



ALASKA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Committed to Advancing Alaska's Public Health Since 1978

ALPHA

March 25, 2019

The Honorable Lora Reinbold, Chair
Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Reinbold and Committee Members:

The Alaska Public Health Association (ALPHA) supports much needed revisions to Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes under SB 52. ALPHA supports the recommendations for comprehensive changes to Title 4 of the Statutes based on the *Alaska Title 4 Review for the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Recommendations for Statutory Change (updated March 2017)* also known as the Title 4 Review Report.

For your information, attached is ALPHA's Resolution *Supporting Comprehensive Revisions to Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes*, updated in January of 2019.

The Alaska Public Health Association (ALPHA) is a non-profit membership organization of over 150 health professionals, advocates, students, and community members dedicated to improving the health and well-being for all Alaskans. ALPHA is also the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association.

We believe that updating Title 4, as a whole, will benefit communities, businesses, public health, safety and welfare in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Patty Owen
Policy Committee Co-Chair

cc: Senator Micciche



Supporting Comprehensive Revisions to Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes

WHEREAS, alcohol abuse costs Alaska more than \$1.8 billion annually, and these costs are borne by the State and local governments, employers and residents;¹

WHEREAS, over 18% of Alaskans 18 and older reported binge drinking in the last month, almost 14% of high school age youth reported binge drinking in the last month, and nearly 7% of Alaskans age 12 and older reported that they are dependent on alcohol;²

WHEREAS, in 2014 alone, one-quarter of all arrests and offenses in Alaska (9,438) were alcohol related, and 17 percent of victims (7,313 individuals) suffered from alcohol-related crimes;³

WHEREAS, creating and maintaining a logical, comprehensive and consistent system of alcohol control is necessary for balancing the economic interests of alcohol businesses with the public's interest in protecting community health and safety;

WHEREAS, Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes is the law regulating alcoholic beverages in the State of Alaska;

WHEREAS, the AS 04.06.090 states that the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board “shall control the manufacture, barter, possession, and sale of alcoholic beverages in the state” and that the Board “is vested with the powers, duties and responsibilities necessary for the control of alcoholic beverages”;

WHEREAS, Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes has not been substantially updated since 1980;

WHEREAS, over 100 stakeholders and staff representing the alcohol industry, public health, local governments, and public safety spent over 11,000 hours of dedicated time over five years to craft proposed revisions to Title 4;⁴

WHEREAS, the Title 4 Review stakeholders group worked together to develop recommendations for comprehensive changes to Title 4 of the Statutes and produced the *Alaska Title 4 Review for the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Recommendations for Statutory Change (updated March 2017)* also known as the Title 4 Review Report,⁵

WHEREAS, stakeholders who served on the Underage Drinking Committee thoroughly considered and ultimately adopted many of the existing recommendations in *Alaska's Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking (2013)*, which includes evidence-based strategies for addressing underage alcohol use and represents the work of partners including the Department of Health and Social Services, the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, the Division of Juvenile Justice, the Alaska Native Justice Center, the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and the Alaska Court System;⁶

WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report *as a whole*, promote a fair business climate and protect public health and safety, create rational regulation for all tiers of the state's alcohol industry, limit youth access to alcohol, and promote responsible alcohol use and reduce the harms of overconsumption;



WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report will *as a whole*, benefit communities, businesses, and public health, safety and welfare;

WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report will benefit youth by ensuring that the penalty for underage drinking does not jeopardize a young person’s future, providing an incentive to seek needed alcohol education or treatment, and holding adults who supply alcohol to youth more accountable;

WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report will benefit public health by preventing youth access to alcohol, preserving population limits on alcohol licenses and managing density of alcohol outlets, promoting responsible and moderate consumption at alcohol establishments and events, and regulating purchases of alcohol shipped directly to customers;

WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report will benefit public safety by providing resources for local education and enforcement, improving law enforcement’s ability to address violations of Title 4, and increasing availability of data about alcohol entering local option communities; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations in the Title 4 Review Report will improve the Alcohol Beverage Control Board’s and agency staff’s ability to effectively administer and enforce Title 4 and its associated regulations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the members of the Alaska Public Health Association, on this date of January 22, 2019 support the recommendations of the Title 4 Review Report and urge the Legislature to enact them.

¹ McDowell Group (2017). *The Economic Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Alaska, 2016 Update*, prepared for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. . <http://www.mcdowellgroup.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/mcdowell-group-economic-costs-of-drug-abuse-final-4.24.17.pdf>

² Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2016; Alaska Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2017; SAMHSA National Survey of Drug Use and Health, 2013-2014

³ McDowell Group (2017). *The Economic Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Alaska, 2016 Update*, prepared for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

⁴ For more information about the Title 4 Review process and stakeholder recommendations, please refer to the project’s summary report: *Alaska Title 4 Review, Recommendations for Statutory Change*, updated October 2017.

⁵ *Alaska Title 4 Review, Recommendations for Statutory Change*, updated March 2017
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/portals/9/pub/abc/alcoholstatutesregulations/title4review_report_mar2017_logos.pdf

⁶ Alaska Committee to Prevent Underage Drinking (ACPUD) (2013). *Alaska’s Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking*.

Amended January 22, 2019