

March 16, 2020

Senator Peter Micciche
State Capital Room 508
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Senate Labor and Commerce hearing - Senate Bill 52

Dear Senator Micciche,

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority supports CSSB52, representing revisions to Title 4 of the Alaska Statutes regulating alcohol. SB52 is the product of a more than seven year effort to improve the structure, organization, and policies associated with Title 4.

The Trust has been an active partner during the multi-year Title 4 reform effort, along with a multitude of partners representing the alcohol industry, public health, and public safety. We are committed to this legislation as we see in it many public health benefits that directly impact the health and wellness of all Alaskans – and more specifically for beneficiaries of the Mental Health Trust. In addition to health-related impacts, alcohol abuse and over-consumption is costly to our state, the 2019 McDowell Report commissioned by the Trust clearly outlines those economic impacts- upwards of \$2.4 billion annually.

Title 4 is outdated as it currently stands, and does not create a clear and consistent framework for alcohol regulation. The Trust engaged in Title 4 reform early, recognizing that improving the statutes will have a positive impact on public health. Limiting youth access to alcohol and controlling online alcohol sales are included in this bill and are examples of positive public health impacts. We also see value in better defining Alaska's alcohol laws, creating a clear framework that is easier to understand, comply with, and enforce.

SB52 creates a rational regulatory structure for our states licensing system and promotes responsible alcohol use – all while simultaneously supporting a fair business environment. SB52 represents the thoughtful, transparent, and stakeholder-driven process that contributed to the final recommendations included in this bill. SB52 has garnered unprecedented support of public health, public safety as well as the alcohol industry.

We very much appreciate your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Michael K. Abbott,
Chief Executive Officer
The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority