



FOUNDATION

HEALTH PARTNERS

(907) 458-5300 Phone
(907) 458-5324 Fax
www.foundationhealth.org
1650 Cowles Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

February 7, 2018

The Honorable Cathy Giessel
State Senate
State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Subject: Support for SB108, Physician Licensure

Dear Senator Giessel:

Thank you for introducing SB 108 in recognition of improving the current physician licensure timelines.

I am writing in support of SB 108. Medical licensure is currently cumbersome and unwieldy. Time delays for clean applications (a good candidate with no issues) can be 4-6 months. In Fairbanks, we have lost several physician candidates due to this delay. Most recently, we had a cardiologist actively considering one of our two open positions. He wanted to come to Fairbanks but had another offer in a different state. Due to the delay of his licensure in Alaska, he took the other job and we still have an open position. Including the funds spent on recruiting this candidate as well as the increased costs of hiring temporary physicians (Locums Tenens) to fill this position, we have been out several hundred thousand dollars over the past two years this position has been open.

We have lost at least two other physician candidates for other positions over the past three years due to this issue. These physicians are often looking for a place to work, considering multiple offers, and cannot afford to wait an undue time to start working somewhere. Delays in licensure in the State of Alaska should not be the reason we lose physician candidates.

Recruiting physicians to Fairbanks and Alaska is difficult enough without being made even more difficult due to delays in licensure. We support any effort to make this procedure more streamlined for a candidate with an unblemished record. We certainly agree that the integrity and rigor of the licensing process must be maintained. Candidates with issues should certainly receive closer scrutiny. In this vein, we support giving the Executive Director authority to approve candidates with clean files and no red flags (as clearly defined in this legislation) rather than waiting for a quarterly Board meeting.

Sincerely,

Danny Robinette, MD. FACS
Chief Medical Officer, Foundation Health Partners
Fairbanks, Alaska
907-458-3550
danny.robinettefoundationhealth.org

Cc: Interior Delegation