



Alaskans Working For Alaska!

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PRESS RELEASE

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ASEA SEEKS COURT INJUNCTION TO PREVENT API PRIVATIZATION

The Alaska State Employees Association filed suit in State Superior Court today against the Governor and the State Department of Health & Social Services for violations of the Alaska Constitution, State Law, and a Collective Bargaining Agreement relating to the privatization of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute in Anchorage.

In addition to the complaint, ASEA is seeking a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction to prevent WellPath, the State's sole-source contractor, from completing its "transition phase" of staff selection, orientation, integration, and training at the psychiatric hospital.

"The Dunleavy plan to outsource this hospital goes beyond bad policy," said ASEA Executive Director Jake Metcalfe. "It violates the Constitutional mandate that Alaska provide for the mental health of its residents, it violates procurement law through the award of a sole-source contract, and it harms the Union and API employees by ignoring ASEA Contract language requiring a feasibility study before any steps are taken to outsource services."

ASEA contends that immediate action is necessary to prevent WellPath from causing irreparable harm to the Union and more than 200 members at API it represents.

WellPath is proceeding with privatization "milestones" despite requirements under Article 13 of the ASEA Contract that the State conduct a feasibility study and provide 30 days for the Union to review the privatization plan and introduce an alternative proposal.

"ASEA has pursued remedies provided in the contract, but the Dunleavy Administration has delayed its response so the handpicked contractor can move closer to permanently managing and operating API," said Metcalfe. "A restraining order is the right message to a Governor whose expensive and inappropriate proposal flies in the face of procurement law and constitutional values."

ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 represents 8,000 state and municipal employees across Alaska.

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