



Representative Ivy Spohnholz

House Health & Social Services Committee Chair

Serving House District 16: College Gate, Russian Jack, Nunaka Valley, & Reflection Lake

Committee Member: Education, Energy, Military & Veterans Affairs, Legislative Budget & Audit

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 318

"An Act extending the termination date of the Board of Social Work Examiners; relating to the composition of the Board of Social Work Examiners; and providing for an effective date."

House Bill 318 extends the Board of Social Work Examiners (board) to June 30, 2026 in accordance with the recommendation with the Division of Legislative Audit. It also removes a requirement that at least one of the licensed members of the board *not* be employed by a non-profit. This requirement was put into place to mandate that a private, for-profit social worker be on the board. However, this requirement has proven problematic over the years leading to long periods of vacancy on the board. This issue is discussed in the audit and in the subsequent agency responses.

The board is composed of five members including two licensed clinical social workers, one licensed master social worker, one licensed baccalaureate social worker, and one public member who has never been licensed by the board. The board regulates over 775 licensed social workers as of March 2017.

The duties of the board include issuing licenses to qualified applicants, establishing continuing education requirements and a code of professional ethics and standards, creating standards for supervisors and supervision, and adopting regulations as necessary.

The Division of Legislative Audit reviewed the operations of the board and concluded that the board is serving the public's interest by effectively licensing and regulating the profession.

The board is currently scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2018 and will have one year to conclude its operations unless the legislature extends the termination date. House Bill 318 mirrors the recommendations of the Division of Legislative Audit, and extends the termination date until June 30, 2026.

Session (January-April):
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone (907) 465-4049

Rep.Ivy.Spohnholz@akleg.gov
www.repivyspohnholz.com
Toll-Free (866) 465-4940

Interim (May-December):
1500 W. Benson Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone (907) 269-0123