

From: [Sarah Hood](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#); [Senate Health and Social Services](#)
Cc: [Sarah Hood](#)
Subject: Physician Assistant confirmation for Ms. Samantha Smith
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 4:41:13 PM

Dear Members of the House Health and Social Services Committees,

I am writing to you in response to the confirmation hearing held 3/25/25 for Ms. Samantha Smith, PA-C for the state medical board PA position.

As a lifelong Alaskan, a PA for more than 17 years in Alaska and a previous member of the state medical board I am urging you against the confirmation of Ms. Smith.

Although I greatly appreciate her desire to serve on the board, her testimony was very concerning.

Most importantly, she violated HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, when she discussed patient information during her confirmation. This is a violation of federal law and demonstrates unprofessional conduct and significant lapse of judgement.

As stated by Ms. Smith, she practices in a unique situation not found with any other practicing PA in our state. This is the only setting she has worked in during her short time as a PA. This restricts her understanding of the PA profession and our role in Alaska. This limits her knowledge of how PAs are integrated into clinics, hospitals, education programs, surgical settings, etc. Her ability to fully comprehend the PA profession is inadequate and deficient and will inhibit her to fully comprehend investigations, complaints, regulations, statutes, or other violations.

Ms. Smith stated she is unwilling to involve herself with the PA profession in Alaska or at a national level, she referred to them as money grabbers. The Alaska Academy of PAs (AKAPA) plays a vital role as a resource for questions, employment opportunities, applications, collaborative plans, CME, students, etc. Restricting interactions between AKAPA and the state medical board representative could be detrimental to PAs and the medical community. Her lack of wanting to be part of a professional group raises great concern about her long-term commitment to the medical board.

Her overall impression of "Alaska subpar medicine" comes from a perspective she stated is limited and restricted. She works in a chiropractic clinic limiting her to a specific type of clientele. She has no family medicine, urgent care, emergency medicine

or underserved experience to truly gain an understanding of medical care in Alaska. Her comments were a discredit to all areas of medicine and all providers including MD, DO, NP, PA, RN, Dentist, Chiropractors, etc.

Ms. Smith's comments about the medical board and how it functions were false. Her statements were inaccurate and demonstrated she lacks an understanding of the medical board members and the Executive Secretary roles, how licenses and investigations are processed, the differences between statute and regulations, and why the board meets monthly. This was decided by the board members not because we were overwhelmed or behind but rather to process applications and investigations monthly verses waiting for the next quarterly meeting. This reduced the number of temporary licenses, ultimately reducing the licensing workload and licensing delays of 3-6 months to 2 weeks. The Executive Secretary signs off applications that meet specific criteria which follows suit with other boards, not because the board members are "unable to get the job done".

Again, I appreciate Ms. Smith's willingness to service in a public role, but I believe a PA with more years of experience, a broader understanding of the role of PAs, and is familiar with the uniqueness and challenges all providers face in Alaska should hold this critical role. Any provider who describes our medical professionals as "subpar" shows they do not understand our state, our medical community, or desire to serve our patients and should not represent us or any medical professional.

Sincerely,
Sarah Hood, PA-C

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The Honorable Andrew Gray
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

The Honorable Justin Ruffridge
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representatives Gray and Ruffridge:

I am writing this letter to express my concerns about the nominated PA representative for the Alaskan Medical Board, PA Samantha Smith. I have been a PA in this state for 7 years and have had the privilege of working in both primary care and surgical specialties. During each of these opportunities I have witnessed the amazing care provided by our medical community, including my fellow PA colleagues. Though I encourage PA Smith's enthusiasm in providing care to the Alaskan community, I do not believe she adequately represents her colleagues. She currently works in regenerative medicine and has proclaimed that she does not support standardized medicine including pharmacology and surgery. Not only does she renounce essential components in standard of care, but she also discredits the entire Alaskan medical community describing the services we provide in a uniquely challenging environment as "subpar." She credits her experience in the lower 48 with her success and wishes to bring these ideals to her aspired position in Alaska. PA Smith does not seem to be open to learning anything about the State in which she practices. Additionally, PA Smith is not currently involved in any Alaskan PA organizations yet she believes that she should represent our community as a whole. A major area of concern that has already come to light occurred during her congressional confirmation hearing in which she broke HIPAA regulations by exposing a patient's identity. This is extremely concerning given that with her role on the board, she will need to be trusted with confidential information. Even before being officially appointed, she has already demonstrated a deeply troubling lack of concern for confidentiality. I am proud to be part of the medical community of Alaska and I want to make sure that we have a representative that accurately reflects our values, understands why Alaska is exceptional, and respects our colleagues. For these reasons, please reconsider the election of PA Smith as our representative on the medical board.

