

Hahlen Behnken

From: Liane Erickson <drerickson@thriveak.com>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2026 8:25 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Support for SB 193 –Prescriptive Authority for Naturopathic Doctors

Senator Dunbar,

I am writing in strong support of SB 193, relating to the practice of naturopathy in Alaska.

I am a licensed naturopathic doctor practicing primary care in Alaska. In my clinic, I provide over 1,000 patient visits per year. As primary care providers, naturopathic doctors evaluate patients, order laboratory testing and imaging, manage chronic and acute conditions, and provide preventive care. However, under current law, when a prescription medication is clinically indicated, I must refer my patient to another prescribing provider solely for that purpose.

This requirement creates unnecessary barriers. It increases cost for patients, delays care, fragments treatment plans, and reduces efficiency in our healthcare system. Patients must pay for additional visits that are often duplicative, even when their condition has already been fully evaluated.

SB 193 does not grant unrestricted prescribing authority. It creates a structured and supervised pathway for naturopathic doctors to prescribe certain prescription medications within defined limits.

The bill requires that a naturopathic doctor:

- Pass the pharmacology portion of the Naturopathic Physicians Licensing Examination (or equivalent approved examination);
- Complete a one-year period of physician supervision before receiving full endorsement;
- Meet continuing education requirements of 60 hours every two years, including 20 hours in pharmacotherapy;
- Remain subject to state oversight, investigation, and disciplinary authority.

Importantly, SB193 does not allow naturopathic doctors to prescribe controlled substances, cancer chemotherapeutic drugs, antipsychotic medications, or poisons. It does not authorize surgery. It preserves strong regulatory safeguards.

Naturopathic doctors complete approximately 4,100 hours of doctoral-level medical education, including at least 1,200 hours of supervised clinical training. Pharmacology is taught during the first two years of training and reinforced throughout clinical education. Our pharmacology education is comprehensive and comparable in hours to that of MD/DO training and is further strengthened through hands-on clinical application during supervised rotations under licensed doctor oversight.

For comparison, nurse practitioners complete approximately 500–750 clinical training hours before being granted prescriptive authority in Alaska. Nurse practitioners and physician assistants are not required to complete residency training prior to receiving prescriptive authority. The absence of a residency requirement is sometimes raised as a reason to oppose prescriptive authority for naturopathic

doctors; however, Alaska already grants prescribing privileges to other primary care providers without residency requirements.

Naturopathic doctors currently practice with prescriptive authority in 16 other jurisdictions in North America. The safety record in those jurisdictions is exemplary. Additional information regarding regulatory structures and safety data can be found at <https://www.fnmra.org>.

SB 193 aligns prescriptive authority with our training while maintaining supervision and accountability. This bill improves access to timely, coordinated, and cost-effective primary care while maintaining patient safety.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 193.

Sincerely,
Dr. Liane Erickson
Licensed Naturopathic Doctor
Treasurer, Alaska Association of Naturopathic Doctors
Anchorage, Alaska

Hahlen Behnken

From: Harbir Makin <harbir.makin@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 6:30 PM
To: ted.eisheid@akleg.gov; Sen. Matt Claman; Rep. Zack Fields; Rep. Carolyn Hall; Rep. Ashley Carrick; ep.robbyn.frier@akleg.gov; Rep. Dan Saddler; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Rep. David Nelson; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Robert Myers; Pam Ventgen
Cc: Creed Mamikunian; Ankita Ambasht
Subject: IMPORTANT-URGENT Subject: Please Oppose HB 147 & SB 193 — Protect Patient Safety and Evidence Based Care

Dear Matt, Ted and respected Alaska Legislators: Greetings.

As you are aware, I have practiced Internal Medicine in this State for more than 4 decades and I rarely, if ever get involved in the politics of medicine. I have had the honor of being a physician for some of you and many others including politicians, attorneys, judges and many physician colleagues.

I have in my long tenure never opposed the introduction of bills that are introduced affecting the healthcare in this state, including allowing Nurse Practitioners and Physicians Assistants to practice independently. Their paid lobbyists introduced these bills, and these physician-extendors calling themselves doctors, quietly advocated their way into providing UNSUPERVISED treatments to our citizens using " POOR ACCESS AND PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE " as an excuse. These physician extendors practice medicine with bare minimum training (mostly done with online Zoom classes to get a "doctorate degree") and unsupervised. Having quietly observed the consequences for years and watching patients subjected to low-quality care driven by inadequate medical judgment and decision-making, not only jeopardizes their safety but also drives up costs across a health system already strained by substandard care leading to unnecessary referrals to specialists and excessive and unnecessary diagnostic testing driven by lack of confidence and inadequate training.

