

Alaska State Medical Association

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March 16, 2015

The Honorable Bert Stedman
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room
Juneau AK 99801

RE: Senate Bill 23 – Immunity for Providing Opioid Overdose Drugs

Dear Senator Stedman:

The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of Alaskans.

ASMA is supportive of Senate Bill 23 providing health care providers immunity from civil liability for providing, prescribing, or administering opioid overdose drugs to a patient at risk of experiencing an opioid overdose emergency. SB 23 will allow health care providers to prescribe opioid overdose drugs and provide the necessary training and education on the proper use and administration of those drugs which should increase the utilization of these lifesaving drugs.

Overdose deaths is a growing national crisis nearly tripling since 1999 and Alaska currently ranks 29th among states for the highest drug overdose mortality rate. Alaska's mortality rate due to drug overdoses was about 11.6 per 100,000 people in 2010, an increase of 55 percent from 1999. ASMA is committed to working on responsible strategies for reducing opioid abuse and respectfully request the Alaska Legislature pass SB 23.

Thank you for your consideration of our position and if you have any questions please let me know.

Sincerely,



Michael Haugen
Executive Director
Alaska State Medical Association