Very respectfully,

Bailey Green, PA-C

Wasilla, AK.

From: [Neil Nardini](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Cc: [Senate Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: PLEASE VOTE NO ON SAMANTHA SMITH'S CONFIRMATION
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 11:08:35 PM

Dear Alaska State Legislators,

First, Thank you for your time in reviewing my letter explaining my concerns with confirming Samantha Smith as the PA Representative on the Alaska State Medical Board.

I would like to express my desire for the committee to vote no on the confirmation of Samantha Smith as the PA representative. I listened to her testimony to the committee on March 25th during her confirmation hearing. I was rather appalled by most of her testimony as well as her response to some of the questions asked by the committee. Besides her lack of Alaskan experience and knowledge as to how the PA profession works in Alaska, she has a short narrow work history that is very different from what the vast majority of PA practice in the state. Her opinion of the medical providers in Alaska as Sub-Par is not only insulting but rather narrow-minded. While I do admire that she has patient centered care on her mind, her sole reason for applying to be a part of the medical board appears more retaliatory in nature. It appears that she has a vendetta to settle with the medical community as her approach to medicine is far more aligned with Eastern homeopathic medicine. Her lack of experience in performing things as minor as writing prescriptions seems simple but leads to a major array of questions such as if she has any experience referring out to fellow physicians, PA's, or NP's that may hold the experience that she lacks, especially in emergency situations. Understanding that referrals are not always a part of all scopes of medicine, it is 100% vital to practice in a manner consistent with Physician and PA standards and this includes knowing where your knowledge is limited and using the experience of highly trained and experienced professionals.

Her negative approach to how medicine is practiced in Alaska will definitely limit her abilities to judge her other fellow medical providers unbiasedly, which is a VERY IMPORTANT responsibility of being on the State Medical Board.

I would also like to point out that her testimony not only demeaned all Alaskan providers, it also just created a legal issue as she VERY CLEARLY VIOLATED HIPAA LAWS by stating the name of one of her patients live over a public forum on a video platform. This very confirmation should include a motion to report her for a very serious HIPAA violation and action should be taken. This alone should end her confirmation consideration and move her into a disciplinary setting. She is very adamant that patient complaints over providers should be handled in a very quick fashion, as this was the very reason that she applied to board which was also part of her testimony on the March 25th committee hearing.

In recap, I highly recommend that the committee vote NO ON THE CONFIRMATION. I think that the committee should immediately refer Samantha Smith, PA-C to the State medical board for disciplinary action for her gross misconduct making a HIPAA violation live on a video recorded public record during her testimony. I will gladly file the complaint with the State Medical Board as this needs to be done even if for some bizarre reason a vote for confirmation results in confirmation and even if she withdraws her name from consideration.

Thank You again for your time,

Neil Nardini, PA-C
Palmer, Alaska

From: [Kelsey Cain](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#); senate.hss@akleg.com
Subject: Medical Board PA Representation
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 10:29:30 PM

Good evening,

My name is Kelsey Cain, and I am a physician assistant born and raised in Alaska. I have been a practicing PA in our state for the last 4.5 years with combined experience in vascular surgery, breast care and surgery as well as primary care. I am writing to respectfully voice my **strong opposition** to the appointment of PA Samantha Smith as the next physician assistant representative on the Alaska State Medical Board.

This seat on the board is critically important. It serves as the regulatory voice for our profession at a time when modernization efforts like SB 89 are reshaping how PAs practice. The person filling this role must deeply understand Alaska's unique healthcare landscape — from rural access issues to the cultural diversity of our patients — and must demonstrate a strong commitment to PA professionalism, regulatory compliance, and patient-centered care.

PA Smith and I have a similar level of experience — roughly five years as certified PAs. However, I am deeply concerned that her limited scope of practice and lack of alignment with PA professional standards may reflect poorly on early-career PAs across the state. I believe it is essential that newer PAs are represented by someone who embraces collaboration, honors our regulatory framework, and is actively engaged with the broader professional community.

PA Smith is not originally from Alaska, and while outside experience can be valuable, it is essential that the PA representative on the board have deep awareness of the unique cultural, geographical, and access challenges that Alaskan residents face. From urban hubs to remote villages, healthcare delivery here is unlike anywhere else — and it demands a voice with firsthand knowledge and strong ties to our communities.