It is time to oppose the bills that are quietly introduced into the legislation by self-serving mercenary lobbyists who do not understand or care about the long-term consequences of these legislations.

Therefore, I am now writing to urge you to oppose **HB 147** and **SB 193**, the two bills that would dramatically and dangerously expand the scope of naturopathic practice in Alaska. These bills would grant naturopaths broad prescriptive authority and medical diagnostic privileges that far exceed their education, training, and regulatory oversight, as a result, they pose significant risks to patient safety.

Naturopathic training is not equivalent to medical education or residency. Naturopathic programs are not accredited medical schools, and naturopaths do not complete ACGME-accredited residency training. Yet these bills would grant them authority that exceeds what a newly graduated MD or DO may do in Alaska without completing the state's required minimum of two years of accredited residency. This undermines long-standing patient-protection standards of this State and across the country.

Alaska would become a national outlier. Only 22 states and a few territories license naturopaths at all. Fewer than half of those allow any prescriptive authority, and nearly all restrict it to a very narrow formulary. HB 147 and SB 193 would give Alaska one of the broadest naturopathic scopes in the country — without the training requirements that other states mandate. Are we going to allow Chiropractors next to have hospital privileges, prescribe prescription medications including narcotics for pain control and perform spine surgeries and procedures ? You will be setting up a wrong and dangerous precedent that will affect the citizens of this state for years to come.

There are no nationally recognized standards of care for naturopathic prescribing. Unlike physicians, naturopaths do not operate under evidence-based prescribing guidelines, specialty society standards, or a national regulatory framework. Granting broad prescriptive authority without these safeguards puts patients at risk of delayed diagnoses, inappropriate treatments, and missed opportunities for timely medical intervention.

Naturopathic practice is rooted in alternative medicine, not FDA-regulated care. Naturopathic practice relies heavily on supplements, herbal preparations, and non-evidence-based modalities. Patients who choose alternative care should be free to do so — but alternative medicine should not be presented to the public as equivalent to science-based medical practice.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to:

a) Reject HB 147 and SB 193

b) Maintain naturopaths in their current role as alternative-care providers and not encroach allopathy which is beyond their scope of training and practice

c) Protect patient safety by ensuring that medical diagnosis and prescribing remain tied to medical education, residency training, and evidence-based standards.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter and I respectfully ask for your commitment to safeguarding the health of Alaskans. I would be happy to engage in a dialogue, for one and only one reason which is to safeguard my patients.

Sincerely,

Harbir Makin. MD

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receive it for delivery to an addressee, is not authorized to read, disseminate, forward, copy, distribute, or discuss its contents, or any part thereof. Anyone else must immediately delete the message, and reply to the sender only, confirming you have done so.

Bruce W Campbell

Re: Support SB 193, Naturopathy
Date: March 5th, 2026

Dear Chairman Alaska Senate Health and Social Services Committee:

It is my pleasure to testify in support of SB 193. This is an important update to Alaska's existing statutes regarding the practice of Naturopathy.

I am a Retired State Employee, testifying on my own behalf. As a Retiree my primary insurer is Medicare. As you may know, or will find out after you turn 65, Medicare first determines what services it will cover and at what rate it will pay. Medicare does not cover Naturopathy.

Alaska's health insurance is managed by Aetna. Aetna is the secondary provider. Aetna covers the Naturopathic services I receive. Without the haircut Medicare gives to physician provided services.

Medicare shaves the reimbursement rate for physician provided services significantly. So much so that after you turn 65, along with many Alaskans, you may find it difficult to find a medical services as many MD's do not accept patients whose primary insurance is covered by Medicare. A not insignificant issue when an individual attempts to remain at home in Alaska in their later years. This bill helps retirees remain in Alaska by adding Naturopaths to the depth of care they can receive in Alaska.

As an individual receiving Naturopathic care I am first impressed with the laboratory and evidence based considerations evaluated for my care. Naturopathy focuses on underlying cause and effects. The second, and perhaps more important aspect of Naturopathic care I receive is the time spent explaining the linkage between the lab results to my individual case. The depth of the explanation is very important to me, as it focuses my attention to changes needed for successful treatment as well as side effects to observe and report. I do not feel rushed.

I had an arthritic hip replaced by a fantastic surgeon in Alaska a few years ago. He required patients and our home support (spouse) to undergo training prior to the surgery. We learned how use of an ice machine could supplant use of the more serious opioid pain medications. And the training included supplements to facilitate recovery. Some supplements were to be taken well before surgery. Others were not to be taken for two weeks prior to surgery. And yet others were for after the surgery. I was encouraged to share the training with my regular physician, but to please not change the supplement schedule unless my doctor had training in Naturopathic medicine. The result is that I took only one of the prescribed opioid pain killers out of the hospital, and from then on Acetaminophen was more than sufficient.

