

February 28, 2024

The Honorable David Wilson
Chair, Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
senator.david.wilson@akleg.gov
Senate.Health.And.Social.Services@akleg.gov

Re: AHHA supports SB 241

Dear Senator Wilson,

For 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

I am writing to express our strong support for SB 241. This legislation allows the Department of Health to apply for a section 1115 waiver to establish one or more demonstration projects focused on addressing health-related needs and supportive services for one or more groups of Medicaid recipients in one or more specific geographic areas. Health-related needs include social or economic conditions that contribute to an individual's poor health outcomes like nutrition and food security, workforce development, transportation, temporary housing, or case management.

AHHA has been a longtime supporter of efforts to improve the Medicaid program through demonstrations projects because we believe Alaska's healthcare providers are in the best position to lead systems change and innovation from their communities.

Alaska's healthcare system and geography are well-suited for testing and innovation. We have a closed environment that is less impacted by interstate travel than other states. Alaska's population is small, and there are distinct population centers in different healthcare markets. Finally, Alaska has diverse provider types for experimentation throughout the care continuum.

Considering the need for real system change and the fertile environment for innovation, AHHA strongly supports maximizing opportunities for projects through 1115 demonstration waivers. In this instance, integrating support for health-related social needs through a Medicaid waiver could substantially help meet Alaskans' needs and reduce reliance on the highest cost healthcare services.



We appreciate your time and respectfully request your support in advancing this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Kosin'.

Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA
President & CEO