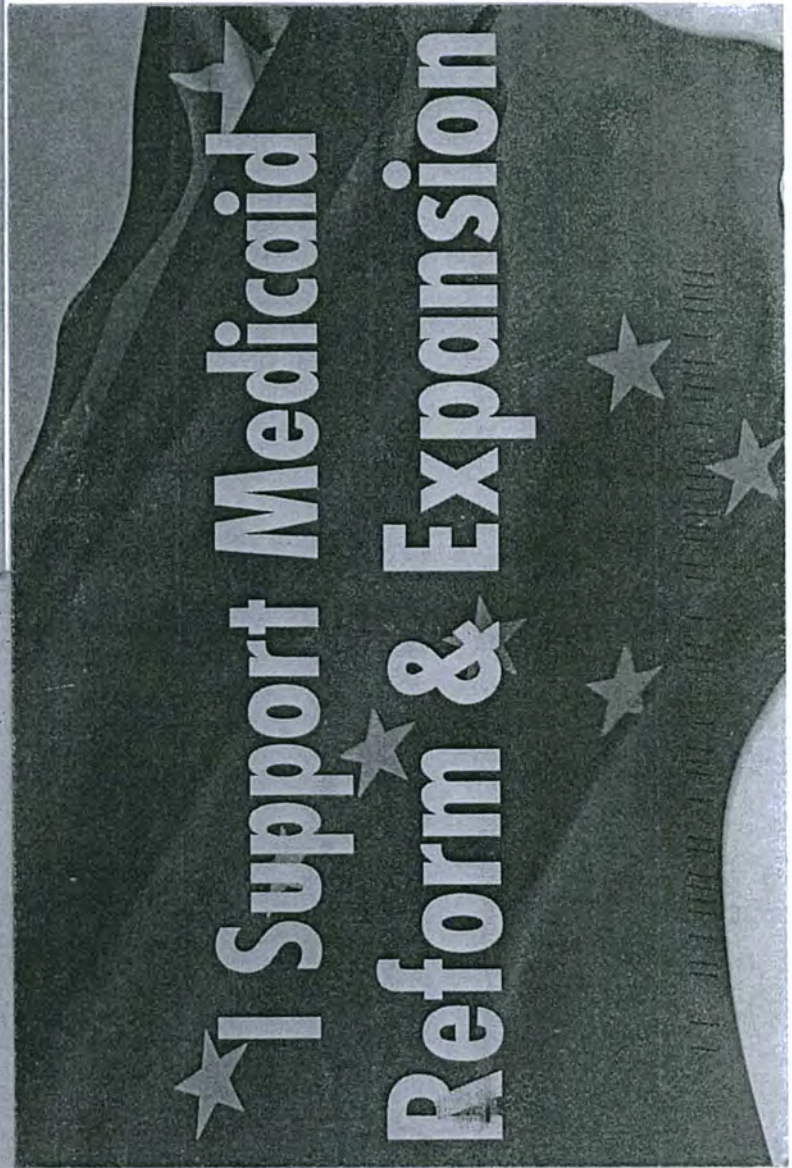
(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99517

(City, State, Zip)



AK Legislature
State Capital Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801



Dear Senator Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Zachary N Voris
(Name)

2700 W 31ST Ave
(Address)

Anchorage, Alaska, 99517
(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Sen. Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Daniel Duque
(Name)

1945 ~~KAPAK~~ ST Apt 3
(Address)

Anch, AK 99501
(City, State, Zip)



Sen Bert Stedman

State Capitol, Rm 30

Juneau Ak, 99801

Dear Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Whitney Lowell
(Name)

1900 K St
(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99503
(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Lila Hobbs

(Name)

525 W. 3rd Ave Apt 604

(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99501

(City, State, Zip)



Senator Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol, Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Breanna James

(Name)

1517 Kepner Dr

(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99504

(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Bert Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Thank you!

Courtney Owen

(Name)

1509 W. 33rd Avenue

(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99503

(City, State, Zip)



Sen Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Sen. Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Kendra Higgins, DPT
(Name)

13385 Ridge wood cir
(Address)

Anch, AK 99516
(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Morie Alfonsi
(Name)

841 Shakespeare Cir.
(Address)

Anchorage, AK 99503
(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Rm 30
Juneau, AK 99801



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Stedman

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Annette Alfonsi
(Name)

841 Shakespeare Cir.
(Address)

Anch, AK 99503
(City, State, Zip)

Dear ANCHORAGE AK 995

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Kevin & Marie Smith
2331 Scarborough Dr
Anchorage, AK 99504

(Address)

(City, State, Zip)



Senator Bert Stedman
Alaska Legislature
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear *Stedman, Bert* ANCHORAGE AK 995

Please support the Governor's Medicaid reform and expansion bill.

