



30th Alaska State Legislature

House Labor and Commerce Committee

Chair:

Rep. Sam Kito
State Capitol 403
907-465-4766

Vice Chair:

Rep. Adam Wool

Members:

Rep. Chris Birch
Rep. Andy Josephson
Rep. Gary Knopp
Rep. Louise Stutes
Rep. Colleen Sullivan-
Leonard

Committee Aide:

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Sponsor Statement

House Bill 346

DENTIST: TEMPORARY PERMIT

House Bill 346 would allow the Alaska Board of Dental Examiners to grant temporary licenses when a dental specialist is suddenly incapacitated or when a small community does not have access to specialized care.

Alaska has a limited number of dental specialists, many of whom serve multiple small communities. There are nine dental specialties as defined by the American Dental Association: oral surgery, orthodontics, periodontics (gums), endodontics (root canals), pedodontics (kids), prosthodontics (replacing teeth), public health, , oral pathology (oral diseases), and oral radiology (x-rays); however, Alaska does not have a single specialist in oral radiology. Of the 647 licensed dentists in Alaska, 136 dentists are specialists.

Dental specialists in Alaska are limited in number and have full schedules. If a specialist is suddenly incapacitated, there is no reserve to draw from, and multiple small communities could be without specialist care for an extended period of time. Small communities have historically had a hard time recruiting healthcare practioners and the trend seems to be worsening.

Temporary dental licenses would allow the Alaska Board of Dental Examiners to maintain dental care in these communities until a full-time dentist can be found. The board is ideally qualified to evaluate the need to circumvent transitional licensing procedures for dentists in exceptional circumstances.

HB 346 will allow temporary licenses to be granted in times of need at the discretion of the Alaska Board of Dental Examiners. Please support HB 346.



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