



Alaska Association of Student Governments

Resolution # 4

WWAMI Funding

Submitted by: Eagle River High School

Submitted: April 8, 2019

Be it resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments

1. **Whereas**, WWAMI stands for Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho;
2. **Whereas**, WWAMI has five primary goals, which include:
 - a. providing publicly supported medical education
 - b. increasing the number of primary care physicians, especially in underserved areas
 - c. providing community-based medical education
 - d. expanding graduate medical education (residency training) and continuing medical education
 - e. providing all of this in a cost-effective manner;
2. **Whereas**, students who enter the program are dual enrolled at UAA and the University of Washington School of Medicine and complete 18 months of medical school;
3. **Whereas**, Alaska gets 20 seats in the program, receiving about 90 applicants each year;
4. **Whereas**, WWAMI allows Alaska's medical students to train all four years in their home state, with their first two years at the UAA campus;

5. **Whereas**, the third and fourth years of medical school is comprised of “clerkship” rotations in different medical specialties;
6. **Whereas**, these clerkships can be taken in any five of the WWAMI participating states, however, students who take the “Alaska track” can take nearly all of these in Alaska;
7. **Whereas**, WWAMI is a medical school program, not a premedical program;
8. **Whereas**, Alaska has a shortage of physicians; specifically primary care, psychiatric care, and emergency medicine;
9. **Whereas**, Alaska needs 60+ physicians each year to meet demand;
10. **Whereas**, WWAMI contributes 14+ physicians each year to help meet this need;
11. **Whereas**, the baseline physician requirement in the United States is 291 physicians per 100,000 people;
12. **Whereas**, all five participating WWAMI states do not meet this requirement;
13. **Whereas**, Alaska only has 264.3 physicians per 100,000 people;
14. **Whereas**, according to Foundations Alaska WWAMI interim director Megan Ritter, no other school in the nation supplies as many physicians as the Alaska WWAMI program;
15. **Whereas**, according to UW's Suzanne Allen, Alaska has the fourth-best return rate for medical school students, behind only Texas, California, and Wyoming;
16. **Whereas**, since its creation in 1971, almost 500 Alaskans have gone on to become physicians;
17. **Whereas**, getting physicians to come to Alaska and stay is a big problem; however, through the WWAMI program and its five-state partnership, students from other states get the chance to visit and work in Alaska;
18. **Whereas**, the State of Alaska funds the WWAMI loans;

- 19. Whereas,** the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) provides approximately \$11.2 million or 579 WWAMI loans;
- 20. Whereas,** about 55 percent of WWAMI borrowers are licensed physicians practicing medicine in Alaska;
- 21. Whereas,** the state pays about half of the tuition for Alaska students in the program;
- 22. Whereas,** graduates who don't return to Alaska are required to pay the state back;
- 23. Whereas,** Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy has proposed cutting nearly \$3.1 million in state funding for the WWAMI program, which means a 100% reduction in state funds for the second through fourth years of students' medical education;
- 24. Whereas,** if cut, it would make it difficult for the program to survive;
- 25. Whereas,** if cut, Alaska will be the only state to not fund education;
- 26. Whereas,** until the state's budget is balanced, the funding for the WWAMI program should be cut by 50%;

Therefore be it resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments, that we as a collective group support a 50% cut of the WWAMI program in Governor Dunleavy's fiscal year 2020 budget, rather than the proposed 100% cut.

Works Cited

<https://www.uwmedicine.org/school-of-medicine/md-program/wwami>

<https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/wwami/about-wwami/index.cshtml>

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<https://www.ktva.com/story/40013218/alaskas-lone-medical-school-may-need-state-resuscitation>

<https://www.ktuu.com/content/news/A-shortage-of-doctors-and-money-the-governor-looks-at-cutting-the-WWAMI-program--506075151.html>

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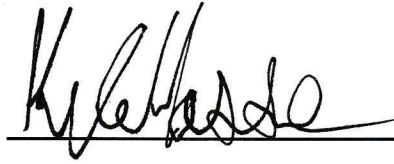
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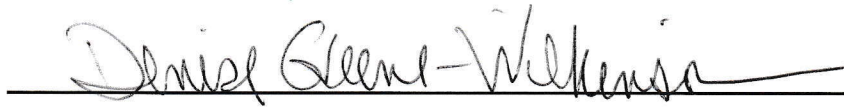
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<https://www.uwmedicine.org/education/md-program/current-students/student-affairs/financial-aid/budget-information>

Passed unanimously by the 2019 Spring Conference GA at Bethel Regional High School

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Hasse", written over a horizontal line.

AASG Vice President, Kyle Hasse

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denise Greene-Wilkinson", written over a horizontal line.

AASG Executive Director, Denise Greene-Wilkinson