



April 18, 2017

The Honorable Paul Seaton
Chairman
Alaska State House Finance Committee
State Capitol
Room 505
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Chairman Seaton:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Alaska Osteopathic Medical Association (AKOMA) are writing regarding HB 159. This bill relates to the practice of osteopathic medicine, but includes incorrect and out-of-date nomenclature. The AOA and AKOMA respectfully request amendments to reflect accurate osteopathic medical terminology.

The AOA represents nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. AKOMA is a professional medical organization that represents over 200 DOs providing patient care in Alaska.

HB 159 incorrectly refers to the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) as the “National Board of Examiners for Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons” (page 8, lines 26-27). In addition, the terms “osteopath” and “osteopathy” are used throughout the bill; these terms reference foreign-trained practitioners who are *not* physicians, as they lack full and complete medical training and limit their services to osteopathic manipulation.¹ DOs, on the other hand, possess full practice rights in all states, including Alaska. The terms “osteopathic physician” and “osteopathic medicine” are used in the United States to reference physicians who have the same medical education, training and competency demonstration requirements as allopathic physicians (MDs). DOs additionally receive training in osteopathic principles and practice, as well as osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT), which involves using the hands to diagnose, treat and prevent illness or injury.² We would like to request that “osteopath” and “osteopathy” be replaced with “osteopathic physician” and “osteopathic medicine,” respectively, throughout the bill.

¹ See <http://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/about-om/US-vs-abroad>.

² See <https://www.osteopathic.org/OSTEOPATHIC-HEALTH/TREATMENT/Pages/default.aspx>.

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We appreciate your consideration of our proposed amendments to HB 159. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nick Schilligo, MS, Associate Vice President, State Government Affairs at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,



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President, AOA



Nancy Kragt, DO
President, AKOMA

CC: Mark A. Baker, DO, AOA President-elect
William J. Burke, DO, Chair, AOA Department of Governmental Affairs
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