It's the Right Thing to Do!

Chad Sietre

(Name) *P.O. Box 292*

(Address) *Birdwood, AK 99587*

(City, State, Zip)



AK legislature
State Capital Room 30
Juneau AK 99801

CHAIRMAN STEDMAN
SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

My name is Ross Bieling. I am testifying on behalf of myself and my company Medical Bidline™, LLC an Alaskan company. I am a resident of Anchorage with my wife and family. I was raised in Ketchikan in mid 1960's and loved every minute we resided there when my father was in the United States Coast Guard.

I am a business person, and a lawyer with 30 years experience within the medical field. I have worked for Zimmer Orthopedics scrubbing in surgery teaching physician's total hip & knee replacement and other areas of orthopedic surgical applications. I have also worked for United States Surgical Corporation also scrubbing in surgery teaching physicians the procedures for surgical stapling.

My experience extends to home healthcare, manufacturing, and the insurance side of reimbursement that has been the basis of most medical care discussions in conjunction with the Obamacare and state healthcare exchanges.

Esteemed members of *this* committee, many individuals have a false basis of confidence concerning both the current scope and the potential expansion of the Medicaid program. Very simply, Alaska has an unreliable business partner in the Federal Government as it is 18 TRILLION in debt. Bill Clinton's Chief of Staff Erskin Bowles said it best, "The United States is just the last horse in line at the glue factory".

The challenge before each committee member is to define "reform" and identify in detail in a specific, measurable, achievable and reproducible plan of action to achieve and exceed necessary corrective financial goals and markers. I for one know that *competitive bidding* for medical equipment, surgical procedure's, diagnostic testing such as MRI's and many other service areas substantially reduces repetitive healthcare costs.

Medical Bidline™ provides competitive bidding in sample areas as follows but not limited to:

- Orthotic services & post-op braces
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Surgical procedures such:
 1. Total hips & knees
 2. Arthroscopies
 3. Lumbar back surgeries
 4. Colonoscopy's
 5. Podiatry & Chiropractic services
- Physical therapy services
- Home health care services
- Emergency & Non-transport services

ALASKA'S STRUCTURAL ISSUES FOR DELIVERY OF HEALTHCARE

Alaska has such a large footprint for coverage of healthcare services. We must reevaluate how we provide healthcare services to individuals. The cost of travel alone in 2014 for 16,560 Alaska Natives covered under IHS (Indian Healthcare Services) cost the State of Alaska through Medicaid \$90 million dollars in travel, accommodations and meals not including an approximate 15% + operating cost to the state. These costs are out of control and require a different approach to delivery of healthcare services for outlying individuals covered under Medicaid.

BLOATED HEALTHCARE COSTS DUE TO LACK OF COMPETITION

The fact that there has not been competition throughout Alaska in the area of healthcare services has resulted in substantially high prices. Competitive bidding stimulates competition on every referral request.

XEROX HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Alaska HSS has through Xerox paid in excess of \$26,000 for a single wheelchair sent out to western Alaska. Hoyer Lifts valued at \$2,000 have been approved for purchase at \$7,000 per each and placed in nursing homes according to reports from individuals within the last administration. Competitive Bidding addresses and prevents these types of abuses.

COSTS OF MEDICAID EXPANSION

The debate rages on as to what the true costs of Medicaid Expansion would be throughout Alaska. We cannot afford to get this wrong. Ensuring that we do not pay substantial monies for medical care and procedures goes a long way to protecting the assets of our great state.

Respectfully,

**Ross P. Bieling
CEO
Medical Bidline™, LLC**

Alaska Family Medical Care, LLC
4045 Lake Otis 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
907 562 4045

Alaska State Legislature
120 4th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

March 24, 2015

Dear Senators and Representatives,

Please vote against HB 148, and do not expand Medicaid, as this is an unsustainable, costly program (\$6.2 billion by 2032 without expansion) that will soon consume the entire budget, drive providers out of business, and eventually bankrupt us as a state.

We now have about 160,000 patients on Medicaid. It is estimated that the expansion population is approximately 40,000; 27,000 of these people are already covered via IHS, and 29% are already covered under other insurance programs. Other states that have expanded Medicaid have greatly underestimated the enrollment, having triple or quadruple more enrollees resulting in dramatic tax increases or deficit spending to cover these unexpected costs. HSA accounts linked to insurance are a much better option for these uncovered low income single adults and would not indebt us further as a state.

