

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE WES KELLER DISTRICT 7

Sponsor Statement HB 53

"An Act establishing a consultation requirement with respect to the prescription of opiates under certain circumstances."

Today medical professionals have a long list and growing of medications to choose from to help their patients with pain, be it real or imagined. The level of pain relief medications being prescribed today and some of the reported unintended negative results is alarming. These opiate drugs are addictive, and in the long term require larger and larger doses to provide that relief. Opiate drugs also have another more sinister reputation, illegal resale.

HB 53 addresses the issues of opiate prescription drugs head on by establishing a process for the patient and medical professional to work with a pain relief specialist on the actual drug needs. Medical Doctors, Dentists, Physician Assistants, and Nurse Practitioners will work together with pain specialists and patients to determine if the patient needs to increase the dosage above 120 milligrams the consultation process kicks in.

Pain verses addiction. Most patients may not know or realize the difference. Many doctors may not see their patients often enough or they have such a huge caseload that they miss the difference as well. HB 53 is a way to slow the process down by addressing the medications and the potential addiction factor with a goal of options.

HB 53 is an important step in identifying and helping reduce dependency on addictive drugs. It also provides a potential decrease in availability keeping those drugs off the illegal distribution system.