In reviewing the confirmation hearing, several concerning aspects of PA Smith's current practice were raised:

- She is currently employed in a chiropractic office, where it appears that the chiropractor may be directing the plan of care and referring patients to her for treatment. This raises serious questions about scope of practice, supervision, and medical appropriateness.
- She stated she does not prescribe medications, yet performs interventional injections — an inconsistency that requires clarification.
- She also indicated that Dr. Hudson, her supervising physician, is a patient of the practice — a serious HIPAA concern and a potential conflict of interest.
- Her scope of practice appears extremely limited, and without prescribing authority or broader clinical engagement, it is unclear how she will remain current on the medical knowledge required to meaningfully contribute to board decisions that affect PAs across multiple specialties and settings.
- Furthermore, PA Smith noted she practices entirely solo — which raises concern about her level of ongoing collaboration and exposure to team-based care, a foundational element of the PA profession, especially in Alaska.

I appreciate PA Smith's enthusiasm for patient advocacy and safety and this letter is not intended to be a personal critique. Rather, it is a call for thoughtful, qualified, and representative leadership

during a time of significant change. Please consider my concerns and **strong opposition to confirming PA Smith.**

Respectfully,

Kelsey Cain, MCHS, PA-C

Anchorage, AK

907-406-4696

From: [Erin Carrick](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Opposition to confirmation of PA Sam Smith to Alaska State Medical Board
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 9:03:26 PM

To the esteemed members of the Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee-

The appointment of a certified physician assistant (PA-C) to the state medical board should be carefully considered and after listening to the testimony from the meeting of March 25, in the case of the PA in question, several concerns arise.

Foremost, PA Smith practices in a very unique and niche practice situation in Anchorage that does not reflect the experiences and varied practices of most Alaska physician assistants. I fear that, in combination with her somewhat limited time in Alaska, she may not have sufficient familiarity with the state's specific healthcare needs and regulatory environment.

In addition, her stated lack of desire to engage with state organizations to learn more about local practices and regulations could hinder her ability to contribute effectively to the medical board.

I also have concerns regarding a blatant HIPAA violation during her testimony when she referred to her supervising physician in terms of being a patient. The mention of this information is concerning given that it does not comply with HIPAA regulations and she is applying for a regulatory board.

Although I appreciate my colleague's enthusiasm, I cannot give my support to her appointment.

I believe an ideal candidate should demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of the unique healthcare landscape in Alaska, a commitment to working with others in the profession they are representing, and significant knowledge of the current state regulations and statutes.

Due to multiple concerns, I strongly recommend AGAINST confirmation of PA Sam Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board.

Thank you,

Erin Carrick, PA-C

From: [Mary Perez](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Opposition to PA Samantha Smith Appointment to the Alaska State Medical Board
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 9:19:38 PM

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Mary Perez PA-C, ATC, currently practicing as a physician assistant in primary care and urgent care in Anchorage. I have been a practicing PA in Alaska for two years and a resident here for over 12 years. Prior to becoming a PA I was an athletic trainer here in Alaska for 12 years, serving on the Alaska Athletic Trainers Association state organization and working with athletes from all over the state including the most rural villages. I would like to voice my strong opposition to the appointment of PA Samantha Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board.

After hearing testimony given by Samantha Smith, PA-C, ATC yesterday in regards to the Alaska Medical Board representation I have several concerns about her appointment to this position. As a PA-C, ATC I have a similar professional background as PA Smith, however I have been extensively involved in my state organization as an athletic trainer and can not fathom appointing a fellow physician assistant to this position who does not work with other PAs and has no vested interest in representing her fellow PAs. As a newer PA, I have found developing relationships with my fellow PAs and physicians in the state to be important to providing high quality patient care and professional development. By developing these relationships, I have a better understanding and perspective of the history of PAs in Alaska, the current legislative concerns and future goals of the fellow PAs across multiple specialties in the state. As PA Smith testified, she does not work with any fellow state PAs and is not involved in any professional organizations. I find this very concerning for someone who now wants to represent an entire profession of providers who you do not have a working relationship with. As a PA representative on the Alaska State Medical Board, a PA should not solely represent one's personal interest but the interests of PA colleagues and patients around the state.

