

# Alaska State Legislature



**Representative Lora Reinbold**  
House District 26

## **Sponsor Statement for House Bill 241**

*"An Act extending the termination date of the Board of Marital and Family Therapy; and providing for an effective date"*

Each year, the Division of Legislative Audit reviews state boards and commissions to determine if they should be reestablished per AS 24.44. The Division of Legislative Audit reviewed the activities of the Board of Marital and Family Therapy (BMFT). The purpose of this audit was to determine whether there is a demonstrated public need for the BMFT's continued existence and whether it has been operating in an effective manner.

The Division of Legislative Audit concluded that the board's termination date should be extended until June 30, 2018, as the BMFT is serving the public's interest by effectively licensing and regulating marital and family therapists. However, the Division of Legislative Audit only recommends a four year extension which is half of the eight-year maximum provided by statute. This recommendation is mainly due to the audit recommendations from the previous sunset audit were not fully addressed. The 2009 sunset audit recommended the BMFT pursue regulations changes necessary to protect the public, for the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing (CBPL) to improve administrative support, and for the Office of the Governor to appoint board member in a timely fashion. Only one of these recommendations has been resolved, thus the Division of Legislative Audit reiterates two of the recommendations and makes one new recommendation:

- a. BMFT should develop a strategy to address the need for distance therapy and distance supervision.
- b. The Office of the Governor and BMFT should work together to fill vacant board seats in a timely manner.
- c. CBPL should continue efforts to improve the investigative case management system's integrity and confidentiality.

I urge your support on this legislation to allow the Board of Marital and Family Therapy to continue to carry out their duties to effectively license and regulate marital and family therapists and to protect and promote the public health, welfare, and safety of Alaskans.