



April 30, 2025

Representative Genevieve Mina
Chair, House Health & Social Services Committee
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chair Mina and Committee Members:

On behalf of Fred Meyer, I write to express our strong support for HB 195 – Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services.

Fred Meyer operates grocery stores throughout the Pacific Northwest, including 11 locations in Alaska, providing one-stop shopping with over 250,000 products under one roof. More than 3,000 Fred Meyer associates serve customers in Alaska. Each year, Fred Meyer contributes more than \$1 million to Alaskan communities through grants, product donations, and sponsorships. Additionally, we donate nearly 3 million meals annually to local food banks across the state through our Food Rescue Program.

As you know, HB 195 would expand the authority of pharmacists to provide critical patient care services—including prescribing and administration of some medications—within the scope of their education, training, and experience. This authority aligns with the current standard of pharmacist education and practice nationwide, and it will allow Alaskans to fully benefit from the expertise of their most accessible healthcare providers.

Our team of pharmacists would welcome this expansion of their ability to provide care for their patients. Pharmacists today are highly trained and educated. Every Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) graduate completes four years of intensive coursework along with a minimum of 1,740 hours of direct patient care before earning their degree. This extensive training has equipped them to provide a wide range of care and services to their patients, which is why many other states have adopted similar legislation.

Ultimately, this bill is about expanding access to care for all Alaskans. At Fred Meyer, we pride ourselves on the strong relationships our pharmacists develop with their patients in the communities where we operate. Our customers trust their pharmacists and regularly seek their advice. HB 195 would modernize state law to reduce delays and remove unnecessary barriers to patient care—which will be especially critical in underserved and rural areas.

For all these reasons, Fred Meyer strongly supports HB 195, and we urge the House and Senate to adopt this important legislation. Thank you for considering our perspective, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KHensley", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kayla Hensley, PharmD
Fred Meyer Division Health Leader



Walgreen Co.
108 Wilmot Rd
Deerfield, IL 60015
Walgreens.com

April 14, 2025

Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for SB 147 – Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services

Dear Senator Giessel,

On behalf of Walgreens, I am writing to express our strong support for SB 147 - Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services. As a leading community pharmacy provider with a long-standing presence in Alaska, Walgreens is committed to expanding access to high-quality and affordable care, especially in underserved and rural communities across the state.

SB 147 represents a meaningful step forward in meeting the healthcare needs of Alaskans by enabling pharmacists to practice to the full extent of their education and training. Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare professionals in the country. Community pharmacies like Walgreens are open evenings, weekends, and holidays without the need for an appointment and are uniquely positioned to help fill critical gaps in care.

Across the country, similar legislative efforts have empowered pharmacists to take on expanded clinical roles to improve health outcomes, reduce emergency department visits, and ease the burden on overextended primary care systems. SB 147 brings Alaska in line with these best practices, ensuring that communities facing provider shortages can fully benefit from the expertise and availability of their local pharmacists.

Alaskans rely on their neighborhood pharmacy for trusted guidance, timely care, and critical health services. By modernizing Alaska's laws to reflect today's healthcare environment, SB 147 helps ensure patients receive the care they need, when and where they need it most.

We deeply appreciate your leadership on this important legislation and welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource as it moves forward. Thank you for your continued commitment to improving healthcare access for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorri Walmsley".

Lorri Walmsley, RPh, FAzPA
Director, Pharmacy Affairs

Member of Walgreens Boots Alliance



April 15, 2025

The Honorable Forrest Dunbar
Chair, Health & Social Services Committee
Butrovich 205
120 4th St
Juneau, AK 99801

SB 147 Pharmacist Prescription Authority – SUPPORT

Dear Chair Dunbar, Vice Chair Giessel, and members of the Health & Social Services Committee:

The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) writes in support of [Senate Bill \(SB\) 147](#) (Sen. Giessel). SB 147 updates state law to align the pharmacist's role with their extensive education and training. It ensures that patients will continue to have accessible health care services and medications from their trusted local pharmacist.