As PA Smith testified, she has little to no rural medical experience. One of the crucial roles that PAs fill in Alaska is providing access to care in rural areas. She can not effectively speak to the needs for this sector of providers on the Alaska State Medical Board. One rural rotation in PA school and working for a privately owned chiropractic office in the most populous city in Alaska does not prepare you to understand the unique needs of patients and providers who rely on and work in the rural medical system.

Again, I would like to voice my strong opposition to the appointment of PA Samantha Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board. A strong candidate for this position would have longevity in the state, be active in their professional organizations and at the very least have relationships with fellow Physician Assistants in the state.

Thank you for your time and hearing my concern,

Mary Perez PA-C, ATC

Dear esteemed members of the Senate and House,

My name is Morgan Walsh, I am a 14-year Alaskan resident living in Anchorage. I have written this letter today to express my significant apprehension regarding the current appointee for the PA representative position on the Alaska State Medical Board, Samantha Smith.

I have several concerns with her testimony the 03/25/2025 House Health & Social Services committee. Her position that Alaskan health care is subpar is, in my opinion as someone who has been both providing and receiving care here for well over a decade, short-sighted. I agree with Ms. Smith's position that access to care within the state can at times be limited. However, to assert that bad or unsafe care is routinely provided by medical professionals in the state is an unfair assessment that was not presented with facts but rather with biased opinion based upon her limited time providing care here. I speculate that this view is further limited by the niche position in her current practice. To date, I have never heard of a PA working under a Chiropractor and I am concerned that her viewpoints based upon experience in her current position are not representative of how Physician Assistants are utilized within Alaska. I am worried that a PA who does not work as a member of a typically modeled care team or have any experience in rural medicine may not be the best candidate to represent the thousands of other PAs who do.

Of the highest importance, I am also gravely concerned about her blatant HIPAA violation when she revealed her supervising physician to be a personal patient, including divulging how often she provides medical services to him and what treatments are completed. I do not believe that any potential appointee who would so casually violate health care law and her responsibility to uphold and protect the privacy of her patients has the professional capacity to serve in such an important position.

I do hope that Ms. Smith can find alternative ways to fulfill her desire to improve health care in Alaska and appreciate her commitment to safe and effective health care delivery.

I am humbly requesting that you please reconsider this appointment.

Thank you for your time,

Morgan Walsh

From: [Jess Harper](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#); [Senate Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Recommend against confirmation of PA Smith to the State Medical Board
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 7:35:51 PM

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Jessica Harper and I am a pediatric physician assistant (PA) practicing in Anchorage Alaska. I am writing to recommend **against** the confirmation of PA Samantha Smith as the PA representative on the State Medical Board. After listening to her testimony at the Health and Social Services Committee meeting on March 25, 2025 there were several things that caught my attention:

1. She is very new healthcare provider (as I am myself, having just graduated 5 years ago). She has limited practice experience and of the experience she possesses, it is limited to a specific specialty (regenerative medicine).
2. Poor representation and involvement with others in our profession. To my knowledge, and as she self identified, she is not involved with other PAs in the state of Alaska. We have the AKAPA which she is not a member or participant. She does not attend our networking meetings or participate in our collaborative groups. Plain and simple she does not work with other PAs. Alaska and the healthcare community is small. If you were someone who truly wanted to represent our profession, why wouldn't you be involved with your local organization and get to know those of whom you are hoping to represent? Change starts on the ground or "in the trenches" as some would say.
3. HIPPA - she unfortunately reported one of her patients by name, and shared details of his medical care. If she is unable to protect patient privacy in such a public forum, how am I to trust that she will not continue to disclose confidential information or other issues that need the utmost discretion?
4. She repeatedly bashed the quality of medical care provided here in Alaska and used anecdotal evidence of what she has seen in her small clinic, to support her claim. This is simply inappropriate.

As a PA working in Primary care, I lack confidence in her ability to competently and objectively fulfill the PA seat on the State Medical Board.

As a PA with a voice in the state, I strongly recommend AGAINST the confirmation of PA Sam Smith to the SMB.

Thank you for your time,
Jessica Harper PA-C, IBCLC

From: [Kari Bernard](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Recommend against confirmation of PA Smith to the State Medical Board
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 4:29:33 PM

To Members of the Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee,

My name is Kari Bernard and I am a physician assistant (PA) in the state of Alaska. I am writing to recommend **against** the confirmation of PA Samantha Smith as the PA representative on the State Medical Board. After reviewing her testimony at the Health and Social Services Committee meeting on March 25, 2025, it is clear that she lacks the qualifications and professional decorum to appropriately serve on the Alaska State Medical Board.

