

March 19th, 2013

Senator John Coghill
State Capitol Room 119
Juneau AK, 99801

Representative Bob Lynn
State Capitol Room 108
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Coghill and Representative Bob Lynn,

Please accept this statement as North Star Behavioral Health's opposition to section 12 of HB 127 and SB 72 which gives the Ombudsman's Office new authority and oversight of treatment facilities, or residential treatment programs accepting placement of juveniles committed to the custody of the Department of Health and Social Services. North Star has been in business for over 28 years, and provides behavioral health treatment for children and adolescents at both our acute hospital, and residential treatment facilities. North Star is committed to providing the children in our care and the employees who care for them a safe environment that complies with, or exceeds all local, state and federal requirements.

North Star program(s) are licensed by the State of Alaska, and accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations and the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services. Monitoring is also conducted by external organizations such as the Disability Law Center, State of Alaska Office of Children's services, and State of Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice. Additionally inherent with treating children, each patient has one or more of the following who monitor and participate in the care provided to patients: parents, family, Guardian Ad Litem(s), OCS social workers, external treatment providers and school personnel. One can surmise from reviewing all interested and involved parties that multiple levels of monitoring and or investigation is already in place.

HB 127 is unnecessary, redundant, and an inefficient use of resources given the onerous regulations and oversight already provided to health care facilities.

Thank you



M. Andrew Mayo, PhD
CEO North Star Behavioral Health