

Date: January 2026

Alaska State Capitol
120 4th Street
Juneau, AK 99801

On behalf of Central Peninsula Hospital, I am writing to express our strong support for the establishment of licensure requirements for Respiratory Therapists in the State of Alaska.

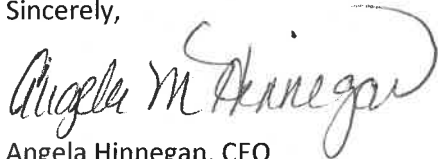
Respiratory Therapists (RTs) are highly trained healthcare professionals who provide essential care to patients suffering from chronic lung disease, acute respiratory failure, and other critical conditions. In settings ranging from hospitals and emergency departments to long-term care and home health environments, RTs play a vital role in ensuring the safe and effective use of advanced life-support technologies.

Alaska currently remains the only state in the nation without licensure requirements for Respiratory Therapists. This lack of regulation not only creates inconsistency in care delivery but also places both patients and providers at risk. Establishing licensure will:

- Ensure consistent standards of care and improve patient safety;
- Align Alaska with national standards and best practices in respiratory therapy;
- Strengthen the healthcare workforce by formally recognizing the expertise and education of Respiratory Therapists; and
- Provide essential accountability and protection for patients and healthcare providers alike.

We believe that advancing licensure for RTs is both a matter of public health and a step toward enhancing the overall quality of care in Alaska. We strongly encourage policymakers help ensure that Alaskans receive the highest standard of respiratory care possible.

Sincerely,



Angela Hinnegan, CEO

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March 12, 2026

House Finance Committee
State Capitol Room 516
Juneau, AK 99801
House.Finance@akleg.gov

RE: AHHA Supports House Bill 362 – Respiratory Care Licensure

Dear House Finance Co-Chairs and Committee Members,

For over 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and a growing number of healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

AHHA supports House Bill 362 and the professional licensure of respiratory therapists in Alaska. Passing this legislation will align Alaska with the rest of the country and provide a consistent standard for care, increase patient safety, and lead to greater service quality.

As employers and partners of respiratory therapists throughout Alaska, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of this service and the therapists. Implementing licensing standards that are consistent with the rest of the country is a practical step for supporting our respiratory therapists and prioritizing access to quality, sustainable healthcare for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA
President & CEO

Alaska State Medical Association

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March 20, 2026

Co-Chair Representative Neal Foster
Co-Chair Representative Andy Josephson
Co-Chair Representative Calvin Schrage
House Finance Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Chairs Foster, Josephson and Schrage,

The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians and physician assistants statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of all Alaskans.

ASMA supports House Bill 362, licensure for respiratory care professionals.

Alaska is the only state that does not license Respiratory Care Practitioners. These professionals are vital to patient care in the emergency department, the intensive care unit and in outpatient management of chronic diseases. Licensure helps ensure that those performing respiratory care services are adequately trained and will promote professional standards and accountability as well as enhance patient safety. Lack of licensure leaves an open door for people with lower standards and less training and experience to come to Alaska when they cannot meet the standards required in all other states.

Patient safety and quality care demand that Alaska join all other states in requiring licensure for Respiratory Care Practitioners. Please pass House Bill 362 this session.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rhene Merkouris, M.D. President
Alaska State Medical Association