

**From:** [Sunny Hemen](#)  
**To:** [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#)  
**Subject:** SB51 - Support for Rural Public Representation on the Alaskan Veterinary Board  
**Date:** Thursday, April 06, 2017 2:46:46 PM

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Dear Senator MacKinnon,

I am a junior at Eagle Community School, which is in Eagle, Alaska, a rural town of about 90 people. The 160 mile dirt road out of Eagle is only open in the summer, making travel in and out very expensive during the winter.

In Eagle, the population of sled dogs far outnumbers the human population. In the past, my family has owned a small team of sled dogs that my father used on his trapline. Because there is not much representation for rural Alaskan areas, it is rare that a veterinarian visits our community. When our animals get sick, it is often too expensive to take them the 300 miles to the nearest veterinarian, so many times the only option is to put them down.

Because of this, I support SB51, with an amendment. Instead of requiring a veterinarian from a town with a population of 7,500 to be on the Alaskan Veterinary Board, I believe that rural Alaska would be better represented by a public member from a town with 1,000 or less residents that is off the road system. The reason that I believe this is that a veterinarian on the board may put their own economic interests before the needs of the Alaska public.

Thank you for your time.

Sunny Hemen