



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATE LABOR & COMMERCE COMMITTEE

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Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson
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Senate Bill 172 – Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact

An Act relating to occupational therapist licensure; relating to occupational therapy assistant licensure; and relating to an occupational therapist licensure compact."

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 172 enacts the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact.

The Compact is an interstate compact that facilitates occupational therapy with the goal of making it easier for Alaskans to get help from an occupational therapist. This bill allows occupational therapists to work in different member states without repeatedly dealing with government red tape, while enhancing the state's ability to protect the public's health and safety.

Occupational therapists perform a vital healthcare service. They help people learn or reestablish the ability to safely and independently do many of the everyday tasks that most of us take for granted, from chewing and swallowing food, to dressing and undressing, to balancing and walking.

Currently, occupational therapy can be very difficult for Alaskans to obtain. With only one training program for occupational therapists in the entire state, we simply don't have enough occupational therapists for every Alaskan in need, particularly in rural parts of the state. The Compact enacted by SB 172 will draw more occupational therapists to our state and thus improve access to occupational therapy for Alaskans.

I respectfully ask for your support of this legislation.