SB 147 better aligns the pharmacists' role with their education and training by allowing pharmacists to order laboratory tests and furnish medications to facilitate care for their patients. Alaska pharmacists have been testing and treating patients since September 2021, when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the ninth amendment under the PREP Act for Medical Countermeasures. This amendment authorized pharmacists to order and administer FDA-authorized, approved, or licensed subcutaneous, intramuscular, or certain oral therapeutics.¹ As beneficial as this temporary federal authority has been in expanding Alaskans' access to care, particularly in rural and underserved areas that lack access to low-cost health care services, it will expire on December 31, 2029.² SB 147 makes this temporary federal authority permanent under pharmacists' state scope of practice to minimize interruptions to patient access to these low-cost preventive care services provided by pharmacists and ensures Alaska can meet its citizens' public health needs, particularly in remote areas of Alaska where pharmacists may be the only health care providers for miles.

SB 147 also aligns pharmacists' scope of practice with many states where patients can receive accessible treatment for health conditions that do not need a new diagnosis, are minor, or after performing a point-of-care test under federal law, or for emergencies that threaten the health of the patient. Pharmacists can

¹ Ninth Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures. Available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/09/14/2021-19790/ninth-amendment-to-declaration-under-the-public-readiness-and-emergency-preparedness-act-for-medical>.

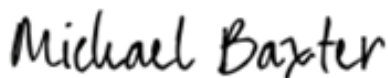
² 12th Amendment to Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act for Medical Countermeasures. Available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/11/2024-29108/12th-amendment-to-declaration-under-the-public-readiness-and-emergency-preparedness-act-for-medical>.

already test and treat for varying health conditions in 14 states³ via a statewide protocol, standing order, or independent prescriptive authority.

Substantial published literature documents the proven and significant improvement in patient outcomes⁴ and reduction in health care expenditures⁵ when pharmacists are optimally leveraged as the medication experts on patient-care teams. SB 147 ensures that Alaskans maintain access to services they have already been receiving from pharmacists for years and better aligns the pharmacists' role with their extensive education and training.

For these reasons, APhA strongly supports SB 147 and respectfully requests your "AYE" vote. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact E. Michael Murphy, PharmD, MBA, APhA Senior Advisor for State Government Affairs, by email at mmurphy@aphanet.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Baxter
Vice President, Government Affairs

cc: Senator Cathy Giessel, Vice Chair
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Löki Tobin
Senator Shelley Hughes

About APhA: APhA is the largest association of pharmacists in the United States advancing the entire pharmacy profession. APhA represents pharmacists in all practice settings, including community pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, specialty pharmacies, community health centers, physician offices, ambulatory clinics, managed care organizations, hospice settings, and government facilities. Our members strive to improve medication use, advance patient care and enhance public health. **In Alaska, with 510 licensed pharmacists and 870 pharmacy technicians, APhA represents pharmacists, students, and pharmacy technicians that practice in numerous settings and provide care to many of your constituents.** As the voice of pharmacy, APhA leads the profession and equips members for their role as the medication expert in team-based, patient-centered care. APhA inspires, innovates, and creates opportunities for members and pharmacists worldwide to optimize medication use and health for all.

³ Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Virginia

⁴ Giberson S, Yoder S, Lee MP. Improving Patient and Health System Outcomes through Advanced Pharmacy Practice. A Report to the U.S. Surgeon General. Office of the Chief Pharmacist. U.S. Public Health Service. Dec 2011. Available at: https://www.accp.com/docs/positions/misc/improving_patient_and_health_system_outcomes.pdf

⁵ Murphy EM, Rodis, JR, Mann HJ. Three ways to advocate for the economic value of the pharmacist in health care. Journal of the American Pharmacists Association. August 2020. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1544319120303927>



April 30, 2025

Representative Genevieve Mina
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: ANTHC Support of HB 195

Representative Mina,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), I write in support of House Bill (HB) 195.

The ANTHC is a statewide Tribal health organization serving all 229 tribes and all Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) people in Alaska. ANTHC provides a wide range of statewide public health, community health, environmental health, and other programs and services for Alaska Native people and their communities. ANTHC and Southcentral Foundation operate programs at the Alaska Native Medical Center, the statewide tertiary care hospital for all AN/AI people in Alaska, under the terms of Public Law 105-83.

HB 195 authorizes pharmacists to provide patient care services within the scope of their training and experience, aligning Alaska statute with federal law and Alaska Board of Pharmacy current regulation of the practice. ANTHC supports this legislation in order to increase patient access to care and build capacity within Alaska's health care system.

