

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## SPONSOR STATEMENT

### SB 21

*"An Act relating to mobile intensive care paramedics; relating to duties of the State Medical Board and the Department of Health and Social Services; and providing for an effective date."*

SB 21 consolidates oversight of the emergency medical services system under a single agency. Currently, regulation of the EMS system is split between the State Medical Board and the Department of Health and Social Services.

Paramedics are an essential part of a comprehensive emergency medical services system. This bill will transfer paramedic licensure to the department's State Emergency Medical Services Office. The department already has responsibility for certifying emergency medical technicians, EMT instructors, EMT training, ground ambulance, medevac services, and even paramedic instructors and paramedic training. However, paramedics are licensed by the State Medical Board.

This bill does not change the scope of practice, license requirements, or fee schedule for the approximately 600 paramedics licensed in Alaska. The medical direction will be provided by the existing DHSS Chief Medical Officer and the EMS Medical Director's Committee comprised of 11 members specialized in emergency medicine.

The bill provides for a smooth transition on January 1, 2022, with an immediate effective date for regulations, provisions to ensure current biennial licenses remain in effect until new regulations are in place, and continuity of license histories with the transfer of files and pending disciplinary cases.

The State Emergency Medical Services Office is well-positioned to support this change with a staff of six full-time positions, five of which are required to have paramedic experience. Existing data systems are ready to incorporate paramedic licensure.

Aligning all EMS services under a single agency promotes public safety while bringing new efficiencies to the licensure process.