HB148 places undue regulatory burdens, more audits, a change in reimbursement and now a special tax on providers that are only being paid to see Medicaid patients at or below their cost. Over 1000 providers have stopped providing care to Medicaid patients from 2010 to 2014 and this will rapidly accelerate in the future if this bill is passed. You will see many providers go out of business, and many more close their doors to Medicaid in a desperate attempt to stay solvent.

There are problems with providers getting paid now via the new system and this will only increase as more people are added. The state now pays the federal government \$80 million a year just to keep Medicaid patients enrolled during the month of October so they can get their PFDs with the dramatic increase in numbers of enrollees this number will increase. It costs about \$900/year per enrollee in administrative costs, it is \$7500 approximately for a young person per year on Medicaid and costs \$65,000/year for older more sickly patients. However there are 2000 Hepatitis C patients to be treated at \$300,000/per person that has not yet been budgeted for in the new budget that I can find. Where will all these funds come from?

There is much fraud and abuse in the current system that needs to be fixed to make this program sustainable for future generations including 5400 plane tickets with no provider visit, \$1.2 million in medevacs for one person, 250 therapy visits for one patient in a year, etc. Please vote no on HB148 or any other bill to expand Medicaid and instead focus on meaningful reform that does not result in increased costs, taxes, or audits to those of us that are actually caring for these patients.



Ilona Farr MD, Family Medicine, WWAMI 1979,
Member of MRAG (Medicaid Reform Advisory Group)

Randy Ruaro

From: Greg Stoddard <grg.stoddard@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2015 10:46 AM
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: NO to Medicaid expansion!!

All Representatives,

No doubt you've seen this letter before. We can't afford to keep driving toward the cliff. Your vote must be based upon logic and not emotion.

Thank you.....Greg Stoddard

Alaska Family Medical Care, LLC
4045 Lake Otis 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
907 562 4045

Alaska State Legislature
120 4th Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

March 24, 2015

Dear Senators and Representatives,

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Ilona Farr MD, Family Medicine, WWAMI 1979,
Member of MRAG (Medicaid Reform Advisory Group)

Randy Ruaro

From: rbcameron1997@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, March 28, 2015 4:09 PM
To: GOV.AllLegislators@alaska.gov
Subject: Medicaid Expansion

NO to Medicaid Expansion!

Expanding programs like Medicaid only serve to hurt the community and nation. It makes men quit in their natural role of leading their families because the government takes over the husband and father role. It makes more dependents on the system.

If people have to work for their needs and wants we will have a healthier community and economy.

My husband and I will not support anyone who votes for this Medicaid expansion; in fact, we will work to actively unseat anyone who has voted in favor of the welfare expansion. It is wrong economically and it is wrong morally. Simply put (ahem, Governor Walker), "It's the WRONG thing to do!"

Thank you for your time,
Bonnie Cameron

Randy Ruaro

From: Alex MacGillivray <biergarden@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2015 11:22 AM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Coverage is good for Alaska's economy

Dear Senator Stedman,

I am writing to urge you to NOT support Medicaid expansion in Alaska because it further destroy our local economy as well as futher Obama care and limit access to health care.

Please prevent this initiative from going forwards and expanding an already bloated government.

Sincerely,

Alex MacGillivray
884 Mizzen Ln
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Randy Ruaro

From: Deborah Hackenberger <nightfall966@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2015 5:33 PM
To: Sen. Bert Stedman
Subject: Medicaid Expansion

Dear Senator Stedman;

I am writing due to my concern about the governors push to expand Medicaid using funds offered by the federal government. At a time when our state budget is already over by \$3.5 billion (or so) and the federal government is in debt by \$16 trillion is expanding Medicaid a wise thing to do? Please do not misunderstand me, I am most likely one of the people expansion would help, but how are we going to pay for this expansion in 6 years, or 2 years if the federal government can no longer keep the promises made to fund the Medicaid expansion.

The price of a barrel of oil does not appear to be significantly increasing and basing our state budget on anything more than \$40 a barrel is fool hardy at best. Is the state legislature going to be so callous as to expand Medicaid, discover that we have just driven over a fiscal cliff, then proceed to cut the program back thereby kicking off the 200,000+ people who basically just qualified for the program?

Before the legislature has a discussion on Medicaid expansion perhaps you should all be very honest and up front with the people of this state and tell them that if Medicaid is expanded the state will have to impose a sales tax of 5%, or perhaps you will vote to create one more incentive NOT to work by imposing an income tax, to insure the costs are covered. If you and your fellow legislatures are going to have discussions about expanding Medicaid, make sure those discussions also include ways to keep the program solvent in the next 20 years.

On a side note (since bring up a problem without a solution is whining) how about creating a sliding "fee" scale for a state run insurance program?

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely

Deborah Hackenberger