ANPA

Alaska Nurse Practitioner Association
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Senator Johnny Ellis
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801
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Senator Ellis:

The Alaska Nurse Practitioner Association (ANPA) represents Alaskan nurse practitioners (NPs) who provide health care services throughout Alaska. NPs frequently work in underserved areas, both urban and rural, and are often the only health care provider in some communities. NPs are dedicated to improving the quality of health and safety for Alaskans.

ANPA members are acutely aware of the profound effects of drug/alcohol abuse and injury in their communities. ANPA strongly supports Senate bill 23 entitled "An act relating to immunity for prescribing, providing, or administering over dose drugs." These health care providers will be able to educate patients and family members on the safe and effective use of these medications such that individuals closest to the person at risk can initiate life-saving intervention if needed.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Agency in 2015 National Drug Threat Assessment Summary over 120 people die in the US daily from drug overdose. Additionally, the number of deaths from controlled prescription drugs has increased at an alarming rate. There is evidence that individuals using controlled prescription drugs are transitioning to less expensive heroin use. For these reasons opiod prescription durgs and heroin are ranked as the most significant drug threats in the United States (US Dept. of Justice 2015 report.)

In Alaska, the problem is wide-spread and affects individuals across all socioeconomic borders, both rural and urban. A situation which poses a huge burden on our health care system, health care providers, and individuals in our communities. Senate Bill 23 will be beneficial for the individual afflicted with addiction but will also benefit health care providers who will have an effective tool to fight this life threatening disorder.

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We do not wait for the house to burn down before we call the fire department. We do not wait for a diabetic to be in hyperglycemic coma to initiate treatment. Addiction is a treatable disease but the patient needs to be alive to receive treatment. Passing SB 23 is a step towards providing a safe route back to a healthy, productive life for our communities.

We respectfully request that the Alaska Legislature pass SB 23. Thank you and if you have any questions please contact us.

Sincerely,

Shannon C. Hilton, ANP, ACNS
President
Alaska Nurse Practitioner Association
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Hull-Jilly, D., Frasens, T., Gebru, B., &Boegli, K. (2015) Health Impacts of Heroin use in Alaska. Released July 14, 2015

http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/rr2015_01.pdf

US Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration: 2015 National Drug Threat Assessment Surve. http://www.dea.gov/docs/2015%20NDTA%20report.pdf