



Alaska Native Health Board

THE VOICE OF ALASKA TRIBAL HEALTH SINCE 1968

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May 7, 2023

The Honorable Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Senate
Alaska State Capitol, Room 427
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: Support for Senate Bill 94 - Profession of Pharmacy

Dear Senator Giessel,

The Alaska Native Health Board (ANHB)¹ writes in support of Senate Bill 94 (SB 94), “an Act relating to the Board of Pharmacy.” Recruiting and retaining pharmacists and pharmacy technicians remains a persistent challenge statewide, especially in rural communities. Tribal Health Organization (THO) pharmacies throughout the state have struggled to fill vacancies for qualified pharmacy technicians, with positions remaining unfilled for months. To address this issue, THOs are exploring innovative avenues for recruitment such as pharmacy technician apprenticeship programs. The expertise and efficiency at the Board of Pharmacy and Alaska Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing plays an essential role in ensuring that THO’s have an adequate and competent pharmacy workforce as we partner to address workforce shortages.

The Alaska Board of Pharmacy’s mission is to promote, preserve, and protect the public health, safety, and welfare by effectively controlling and regulating the practice of pharmacy. However, legislation is needed to ensure the Board of Pharmacy can continue to protect Alaskans and SB 94 is the result of collaboration between the Alaska Board of Pharmacy and the Alaska Pharmacists Association (AKPhA) to modernize pharmacy practice statutes.

SB 94 will update pharmacy practice statutes to:

- Streamline the licensure process while improving public safety
- Align pharmacy statutes with other AK boards’ and other states’ statutes
 - Replace one of the two public member seats with a pharmacy technician seat
 - Adopt regulations for retired pharmacist status
 - Clarify board executive administrator’s salary, allowing flexibility for a pharmacist to serve in this role in the future

¹ ANHB was established in 1968 with the purpose of promoting the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and cultural well-being and pride of Alaska Native people. ANHB is the statewide voice on Alaska Native health issues and is the advocacy organization for the Alaska Tribal Health System (ATHS), which is comprised of tribal health programs that serve all of the 229 Tribes and 180,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people throughout the state. As the statewide tribal health advocacy organization, ANHB helps Alaska’s Tribes and Tribal programs achieve effective consultation and communication with state and federal agencies on matters of concern.

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF
ISLANDS ASSOCIATION

ARCTIC SLOPE
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

BRISTOL BAY AREA
HEALTH CORPORATION

CHICKALOON VILLAGE
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

CHUGACHMIUT

COPPER RIVER
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN
TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

EASTERN ALEUTIAN TRIBES

KARLUK IRA
TRIBAL COUNCIL

KENAITZE INDIAN TRIBE

KETCHIKAN
INDIAN COMMUNITY

KODIAK AREA
NATIVE ASSOCIATION

MANIILAQ ASSOCIATION

METLAKATLA INDIAN
COMMUNITY

MT. SANFORD
TRIBAL CONSORTIUM

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF EKLUTNA

NATIVE VILLAGE OF EYAK

NATIVE VILLAGE
OF TYONEK

NINILCHIK
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

NORTON SOUND
HEALTH CORPORATION

SELDOMIA VILLAGE TRIBE

SOUTHCENTRAL
FOUNDATION

SOUTHEAST ALASKA REGIONAL
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

YAKUTAT TLINGIT TRIBE

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM
HEALTH CORPORATION

VALDEZ NATIVE TRIBE

- Increase access to epinephrine auto-injectors, medication delivery devices for anaphylaxis emergencies
- Ensure the Board of Pharmacy powers and duties support the Drug Supply Chain and Security Act (DSCSA) related to manufacturers, out-of-state pharmacies, and internet pharmacies to ensure Alaskans receive safe medications

ANHB appreciates the opportunity to support SB 94, which would allow the Board of Pharmacy to continue to meet its mission in promoting, preserving, and protecting Alaskans' public health, safety, and welfare. If you have any comments or questions, you may contact ANHB by e-mail at anhb@anhb.org or by telephone at (907) 729-7510.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.F. Smith".

Chief William F. Smith, Chairman
Alaska Native Health Board
Tribally-Elected Leader of the Valdez Native Tribe

CC: Senate Finance Committee