On behalf of ANTHC, I appreciate you bringing this legislation forward. HB 195 takes the necessary steps to maximize our existing healthcare workforce and to meet the needs of Alaskans by increasing their access to care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monique R. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Monique R. Martin, Vice President
Intergovernmental Affairs



THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development

Corporations, Business, & Professional Licensing
Board of Pharmacy

P.O. Box 110806
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806
Main: 907.465.2550
Fax: 907.465.2974

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Senator Giessel
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: SB- 147A – Letter of Support

Dear Senator Giessel,

The Alaska Board of Pharmacy (“board”) unanimously supports SB 147A, An Act relating to the prescription and administration of drugs and devices by pharmacists; relating to reciprocity for pharmacists; and providing for an effective date, because it:

- Increases access to pharmacist-provided patient care services, allowing healthcare practitioners in Alaska to practice at the top of their education, training, and experience.
- Aligns with the standard of care, including models established within multiple other states, the federal healthcare system, the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act, and the Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act.
- Encourages interdisciplinary collaboration for patient referral to other practitioners as needed, with pharmacists effectively working as part of the healthcare team to ensure access to safe care.
- Supports the board’s strategic plan, specifically goal #4 which is to grow Alaska’s economy while promoting community health and safety.

The board endeavors to promote, preserve, and protect the public health, safety, and welfare by and through the effective control and regulation of the practice of pharmacy. The board previously supported and provided testimony for HB 145 (2021-2022 Legislative Session), which added AS 08.80.337 Other Patient Care Services. Since the passing of that bill, the board received multiple inquiries about its applicability to independent prescribing. After feedback from the Alaska Department of Law, the Board recognized that clarifications were needed to allow pharmacists to practice at the top of their education, training, and experience. These changes, seen in SB 147A of the current legislative session, are important for overall access to patient care services in Alaska.

Pharmacists are highly qualified and educated healthcare professionals. We fully support the ability for pharmacists to exercise their education, training, and experience to promote community health and safety. As a regulatory body, we also support our ability to oversee these areas to the full capacity for the benefit to Alaskans and our communities.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ashley Schaber in cursive.

Ashley Schaber, PharmD, MBA, BCPS
Chair, Alaska Board of Pharmacy

Sarah Spencer DO, FASAM
Ninilchik Traditional Council Community Clinic
Ninilchik, AK
sarahspencerak@gmail.com
907-299-7460
4/18/2025

Senator Dunbar
Chair, Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Dunbar and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sarah Spencer, and I am a physician practicing in the Kenai Peninsula, specializing in addiction medicine. I am writing today in support of **Senate Bill 147 – Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services**.

Pharmacists are valued members of the healthcare team, playing an essential role in medication management, patient education, chronic disease support, and preventive services. In my practice, I frequently collaborate with pharmacists and recognize their contributions to improving patient outcomes and ensuring continuity of care.

Alaska has experienced the nations greatest increase in rates of overdose death in 2021 and 2023. The top evidence-based intervention to reduce mortality in opioid use disorder (OUD) is opioid agonist pharmacotherapy such as buprenorphine and methadone, which reduce death rates by more than 60%. Access to medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) is severely limited in many parts of Alaska, and pharmacists can play a key role in increasing access by assisting with prescribing and administering MOUD, particularly oral and monthly injectable buprenorphine. Alaska should utilize every tool at its disposal to tackle this epidemic, and the federal MAT act allows of additional flexibility for expanding access to treatment by engaging pharmacist in diagnosing and treating OUD.

Importantly, pharmacists are well-positioned to help triage patients appropriately and escalate care when higher levels of intervention are needed — working in true partnership with physicians and other providers. I urge you to support SB 147, and **although I am not available to testify on April 22nd due to patient care responsibilities, I am happy to be contacted with any questions.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sarah Spencer DO, FASAM
NTC Community Clinic



Island Pharmacy Inc.
3526 Tongass Ave.
Ketchikan, AK 99901
Phone: (907) 225-6186
Fax: (907) 225-6187
islandrx1@gmail.com
www.islandpharmacyak.com

April 29, 2025

Representative Genevieve Mina
Chair House Health and Social Services Committee
Capitol Building 106
Juneau, AK

Representative Mina,

I am writing in support of HB 195 Pharmacist-Provided Patient Care Services. My father started Island Pharmacy in 1974 and we have been serving patients in Southern Southeast for over 51 years. The medications and services we offer now are vastly different and much more complex. Yet the number of medical providers in our community is shrinking and becoming more dependent on travelling/non-permanent personnel. Pharmacies and pharmacists such as those I employ are highly trained and able to provide a standard of care which supplements existing medical services in our community. HB 195 provides language critical to allowing pharmacists to improve healthcare across Alaska including communities such as mine.

