

February 27, 2026

To Whom it may Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the National Board for Respiratory Care to express strong support for respiratory care licensure in Alaska. This legislation represents an essential step toward ensuring that patients across Alaska have consistent access to high-quality respiratory care delivered by qualified, competency tested respiratory therapists.

Respiratory therapists play a critical role in the care of individuals with asthma, COPD, cardiac conditions, trauma, and many other complex medical needs. Their work requires specialized training, clinical judgment, and the ability to work effectively in high-stakes situations. Licensing these professionals is a straightforward and necessary measure to protect patient safety and uphold standards of care.

In addition to strengthening professional standards, this legislation directly enhances patient safety. Alaska is currently the only state in the nation that does not license respiratory care providers. This gap places patients at unnecessary risk and creates an inconsistency in professional expectations compared to the rest of the country. By adopting licensure, Alaska would align with national standards and ensure that respiratory therapists practicing in the state have demonstrated their competence through a rigorous, nationally recognized examination. Licensure also provides Alaskans with access to a critical communication network that supports collaboration between states.

Requiring a credentialed, competency-based standard is clearly in Alaska's best interest. It strengthens the healthcare workforce, enhances patient trust in respiratory care providers, and ensures that those providing respiratory care are fully prepared to meet the demands of modern medical practice.

I respectfully encourage support for respiratory care licensure in Alaska to help secure safer, more reliable respiratory care for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Lori M. Tinkler, MBA, ICE-CCP
Chief Executive Officer