PA Smith is a new healthcare provider, having practiced for only 5 years. Her experience is limited to a niche specialty (regenerative medicine) practiced in an urban setting. She admits to interacting primarily with the chiropractor at her clinic, rather than other PAs, and to not being involved with the community of PAs in Alaska. Further, when questioned about her potential role on the medical board, she struggled to accurately articulate what her scope of practice would be.

- *It is unclear how an isolated, urban PA who works in a chiropractic clinic and does not understand how the medical board functions has the capacity to assess the quality and safety of care delivered across specialties, in various clinical contexts, and in Alaska's many rural settings.*

In addition to her lack of experience, PA Smith's decorum during the committee meeting raised several red flags. PA Smith's conduct was concerning for two reasons. First, she committed a HIPAA violation by reporting one of her patients by name and sharing details of his medical care during the committee meeting.

- *Her public behavior failed to embody the legal requirements to protect patient privacy, making me concerned that she might carelessly disclose protected health information or confidential professional details commonly handled in the context of a medical board investigation.*

Second, PA Smith made several broad sweeping and disparaging remarks about the quality of medical care provided in Alaska, repeatedly deeming it "subpar" to what was delivered on the East Coast. She never substantiated these claims with evidence from publicly available medical board investigations, instead basing them on anecdotes provided by the chronic pain patients treated in her subspecialty chiropractic clinic.

- *Despite the lack of representativeness of her patient population, PA Smith failed to recognize the limitations of her perceptions and instead defended her disparaging statements with subjective and distorted reasoning. I am concerned that she will bring this same biased approach to her work on the State Medical Board.*

Her lack of experience combined with her breach of patient privacy during the committee meeting itself and her biased contempt for the Alaskan medical community makes me doubt her capacity to competently and objectively fulfill the PA seat on the State Medical Board. For these reasons, I strongly recommend **against** the confirmation of PA Samantha Smith to the State Medical Board.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kari Bernard, PhD, PA-C

Mobile: 907-227-6291

From: [Betsy Douds](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Recommend against the confirmation of PA Smith
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 9:31:22 PM

Sam smith

To Members of the Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee

I am writing regarding the potential appointment of PA Sam Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board. I have reviewed her resume, sat in on her first State Medical Board Meeting, and listened to her testimony in your committee; and am left deeply concerned that PA Smith is in line to potentially become the PA representative on the SMB.

PA Smith expressed great passion for the care she provides. But she has very little practical experience actually working with other physician assistants. This fact alone is alarming being that she would be acting as our representative. Her own work experience is very specialized and exceptionally unlike that of most PAs who practice throughout Alaska. She demonstrated enthusiasm and energy, but lacked curiosity and a desire to continue to learn about her colleagues whom she would be representing. And she spent much of her testimony comparing Alaska's "subpar" medical care to that of the east coast which she heralded as exceptional.

I recommend against the appointment of Sam Smith as the Physician Assistant representative to the State Medical Board. It is important that the PA representative carry a depth of understanding of the lineage and history of our profession in Alaska. It is true that we, like the rest of the United States, are experiencing a shortage of providers. So it is all the more vital that this representative comes to the table with knowledge of the struggles our health care professionals face. PA Smith has shown us that for all of her eagerness, she simply lacks the background that would make her a reasonable candidate for this position.

We need a representative who understands the day to day struggles of providers in Alaska. I believe it is a little early in her career as an Alaskan PA to take on this responsibility. The PA representative to the State Medical Board should present with a team oriented mindset aimed at proactively working together to improve healthcare in Alaska. PA Smith is not that person.

I strongly encourage you **not** to confirm PA Sam Smith,
Thank you for your consideration.

Betsy Douds-Paczan, MPAS, PA-C

From: [Meagan](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: State Medical Board PA position
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 10:19:03 PM

Committee members,

My name Meagan Rector. I am currently employed in Alaska as a PA-C, specializing in orthopedic spine surgery. I am writing to urge you to vote against the confirmation of PA Samantha Smith as a member of the Alaska State Medical Board.