One of the aspects of SB 193 I appreciate is the exclusion from the prescription of any of the heavy opioid medications that are causing such tragic results in the country. Once the trial lawyers finish their harvest of billions from the pharmacy industry, one suspects they will come for the real money – by suing every physician who has ever prescribed one of the dangerous drugs. Drugs that are a not insignificant part of death of more Americans every year than died in ten years of the Vietnam War.

This is an important bill. Please give it a due-pass recommendation and advance it from committee.

Thank You, Bruce W Campbell

Hahlen Behnken

From: Abraham Tsigonis <tsigonisa@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 21, 2026 8:35 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Rep. Zack Fields; Rep. Carolyn Hall
Subject: Oppose HB 147 & SB 193 Naturopathy Expansion

Hello Zack, Carolyn, and Forrest,

I am a general surgeon and my wife is a family physician in Fairbanks, AK.

As physicians, we urge you to oppose HB 147 and SB 193. These bills grant naturopaths medical authority without medical training, exceed national norms, and put patients at risk. Please keep naturopaths in their role as alternative care providers and protect the integrity of evidence based medical practice.

Abraham and Katrin Tsigonis

Hahlen Behnken

From: Jerry Flynn <jerryflynn8675309@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 14, 2026 8:14 PM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: Please oppose HB 147 and SB 193

Senator Dunbar,

As a licensed family physician who has served the citizens of Alaska for the last 15 years, I am asking you to oppose HB 147 and SB 193. These bills grant naturopaths inappropriate medical authority without appropriate medical training. This is no joke, and yet over and over this issue keeps coming up.

Naturopaths are alternative care providers, and simply don't have the training or appropriate oversight to act in such a role. Blurring the line between a trained physician and a naturopath is dangerous, and results in inappropriate prescribing. We need to remember that naturopaths chose their role, and were not forced into it. They need to simply know when to refer their patients to appropriate providers who have appropriate training. You wouldn't want me flying a passenger plane if I deluded myself into thinking I knew how to do it.

In order to practice in Alaska, I had to graduate medical school, pass multiple boards examinations, and complete a three-year residency under direct supervision of competent attending physicians. The citizens of Alaska will not be better off by allowing fake practitioners to sneak through a back door to obtain licensure and prescribing authority.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Respectfully,
Jerald Flynn, MD

Chief of Staff, Providence Seward Medical Center
Medical Director, Providence Seward Mountain Haven
Diplomate, American Board of Family Medicine
Voter and concerned Alaskan citizen

Hahlen Behnken

From: Jenna Schmidt <jenna_schmidt@outlook.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 11:59 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: HB 147 and SB 193

Hello,

I am reaching out in regards to HB 147 and SB 193. As a family physician, I urge you to oppose HB 147 and SB 193. While I respect our colleagues in Naturopathy, the role of Naturopathic medicine is alternative to allopathic (medication, procedure) based care. My patients often benefit from seeing a naturopath when Western allopathic medicine for complementary naturopathic care, because we physicians don't always have all the answers. We undergo extensive training, as well as midlevel providers like ARNPs and PAs, specifically in the type of medicine we practice. Same as us not learning the depth and breadth of naturopathy, naturopath training in allopathic medicine is not near what our profession has to do in terms of supervised direct patient care learning. One can pass a pharmacology test, however it takes rotations on the wards, direct patient care to truly understand the risks/benefits of medications and perform the standard of care in alignment with patient safety.

With the bill as it currently stands, Naturopaths would have more prescriptive authority than a fresh med school graduate. As someone earlier in my career I can still distinctly remember my days as a new medical resident (the 3+ years of hands on learning required to be board certified to practice medicine). I knew medications and their uses, but needed to practice it with supervision in order to learn through mistakes in a controlled environment. I was corrected many times by my attendings, preserving patient safety, to the point of competency for independent practice.

I do understand the need for access to care and the ability of a trusted naturopathic doctor to push patients towards evidence based care with medication management. Medicine is not perfect, and people seek alternative medicine for many reasons. This bill is essentially redefining naturopathic care. As an alternative, I think a collaborating physician seeing patients working with the naturopath preserves patient safety, rather than a minimally limited prescription authority granted to naturopaths.

To summarize, my concerns are:

- Competency and safety for naturopaths prescribing medication, cannot assure that they will perform the standard of care
- Redefinition of naturopathic care instead of more collaborative complementary approach
- Lack of limitations to what naturopaths can prescribe
- Lack of ongoing supervision
- Lack of standards of care for naturopath prescribing
- Lack of a medical board (there is none), with strong allopathic medicine oversight for prescribing practices

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to clarify any questions, feel free to reach out!

