



## Mental Health and Psychedelic Medicine Task Force

*An Act establishing the Alaska mental health and psychedelic medicine task force; and providing for an effective date.*

CSHB 228 (MLV) - 33-LS0976\P

HB 228 seeks to create a task force to consider barriers to the implementation of and equitable access to certain psychedelic medicines ahead of the expected FDA authorization<sup>1</sup> of prescription drugs that would fall under this category.

The task force will report to the Legislature by December 31, 2024 what regulations or other changes are necessary in the state for Alaskans to safely benefit from these new treatments for mental health issues such as treatment-resistant depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use disorder and other mental health issues common in Alaska.

Alaska has the highest share of veterans per capita<sup>2</sup> and one of the highest suicide rates in the nation.<sup>3</sup> Coupled with also being a state where 43.3% of women and 30.2% of men in Alaska experience domestic violence and related crimes in their lifetimes and where 84% of American Indian/Alaska Native women experience violence,<sup>4</sup> there is a potential for these medicines to have a profoundly positive impact on the mental health crises we see statewide. This task force is an opportunity to ensure we are prepared for the potential federal medicalization of these life-saving and life-changing medicines.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthcare-brew.com/stories/2023/10/27/first-fda-approved-psychedelic-drug-potentially-2024>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.axios.com/2023/11/10/map-where-veterans-live-us>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/suicide-mortality/suicide.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <https://domesticviolence.org/states-highest-domestic-violence-rates/>