I was born and raised in Palmer, completed my PA education through the MEDEX program based in Anchorage and recently returned back to the state to raise my family. I take great pride in the medical community that I am a part of and care deeply for the residents of the state. I cannot help but feel troubled by the testimony of PA Samantha Smith. Frankly, offended as well. I practiced for 7 years out of state as a PA-C and never once heard the “common rumor” that medical care is “sub-par” in Alaska. Furthermore, since returning home I feel like I am part of providing exceptional care to patients, certainly not sub par care. I believe that PA Samantha Smith is clearly out of touch with the standards of care provided in this state. She provides an extremely narrow spectrum of care to patients in an extremely unusual setting. I do not feel like she can adequately represent Alaskans in the medical board because of this. I also do not feel comfortable having someone who so easily violates HIPPA regulations, as she did by saying she treats her supervising physician as a patient, being on our state medical board.

For these reasons I ask you to vote against the confirmation of PA Samantha Smith.

Thank you for your time.

Meagan Meekin Rector
PA-C

TESTIMONY

Email: house.hss@akleg, senate.hss@akleg

Legislature(2025 - 2026)

DAVIS 106

03/25/2025 03:15 PM House HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Thank-you Chair Representative Genevieve Mina and fellow board members for allowing me to testify regarding the confirmation of Alaska State Medical Board applicant for PA representative PA Samantha Smith.

I strongly recommend against confirming PA Sam Smith.

I have grave concerns about her ability to fully understand the issues facing the average Alaskan PA. I admire her enthusiasm, but feel she is not a valuable candidate for the State Medical Board. As per her resume, her 5 years of practice is niche and lacking broad clinical experience of PA practice in Alaska. 91.8% of PAs in Alaska practice in rural settings, as I have for 22 years. Almost 40% of Alaskan PA practice in primary care. Her lack of previous professional engagement at the local or national level is also a concern. I value volunteerism within your professional organization as a student or professional and see none of that on her resume.

I urge you to vote no on confirmation for PA Sam Smith. I thank the applicant for her interest and encourage her to engage with the local PA professional organization to learn the current pressing issues our local profession is facing.

Sincerely,

Wendy Smith, PA-C

wendysmithpac@gmail.com

Juneau Urgent and Family Care

[REDACTED]

Past President AKAPA 2017-2020

Past Board Member 2014-2016

From: [Katherine Van Atta](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Recommending against Confirmation of PA Samantha Smith to State Medical Board
Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 11:28:50 PM

Dear Honorable Members of the House Health and Social Services Committee:

I would like to recommend **against** the confirmation of Samantha Smith, PA-C to the State Medical Board.

I have been a Physician Assistant for 20 years, almost 16 of them in Alaska. Here, I have worked in about a dozen primary care clinics, both on and off the road system, and an emergency department. I also happen to be a Certified Nurse-Midwife and currently divide my time between working in a women's health practice on the road system, and a rural clinic off the road system.

I greatly appreciate Ms. Smith's passion for improving health care, and her desire to serve.

However, I found several facets of her testimony concerning, such as:

- She provided patient information during her hearing, which is a HIPAA violation unless the patient was agreeable to it, which was never specified. This is a significant lapse in judgment.

- Ms. Smith works in a very unique setting for a PA. This is not at all representative of where the majority of professionals regulated by the State Medical Board work.

- Ms. Smith reported that she chose not to be involved in professional groups that did not offer immediate benefit to her. This makes me wonder how committed she would be long-term to serving on the State Medical Board, which may not always offer significant direct benefit to her.

- Ms. Smith made a sweeping statement, "Alaska has subpar medicine." This is a presumptuous statement coming from a person relatively new to this state and their career, particularly a career in a niche field.

While I appreciate Ms. Smith's interest in this position and share her desire to improve health care, at this time, I believe this position would be better filled by someone with more experience working as a PA and more knowledge of the healthcare milieu in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Katherine Van Atta, PA-C, CNM

From: [Susan A](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Public Testimony Smith
Date: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 7:56:19 PM

Public Testimony in Opposition to the Appointment of Samantha Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board

Respected members of the committee,

I am here to express my strong opposition to the appointment of Samantha Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board. While I understand that the position requires a commitment to public health and the oversight of medical practices, I am deeply concerned that her involvement in promoting pseudoscientific viewpoints contradicts the very foundation of responsible medical practice.

Opposition Based on Pseudoscience:

In recent years, we have seen a growing movement to undermine well-established scientific principles in favor of personal ideologies and political agendas. This is particularly evident in the case of gender dysphoria, which has been widely misrepresented and misunderstood.