I appreciate you and your House HES colleagues efforts to help insure Alaskans receive adequate healthcare. I believe passage of HB 195 will assist in that endeavor.

Respectfully,

Bary Christensen, RPh

Bary Christensen, RPh/Owner

Karen Miller RPH
Denali Pharmacy
Fairbanks, AK
Karen.miller@foundationhealth.org
907-322-6314

4/18/2025

Representative Ivy Spohnholz
Chair, House Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Spohnholz and Members of the Committee,

My name is Karen Miller, and I am a pharmacist practicing in Fairbanks, Alaska. I am writing to express my strong support for **House Bill 195**.

As a lifelong Alaskan, I've witnessed firsthand the many changes in our healthcare system. When I was growing up, it was common to be able to call your primary care provider at home after hours. Today, however, it's often difficult for patients to get a timely appointment with their provider. Pharmacists can help fill this gap in care.

Pharmacists today complete extensive clinical training and education, earning a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. We are the most accessible healthcare professionals — a fact that became especially clear during the COVID-19 pandemic, when pharmacists stepped up to advise patients, administer vaccines, and help maintain continuity of care during a time of crisis.

Every day in my practice, I see opportunities to help patients manage common conditions, chronic illnesses, and preventive care needs — but current laws limit how fully we can contribute. My current practice is working to embed pharmacists into primary care clinics, including those focused on behavioral health and substance use disorders. **HB 195** would help streamline this process and empower pharmacists to provide care more effectively.

This bill would allow pharmacists to practice at the top of their training and licensure, within a standard-of-care framework — just like other healthcare providers. By doing so, **HB 195** will reduce strain on overburdened physicians and emergency departments, while improving access and outcomes for patients.

I am confident in my ability to provide safe, effective care, and I am fully committed to working alongside other members of the healthcare team to ensure the best possible outcomes for our patients.

I respectfully urge you to support **HB 195** and help expand access to high-quality healthcare services for Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Karen Miller RPH

Brandy Seignemartin, PharmD
Alaska Pharmacy Association
3211 Providence Dr., PSB 111
Anchorage, AK 99508
akpharmacistsassociation@gmail.com



April 18, 2025

Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: Support for SB 147 – Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services

Dear Senator Giessel,

On behalf of the Alaska Pharmacy Association (AKPhA), I write to express our strong support for SB 147 – Pharmacist Provided Patient Care Services.

AKPhA proudly represents pharmacists, student pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacies operating in all corners of our state—urban, rural, and remote. This legislation is an important step toward ensuring that Alaskans have timely, equitable access to healthcare services, especially in areas facing critical provider shortages.

SB 147 authorizes pharmacists to provide patient care services—including prescribing and administration of medications—within the scope of their education, training, and experience. This authority aligns with the current standard of pharmacist education and practice nationwide and ensures that Alaskans can fully benefit from the expertise of their most accessible healthcare providers.

Pharmacists today are highly trained clinicians. Every Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) graduate completes four years of intensive didactic coursework paired with a minimum of 1,740 hours of direct patient care before earning their degree. Many go on to pursue post-graduate residencies, clinical fellowships, certifications, and board specialties in fields ranging from ambulatory care and infectious disease to geriatrics and cardiology.

Yet despite this extensive training, pharmacists in Alaska remain underutilized due to outdated legal restrictions. SB 147 modernizes our statutes to reflect current clinical realities and removes unnecessary barriers that limit patient care. Similar legislation has been adopted in many other states and has demonstrably expanded healthcare access and improved outcomes, especially in underserved and rural areas.

Alaskans trust their pharmacists and regularly seek their advice and care. Authorizing pharmacists to provide care within their training improves system efficiency, supports team-based care, and reduces delays in treatment for patients who need it most. This bill helps maximize Alaska's existing healthcare workforce while reducing burdens on physicians and emergency departments.

For these reasons, the Alaska Pharmacy Association urges your full support of SB 147. We stand ready to serve as a resource and partner as this legislation advances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brandy Seignemartin".

