

Dana Owen

From: Shellie Smith <:ssmith07@acsalaska.net>
Sent: Sunday, April 01, 2012 8:48 PM
To: Sen. Bill Wielechowski; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Sen. Linda Menard; Rep. Max Gruenberg
Subject: Please support SB 166

Hello,

I am writing today to ask you to support SB 166 regarding the licensing of medical laboratory scientist professionals. I look forward to a hearing and I hope this bill will pass so that Alaskans will have high quality diagnostic services available to them in any healthcare system they use. Laboratory testing provides the diagnosis and guides treatment in 70% of healthcare cases.

Setting standards for those who do laboratory testing is also a good fit with Governor Parnell's campaign to fight domestic violence. I once detected Herpes in the anus of a 14 year old boy so I immediately brought this to the physician's attention. He thanked me for the results and indicated that they were irrelevant since the boy had committed suicide and would not need treatment. I told him that I disagreed and that this was more than just a laboratory result, this laboratory test was a window into that boy's life and it revealed a very alarming picture. I further pursued these laboratory results with social services which resulted in an investigation. The investigation revealed there were serious problems in the family and three other children were determined to be at risk for abuse.

I believe that had I not been a trained medical laboratory scientist, these findings would have sadly been ignored and this case would have slipped through the cracks. It is important to have a multi-disciplinary team to provide healthcare and it is important for everyone on that team to be highly trained including the laboratorian. Many studies have been published attesting to the fact that highly qualified multi-disciplinary teams result in better patient outcomes. Had this test been performed by someone without a clinical background, the results may not have raised a concern and follow through, especially without the physician's concern, may never have happened.

Licensure is a way that we can make sure laboratory workers do meet quality standards. Each time you or your family has a laboratory test you rely on that person to be extremely competent and perform the test correctly. Therefore, I ask you to support SB 166.

Thank you.

Shellie Smith

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