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Sectional Analysis

House Bill 70, Version A – “Rico’s Law”

An Act related to emergency medical services and operational canines.

Section 1: Amends AS 08.98.125 exempts emergency medical technician or mobile intensive care paramedic from penalty for practicing veterinary medicine without a license when providing emergency medical services to an operational canine as provided under AS 18.08.093.

Section 2: Amends AS 18.08.075(a) to authorize emergency medical technicians and mobile intensive care paramedic to enter a building or premises where a report of an injury or illness has taken place or where there is reasonable cause to believe an operational canine has been injured or is ill to render emergency medical care and direct the removal of a motor vehicle or other thing determined necessary to prevent further harm to operational canines.

Section 3: Amends AS 18.08.086(a) to provide for civil liability protection to providers, or a director of a provider licensed under AS 18.08.082 who administers emergency medical services to an operational canine within the scope of the person’s certification or licensure and if the operational canine reasonably seems to be in immediate danger of serious harm or death.

Section 4: Amends AS 18.08.087 to remove language limiting physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, or physician assistants’ permission to disclose medical information of a patient to emergency medical technicians and mobile intensive care paramedics when the information is not for the purpose of evaluating the performance of an emergency medical technician, mobile intensive care paramedic or physician.

Section 5: Adds two new subsections to AS 18.08.087. The first allows licensed veterinarians to disclose medical or hospital records of an operational canine to an emergency medical technician or mobile intensive care paramedic for the purpose of evaluating the performance of an emergency medical technician or mobile intensive care paramedic. The second adds language restricting physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, or physician assistants’ permission to disclose medical information of a patient to emergency medical technicians and mobile intensive care paramedics when the information is not for the purpose of evaluating the performance of an emergency medical technician, mobile intensive care paramedic or physician.

Section 6: Adds one new section to AS 18.08 with two subsections. Subsection (a) allows for an emergency medical technician to provide emergency medical services to an operational canine if

a veterinarian is unavailable to provide emergency medical services in a reasonable amount of time, the emergency medical technician or mobile intensive care paramedic has received training on providing emergency medical services to operational canines, is trained to provide comparable medical services to humans, is authorized to provide the comparable medical service to a human under the scope of their license or certification, and has informed consent from the owner or someone authorized to make medical decisions about the operational canine or is providing medical service in accordance with a written protocol developed by a veterinarian. Subsection (b) requires the emergency medical technician or mobile intensive care paramedic to transfer the operational canine to a licensed veterinarian at the earliest practicable opportunity and comply with all laws governing the administration of drugs or biologics to a human when administering a drug or biologic to an operational canine.

Section 7: Amends AS 18.08.100(b) to clarify that if individuals licensed under this chapter determine, during a telehealth encounter, that the encounter will extend past their scope of practice they shall advise the person who is authorized to make medical decisions for the operational canine that they are not authorized to provide the services needed, provide recommendation for an appropriate provider, and limit the encounter to the services they are authorized to provide.

Section 8: Amends AS 18.08.200 to define “veterinarian” in this chapter the same as it is under AS 08.98 and “operational canine” as a dog used by law enforcement or other government operations; or in search and rescue operations.

Section 9: Sets an effective date of January 1st, 2026.