

Alaska State Legislature

Session:
Alaska State Capitol, Rm.104
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Representative Justin Ruffridge

District 7 - Kenai/Soldotna

HB 371 Sponsor Statement

"An Act relating to medical review organizations; relating to the definition of 'health care provider' and 'review organization'; and relating to the duties of the chief medical officer in the Department of Health."

The purpose of House Bill 371 is to modify public health review organizations to improve the review committee process and prevent and reduce avoidable deaths, injuries, and illnesses of Alaskans.

Review organizations (also known as review committees) conduct a thorough review of deaths, injuries, and illnesses by examining clinical and other records to identify areas of concern and recommend interventions and improvements to services to improve health outcomes of Alaskans. Review organizations that are recognized in Alaska law (AS 18.23) include hospitals, clinics, associations of health care providers, professional standards organizations, the State Medical Board, health care accreditation organizations, and those established by the Commissioner of Health to review public health issues regarding morbidity and mortality.

This bill clarifies the sharing of information from the review organizations if it does not violate federal or state confidentiality laws; provides a definition of health care provider rather than a specific list of provider types; changes the designation of who can approve Department of Health morbidity or mortality review committees from the Alaska State Medical Board to the Department of Health Chief Medical Officer; modifies the membership of Department of Health review committees by removing the requirement that composition of the committee be 75% health care providers; and allows all nationally-recognized groups that accredit health care organizations to have review organizations.

This bill over time will improve the composition of the review organizations to better inform public policy and improve Alaskan's health.

Please join me in support of House Bill 371.

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