Hahlen Behnken

From: laurie montano <lmlalderson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 11:06 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: SB193

Dear Senate members of the Health and Social Services Committee,

As a physician who has been practicing medicine in Anchorage for almost 24 years, I am writing to oppose SB 193.

This bill is dangerous. It gives naturopathic providers prescribing authority that is outside the scope of their training. They attend naturopathic schools that are not based in science and not accredited medical schools. As physicians, we not only attend our four years of medical school training, but we then attend a minimum of 2 years of post graduate residency training where we are supervised by other physicians who continue to educate us and give us more medical training. By increasing the scope of naturopaths outlined in this bill, you will fundamentally redefine what a naturopathic provider can do without the training required for medical doctors who do this job. This training is in place to not only give the prescribers the knowledge needed to be aware of how drugs physiologically work in the body but how they interact with each other. This expansion threatens the safeguards to our patients in our communities.

My first concern is patient safety, my second concern is increasing costs of medical care in an already stretched system. My patients or friends who have seen naturopathic providers often have many many unnecessary lab tests ordered that are not backed by evidence based medicine. Prescribing unnecessary medications or those not supported by science adds costs to our care that we as a community cannot afford.

Please note I am not opposed to patients seeking a naturopathic provider for an alternative to western medicine. I fully support this option for patients so they can choose this route if this fits with their ideals. I just respectfully ask that they stay in their lane and practice the alternative medicine they were trained to do.

Sincerely,

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Laurie Montano, MD
Board certified physician in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics
Co-owner Alaska Internal Medicine and Pediatrics
Clinical Faculty University of Washington School of Medicine

Hahlen Behnken

From: Rebekah Robinson <rar96md@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 9:42 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: SB 193

Dear Senator,

I am requesting that you reject HB147 and SB 193. These bills would give naturopaths medical authority without medical training, and put patients at risk. I have seen a number of cases of people getting unnecessary and potentially dangerous treatment by naturopaths and hope you will keep naturopaths in their role as alternative care providers. In opposing these bills, you will protect Alaskan citizens and the integrity of evidence-based medical practice.

Thank you,
Rebekah Robinson, MD

Sent from my iPad

Hahlen Behnken

From: Karpinsky, Gabi <Gabrielle.Karpinsky@providence.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 1:50 PM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar
Subject: URGENT: Protect Patient Safety — Oppose HB 147 & SB 193 Naturopathy Expansion

To whom it may concern:

I urge you to Reject HB 147 and SB 193

- Maintain naturopaths in their current role as providers of alternative care, not medical practitioners
- Protect patient safety by ensuring that prescriptive authority and medical diagnosis remain tied to medical education, residency training, and evidence based standards

My name is Gabrielle Karpinsky. I am double boarded in Pediatrics and Pediatric Critical Care, practicing at Providence Alaska Medical Center. I have spent over 8 years on my medical degree, continued to pursue a PhD in cancer biology AND finished 6 years of residency and fellowship training. As a physician, these bills grant naturopaths medical authority without medical training, exceed national norms, and put patients at risk. I have had naturopaths write their own diagnostic tests for pediatric patients that led to unnecessary testing, inappropriate familial treatment plans and high risk sedation situations. Additionally, naturopaths do not follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics for preventative medicine and milestones, leading to misdiagnoses of developmental delay and therapy for children. Our training and privileges should be kept different and separate.

Regards,

Gabrielle Karpinsky MD, PhD
Pediatric Critical Care Medicine | Trauma Liaison
Clinical Assistant Professor | University of Washington School of medicine
Providence Alaska Children Hospital

Anchorage, AK 99508

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Hahlen Behnken

From: Megan Clancy <clancymegan37@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 1:29 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: Natropath prescribing

As an Infectious Disease physician, I urge you to oppose HB 147 and SB 193. These bills grant naturopaths prescribing authority without medical training and put patients at risk.

I and my infectious disease colleagues frequently receive referrals from Natropathic specialists that believe their patients' have infections. Their diagnostic testing and treatment regimens are at best not based in science and at worst quite dangerous. Antibiotics are not benign medications. Untrained professionals using inappropriate antibiotics for prolonged periods of time in patients without infections is going to cause serious harm. Moreover, in an era where we are running out of antibiotics to use, it can further derail our ability to treat infections for decades to come.

Please vote no on these bills.
Sincerely, Dr. Megan Clancy MD

Hahlen Behnken

From: laurie montano <lmlalderson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 13, 2026 11:06 AM
To: Sen. Forrest Dunbar; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Matt Claman; Sen. Löki Tobin; Sen. Robert Myers
Subject: SB193

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Sincerely,

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Laurie Montano, MD

Board certified physician in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics

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Clinical Faculty University of Washington School of Medicine