

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## Subcommittee Chair:

Dept. of Family &  
Community Services

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Dept. of Health & Social  
Services

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Dept. of Law

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University of Alaska



*Serving House District 13:*

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*Dimond Business District,*

*East Sand Lake,*

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## REPRESENTATIVE ANDY JOSEPHSON

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### HB 272: Activity-Specific Prosthetics & Orthotics

### SPONSOR STATEMENT

“An act relating to insurance coverage for prosthetic and orthotic devices; relating to medical assistance for prosthetic and orthotic devices; and providing for an effective date”

House Bill 272 ensures insurance coverage for prosthetic and orthotic devices that enable their wearers to participate fully in all elements of daily life. Activities such as running, biking, swimming, bathing, and showering are critical to healthy and hygienic living. This bill will make it possible for Alaskans living with full or partial limb loss to engage in those activities.

Currently, individuals needing a prosthetic or orthotic can generally receive coverage for a single prosthetic or orthotic, but these devices often do not have the flexibility or range of motion required for physical activities, water activities, and even showering. Insurance policies are vague about coverage for additional devices, meaning that patients can be denied coverage for an activity-specific device even when such a device has been deemed medically necessary. The consequences to the patient include deterioration of intact limbs (for example, reduced muscle mass, weakened tone, direct pain, and referred pain), risk of injury from use of a device beyond its intended use, obesity, and mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety. The devices can cost from \$5,000 to \$50,000, making them prohibitively expensive for many.

HB 272 requires insurers, including Medicaid, to provide prosthetic and orthotic coverage at least equal to Medicare’s coverage. Specifically, the bill requires that coverage of prosthetic and orthotic devices include all devices that a health care provider deems required to meet the covered person’s medical needs for a range of activities, and provides safeguards around financial requirements, and requires written, detailed explanations of any denied claims.

Alaskans who have lost a limb have not lost their desire to participate fully in life. Activity-specific prosthetics and orthotics let children discover sports and keep adults in the outdoor activities they love. I humbly request your support.

*Bill version: 34-LS1296\N, 1/22/26*