

**Alaska Mental Health Board
Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
431 N. Franklin St. Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska, 99801**



March 14, 2017

Senator David Wilson, Chairperson
Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Capitol Room 115
Juneau, Alaska 99801

BY HAND-DELIVERY

Re: Letter of Support for SB 91

Senator Wilson,

The Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the Alaska Mental Health Board support SB 91 and the extension of the mechanism by which the State of Alaska is making opioid overdose medication (naloxone) available to community responders. This medication is just like any other life-saving technology or medication that we make available in emergencies and life-threatening situations. We appreciate that Governor Walker and his administration have secured funding in order for family members, community responders, and people at-risk of opioid overdose to have access to overdose medication. We now need a reliable mechanism by which to ensure that community coalitions and families can access the medication **and** the training in its use.

Ensuring widespread access to opioid overdose medication is a specific harm reduction strategy recommended by the Alaska Opioid Policy Task Force, based on expert information and wide public support. We encourage you and the members of the Senate Health and Social Services Committee to support this bill as part of the multi-sector, community driven response to opioid misuse and abuse in Alaska.

Sincerely,

J. Kate Burkhart
Executive Director

cc: Philip Licht, Chairperson, ABADA
Charlene Tautfest, Chairperson, AMHB
Dr. Jay Butler, Chief Medical Office, DHSS