It is important to address the removal of gender dysphoria from the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). The American Psychiatric Association (APA) revised the DSM-5 to reclassify gender dysphoria, recognizing that not everyone who identifies with a gender different from the one assigned at birth necessarily requires medical intervention or diagnoses of mental illness. This change was made based on a better understanding of gender identity and the recognition that gender identity issues do not inherently imply pathology or distress for all individuals. In fact, gender dysphoria as a condition is only diagnosed when it causes significant distress or impairment to an individual's functioning.

The World Health Organization (WHO) accepted this change, aligning with the more modern and scientifically backed understanding of gender identity and its relationship to mental health. As science progresses, so too should our approach to these sensitive issues. However, the current administration, along with individuals such as Elon Musk, have been spearheading a counter-narrative that misrepresents scientific facts and targets vulnerable groups—particularly children—who are at risk of being misled and subjected to harmful practices.

The Impact of Pseudoscience on Alaskans:

Pseudoscience, particularly in the form of misleading and false medical claims about gender identity and its treatment, is not only harmful but dangerous. By promoting unsubstantiated therapies or policies based on personal beliefs rather than evidence-based practices, we put our most vulnerable populations—our children and families—at risk. It is unconscionable to allow unproven and harmful ideas to dictate the care and wellbeing of Alaskans.

Why This Is a Concern for the Alaska State Medical Board:

The Alaska State Medical Board is entrusted with the responsibility of protecting public health, ensuring that healthcare professionals adhere to the highest ethical standards, and ensuring that only evidence-based practices are applied in the state. Appointing someone who

may promote false or politically charged medical ideologies undermines the integrity of this board and can lead to the spread of dangerous medical practices. It is vital that board members hold themselves to the highest standards of scientific accuracy and medical ethics.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I urge the committee to reconsider the nomination of Samantha Smith to the Alaska State Medical Board. Pseudoscientific practices and the endorsement of politically motivated medical ideologies are not in the best interest of the people of Alaska. We must protect our children and families from the influence of misinformation, especially in the realm of healthcare, where trust and expertise should guide all decisions.

It is imperative that we appoint individuals to the board who are committed to science, evidence-based medicine, and the well-being of all Alaskans, without the influence of personal vendettas or false teachings.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sources for Citation:

American Psychiatric Association (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). American Psychiatric Publishing.

The DSM-5 includes updated terminology and classifications, including the reclassification of gender dysphoria to reflect more accurate and supportive approaches to understanding gender identity.

World Health Organization (WHO) (2019). International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

The WHO declassified gender dysphoria as a mental illness in the ICD-11, recognizing that being transgender is not a disorder but a natural variation of human diversity.

American Psychological Association (2020). Understanding Gender Dysphoria.

This resource outlines the psychological understanding of gender dysphoria and the importance of providing appropriate, non-pathologizing care for individuals.

Scientific American (2020). Elon Musk and the Misinformation Crisis.

This article examines the role of individuals like Elon Musk in spreading misinformation and the impact of that misinformation on public policy and medical practices.

The Lancet (2021). The Impact of Misinformation on Healthcare Decisions.

This article provides a comprehensive analysis of how pseudoscience and misinformation can lead to harmful healthcare decisions and affect public health.

Proof of their true intentions here in Alaska. Do not trust them for one damn minute! They are not like us.

https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/MEDboardbook_2025_03_20.pdf

These rules are in place for a reason. And now that you have loosened the rules, they have no reason. Stay vigilant.

Susan Allmeroth

Two Rivers

Myself

From: [Mike Michaud](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: PA Representation
Date: Wednesday, March 26, 2025 2:10:39 PM

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. After listening to testimony from the proposed physician assistant representative to the medical board, I would like to take the time to extend my concerns.

With SB89 in process this legislative session it has become incredibly important to me personally and professionally as a physician assistant to have someone on the board who will represent our profession well. I do not know Ms. Smith personally nor do I know her professionally. However the way with which she comported herself yesterday during her testimony raises some very large concerns for me in regards to her serving on the SMB as a representative of our profession.

Please do not confirm this candidate.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you again.

Michael Michaud PAC

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.
C. S. Lewis

From: [Kathy Hinkle](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Samantha Smith PA-C
Date: Friday, March 28, 2025 11:48:55 AM

Thank you for receiving my email regarding Samantha Smith PA-C potential appointment to represent Physician Assistants on the Alaska State Medical Board.

I am an Alaskan. I have lived in Alaska for 51 years. I have been practicing as a PA-C in Alaska for 24 years, 23 of which have been in remote Alaska.

