



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Matt Claman

Session: State Capitol, Rm 118 Juneau, AK 99801 Phone: 465-4919
Interim: 1500 W. Benson Blvd., Anch, AK 99503 Phone: 269-0130

House Bill 21 Sponsor Statement

"An Act relating to insurance coverage for contraceptives and related services; and relating to medical assistance coverage for contraceptives and related services."

Alaskan women often face numerous challenges when trying to access reproductive health care and prescription contraceptives. Women living in rural Alaska have less access to healthcare services and therefore less reliable access to prescriptive contraceptives. Fisherwomen working on a boat for months at a time need longer supplies of prescription contraceptives. For women who are trying to balance their personal health with busy work and family schedules, making multiple trips to the clinic or pharmacy is a significant barrier in accessing consistent contraception.

House Bill 21 requires health care insurers, including Medicaid services, to provide coverage for prescription contraceptives and medical services necessary for those products or devices. HB 21 gives women full access to the contraceptive method that works best for her—including long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) such as intrauterine devices and implants—without barriers related to cost or availability. HB 21 also requires coverage for the dispensing of 12 months of prescriptive contraceptives at a time.

By requiring insurance to dispense a one-year supply of prescription contraceptives, HB 21 provides women and families with easier and more accessible family planning options, and in doing so, saves money for Alaskan families by reducing repeat trips to the clinic and pharmacy.

Studies have shown that access to reliable, consistent contraceptives and services is the best way to prevent unintended pregnancy. One in four women say they have missed contraceptive pills because they could not receive the next pack in time, and dispensing a one-year supply at a time reduces the odds of experiencing an unintended pregnancy by 30%. Dispensing a one-year supply is also cost effective for both public and private insurance plans, which lower claims on follow-up visits, pregnancy tests, and long-term costs associated with unintended pregnancies.

Finally, HB 21 critically enables victims of contraceptive coercion, a form of domestic or interpersonal violence in which abusers dictate when and how contraceptives can or cannot be accessed as a means of gaining power and control.

House Bill 21 reduces health care costs in Alaska and supports the health of Alaskan women and their families by providing greater access to reproductive health care and family planning options.