Inspiring Personal Independence

SOUTHEAST ALASKA INDEPENDENT LIVING

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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

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, Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Inc. (SAIL) 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 SAIL 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.

Robert J. Purvis, Board Chair
Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Inc. (SAIL)

03-13-15
Date