Regarding Samantha Smith PA-C responses to questions at the recent Gavel meetings:

I am not impressed with her ignorance of Alaska Medicine, lack of experience working with indigenous cultures of Alaska, nor her scathing, uninformed arrogant attitude towards the profession she is seeking to represent.

It is my very strong opinion that she is not qualified to represent Physician Assistants in Alaska.

Respectfully,
Kathy Hinkle PA-C

Terrin Holliman, PA-C, MPAS
Palmer, AK

March 28, 2025

Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Members of the Alaska House Health and Social Services Committee,

My name is Terrin Holliman. I am a proudly Alaskan raised and trained Physician Assistant, currently practicing in southcentral Alaska for the past 12 years. I am writing to respectfully recommend against the confirmation of Physician Assistant Samantha Smith. After reviewing her testimony during the confirmation hearings on March 25 and 27, 2025, and reflecting on the concerns raised, I believe that her confirmation would be detrimental to the quality of healthcare in Alaska. There are several reasons for this recommendation, including violations of patient confidentiality, poor judgment, a lack of self-awareness, and a demonstrated bias against Alaska's medical providers.

First and foremost, during her testimony, Ms. Smith violated the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) by discussing confidential patient information in a manner that could potentially compromise patient privacy. As healthcare professionals, it is our duty to maintain patient confidentiality, and the fact that she appeared to disregard this crucial responsibility raises serious concerns about her suitability to serve in a role where patient trust is paramount.

Furthermore, Ms. Smith displayed poor judgment and a lack of self-awareness when she openly admitted to treating her own collaborative physician within her practice. This creates a clear conflict of interest, calling into question her ability to provide objective and unbiased care. Such behavior undermines the professional integrity that is expected from healthcare providers, and it is particularly concerning for someone seeking confirmation to serve in a leadership role in Alaska's healthcare system.

Additionally, Ms. Smith made statements during her testimony that Alaska has "subpar medicine." This remark demonstrates a lack of understanding and familiarity with the healthcare providers in Alaska, and it reflects a pre-existing bias against the state's medical community. Many Alaskan providers are highly skilled and dedicated professionals who work tirelessly in often challenging and resource-limited environments. Ms. Smith's comment not only shows disrespect for these providers but also indicates a lack of appreciation for the unique challenges and needs of the state's healthcare system.

Finally, Ms. Smith's current role as a Physician Assistant in regenerative medicine, while valid within its own niche, highlights her limited understanding of the diverse roles that

Physician Assistants, particularly those in rural and primary care settings, take on in Alaska. Her experience does not reflect the broad range of responsibilities and adaptability required by PAs working in rural and remote areas of our state. It is imperative that any PA serving in a leadership capacity in Alaska has a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by healthcare providers across the entire state, from urban to rural communities.

Given these concerns, I strongly urge the committee to reconsider the confirmation of Samantha Smith. Alaska deserves a healthcare leader who embodies professionalism, integrity, and a deep understanding of the state's unique medical needs. Unfortunately, based on her testimony and actions, I do not believe Ms. Smith possesses these essential qualities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Terrin Holliman, PA-C, MPAS

From: [Megan Rolinger](#)
To: [Senate Health and Social Services](#); [House Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Samantha Smith, PA-C
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2025 6:16:25 PM

Good evening,

I am a practicing Physician Assistant in the state of Alaska. I worked for SCF for 10 1/2 years and ANTHC for the last 2 years and I work on the North Slope. I have listened to a couple of Samantha Smith's testimonies on KTOO. I am absolutely fuming at her slanderous verbiage stating that the entire Alaska Medical Community gives sub par medical care and on top of that specifically naming medical facilities and making that judgement off of a few patients that she has seen and borderline violating HIPPA. She has no experience with providing medical care to remote communities or to the indigenous people of the state of Alaska. This is not the individual that I want representing me on the State Medical Board. I encourage all of you to vote no on Samantha Smith for the state medical board position. Not only do the PA's of Alaska deserve better, but Alaska deserves better!!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Megan Rolinger, PA-C

From: [Dominique Lawrence](#)
To: [House Health and Social Services](#); [Senate Health and Social Services](#)
Subject: Do not support
Date: Friday, March 28, 2025 6:52:26 AM

I would like to voice my opinion regarding NOT supporting Samantha Smith for representing the PAs on the medical board. I do not believe her views align with the majority of the PAs perspective and do not believe she will be a good fit. Can this position be reconsidered and someone else chosen or nominated?

Dominique Lawrence PA-C

Sent from my iPhone