Brandy Seignemartin, PharmD
Executive Director
Alaska Pharmacy Association



Alaska Native Health Board

THE VOICE OF ALASKA TRIBAL HEALTH SINCE 1968

☎ 907.729.7510 ☎ 907.729.7506 • 4000 Ambassador Drive (ANHB Office) • Anchorage, Alaska 99508 • www.anhb.org

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF
ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

ARCTIC SLOPE
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

BRISTOL BAY AREA
HEALTH CORPORATION

CHICKALOON VILLAGE
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

CHUGACHMIUT

COPPER RIVER
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN
TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

EASTERN ALEUTIAN TRIBES

KARLUK IRA
TRIBAL COUNCIL

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE

KETCHIKAN
INDIAN COMMUNITY

KODIAK AREA
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

MANILAQ ASSOCIATION

METLAKATLA INDIAN
COMMUNITY

MT. SANFORD
TRIBAL CONSORTIUM

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF EKLUKNA

NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF TYONEK

NINILCHIK
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION

SELDOVIA VILLAGE TRIBE

SOUTHCENTRAL
FOUNDATION

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

YAKUTAT TLINGIT TRIBE

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
HEALTH CORPORATION

VALDEZ NATIVE TRIBE

April 15, 2025

The Honorable Cathy Giessel
Senator, District N
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: ANHB Support for SB 147 – Pharmacist

Dear Senator Giessel,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Health Board (ANHB)¹, I write in support of Senate Bill (SB) 147, an Act relating to the prescription and administration of drugs and devices by pharmacists; relating to reciprocity for pharmacists; and providing for an effective date.

SB 147 authorizes pharmacists to provide patient care services—including prescribing and administration of medications—within the scope of their education, training, and experience. ANHB supports this legislation because it will increase access to pharmacist-provided patient care services, maximizing the professional capacity of Alaska's existing healthcare professionals. There are too few Alaskan providers to fill the current demand for healthcare services in Alaska, and job vacancies in the industry are significant. Pharmacists are already an integral part of the AHS and the need for their services is growing. The State of Alaska should take every commonsense step to maximize our existing healthcare workforce, including the more than 500 pharmacists, to ensure access to safe care and referrals to other practitioners as needed.

Pharmacists are highly qualified, trained healthcare professionals. We support legislation that enables pharmacists to utilize the full scope of their education, training, and experience to promote community health and safety for the benefit of Alaskans. Should you have any questions, please contact ANHB at anhb@anhb.org or (907) 729-7510.

Sincerely,

Chief William F. Smith, Chairman
Alaska Native Health Board

¹ ANHB was established in 1968 to promote the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and cultural well-being and pride of Alaska Native people. ANHB is the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues and the advocacy organization for the Alaska Tribal Health System (ATHS), which is comprised of Tribal health programs that serve the 229 Tribes and over 234,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people throughout the state. As the statewide Tribal health advocacy organization, ANHB supports Alaska's Tribes and Tribal programs to achieve effective consultation and communication with state and federal agencies on matters of concern.

April 15, 2025

Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 147 – PHARMACISTS PRESCRIPTION AUTHORITY

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing today on behalf of the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) in support **SB 147**, a bill that authorizes licensed pharmacist to provide patient care services including the prescribing and administration of medications within their education and scope of practice. We **support** this bill as it empowers pharmacists to practice at the top of their training, enhance patient outcomes and reduce administrative burdens among providers and patients.

The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) represents the interest of America's community pharmacists, including owners of more than 19,400 independent community pharmacists across the United States and 83 independent community pharmacists in Alaska. These Alaska pharmacies filled over 900,000 prescriptions last year, impacting thousands of patients in your state. Our members are small business owners who are among the America's most accessible healthcare providers, and they provide an expanding set of health care services to millions of patients every day.

Within the next 10 years, the U.S. could see a shortage of over 55,000 primary care physicians. In Alaska there are 341 areas that are designated as health professional shortage areas. There are hundreds of pharmacists in Alaska who are ready to provide valuable healthcare services to these communities that have limited access to care.

