

## Dana Owen

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**From:** Sid and Liz Bacom <altab@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 07, 2012 6:40 AM  
**To:** Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Joe Paskvan; Sen. Linda Menard; Sen. Bettye Davis; Sen. Cathy Giessel  
**Cc:** Dana Owen  
**Subject:** Support SB 166  
**Attachments:** image001.jpg  
  
**Importance:** High

My name is Elizabeth Bacom. In my career, I have worked as a phlebotomist, laboratory technician and medical technologist/clinical laboratory scientist. I have also worked in urban and rural facilities in Alaska.

I am a certified clinical laboratory scientist with over 25 years of experience. I have a bachelors degree in Biology, my clinical training was received while serving on active duty with the US Air Force. I am certified by the ASCP (American Society for Clinical Pathology) as a Medical Technologist. I am also a member of ASCLS, The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science. By participating in annual continuing education conferences or continuing education events, I demonstrate dedication to my profession and credibility to my professional peers by staying up to date on current standards of practice in laboratory science.

It is important for the general public and elected officials to understand how critical specimen collection, testing and reporting is to the delivery of health care. Most people do not have any experience with the laboratory other than having their blood drawn. What happens behind the doors is not magical, it is scientifically based testing, following strict protocols and quality control standards. Laboratory medicine is highly regulated. However for some facilities and for some testing, there are currently no requirements to verify or certify testing personnel.

Not only laboratory scientists perform laboratory testing. Medical assistants, CNA's, Registered Nurses also perform testing. Their background is not in laboratory science however. But they perform critical point of care testing at the patient's bedside. A tiny drop of blood on a strip placed in a point of care device called a glucometer may result in therapy that will save a person's life. The potential for serious, poor patient outcome is very possible if the test is not performed properly. On the other hand, a test may be performed properly, but the test strip may not have been handled properly prior to testing and thus a result may not be valid. Without strict quality control, quality assurance and training guidelines the potential for failure is great. The person collecting the specimen, running the test and recording the result on the display will enter the result in the patient's record. This result will become the gospel truth. This test result will cause in a change in the care of the patient. If the result is interpreted 93 mg/dl instead of 39 mg/dl, the patient outcome might very well be dire.

Many trained and capable people are currently performing laboratory testing. However, it is important for all people performing testing to get it right. Always. All patients in Alaska must receive the best laboratory guided health care by providing a process to certify all testing personnel. Regardless if a patient is seen at Providence Hospital in Anchorage or the clinic in Tok. Let's make sure all testing personnel are qualified, by verification of training and certification, to provide an accurate result to the physician. For any comparable test, the standard of care at Providence Hospital must be the same as the standard of care in a rural hospital or clinic.

Your decision to move this legislation will have a positive effect on all Alaskans.

Thank you for your time and service.

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