With over 500 pharmacists practicing within Alaska, approval of this legislation will allow pharmacists, pharmacy personnel, and pharmacies to meet the demand for health care services and continue to be a gateway for patients to access quality care. This bill modernizes Alaska's statutes to reflect current clinical trends and realities as well as removing unnecessary barriers to care. Updating these laws not only allow pharmacies to expand immunization and testing capacity but will allow pharmacists to dispense opioid antagonists, epinephrine auto injectors, post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for exposure to HIV infection and hormonal contraception.

More than 90% of Americans live within five miles of a community pharmacy,¹ and more than any other segment of the pharmacy industry, independent community pharmacies are often located in underserved rural and urban areas. These pharmacies are frequently the most accessible healthcare providers in many Alaska communities and are vital in the provision of immunizations, testing, and other services.

¹ NCPDP Pharmacy File, ArcGIS Census Tract File, NACDS Economics Department.

Over the years, the pharmacy profession has evolved from a dispensing and product reimbursement industry to a profession with training and patient relationships to provide outcomes-based services and participate in care coordination efforts. Pharmacists' care has increasingly involved patient counseling, and we have learned how their presence in underserved communities has seen improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

NCPA supports the Alaska Board of Pharmacy and the Alaska Pharmacy Association in their advocacy to align pharmacists' standard of care and improve efficiencies in healthcare delivery. We appreciate the time taken to address the important issue and urge the committee's approval so SB 147 can be passed and signed into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Belawoe Akwakoku". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Belawoe Akwakoku
Associate Director, State Government Affairs
National Community Pharmacists Association

Carrie Urena
Klawock AK Opioid Treatment Program
Klawock, AK
carrieurena22@gmail.com
(907) 888-8234
4/18/25

Senator Dunbar
Chair, Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Dunbar and Members of the Committee,

My name is Carrie Urena, and I am a pharmacist practicing in Klawock AK which is a small rural community in southeast AK on the Prince of Wales Island. I am writing to express my strong support for **Senate Bill 147**.

As a pharmacist, I have completed extensive education and clinical training, earning my Doctor of Pharmacy degree and completing over 1,900 hours of hands-on patient care training. I went on to complete a PGY1 residency with Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and then began work in 2023 in a newly opened opioid treatment program in Klawock AK. Every day in my practice I see opportunities where our underserved community members could benefit from additional pharmacist services — but existing statutory barriers prevent this from happening.

Those who know me know I'm extremely passionate about the work I do, working with our rural populations suffering from opioid use disorder. Throughout my education and into my residency I placed a high emphasis on experiences and learning opportunities that would enhance my knowledge and ability to serve this patient population. Our Alaskan statistics tell the story of the immense need we have for greater access to care, particularly when addressing medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD). At the end of 2023 when the majority of our nation saw a drop in opioid related deaths, here in AK our numbers continue to rise. Not only did we not see the decrease that so many other states saw, but we also actually had increased rates. It is clear that what we are currently doing is not enough. We simply don't have enough providers to cover the need for services. Our smaller, more rural communities continue to have little to no access to essential services such as MOUD. This is where pharmacists can begin to make a positive impact and really help bridge these gaps in care and services. The growing amount of evidence supporting pharmacists' involvement in MOUD continues to show improved patient outcomes. Our training and education make us uniquely qualified to help bridge the service gaps and improve access for MOUD. We are the medication experts with extensive knowledge about drugs, drug metabolism, drug interactions, and drug safety. We are taught how to assess and identify patients with sub- and supratherapeutic medication regimens. Our state continues to talk about increasing access for MOUD and the undeniable need for these services in our rural populations and we, as pharmacists, are here and more than capable of helping to make this happen. Our communities deserve to have access to these services. These increasing "rates" we continue to talk about and quote, were living breathing people that are no longer with us. Their

lives are lost forever. It's time to bring this immense pain and suffering our communities are feeling to stop. I know that I am eager to help bring healing to our communities, please let me use my education and training to bring some relief to the suffering our state is feeling right now.

SB 147 would allow me to practice at the top of my clinical ability, within a standard of care framework like other healthcare professionals. By streamlining patient access to pharmacist-provided services, this bill will improve health outcomes and reduce unnecessary burdens on physicians and emergency departments.

I am confident in my ability to provide safe, effective patient care, and I am committed to collaborating with other healthcare team members to ensure patients receive the best care possible.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 147 to expand access to high-quality healthcare services for Alaskans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Carrie Urena
PharmD, BCPS
Klawock Opioid Treatment Program