



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community,
and Economic Development

BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AND
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

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April 18, 2025

The Honorable Genevieve Mina
Chair, House Health & Social Services
Alaska State Capitol, Room 416
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Mina,

On behalf of the Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Licensing Board, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 147. This legislation offers a crucial pathway for licensed Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) in Alaska to obtain voluntary prescribing authority for non-controlled medications under initial collaborative oversight.

House Bill 147 not only prioritizes patient safety, but it also aims to expand access to healthcare in Alaska's medically underserved communities. With the ongoing shortage of healthcare providers in our state, allowing qualified Naturopathic Doctors to help meet patient needs is both a practical and necessary step. By integrating NDs into the healthcare framework, we believe that House Bill 147 has the potential to significantly strengthen our healthcare system without compromising patient safety or the quality of care.

To become eligible for licensure, NDs must graduate from an accredited institution and pass two national board examinations, ensuring that their training is rigorous and comprehensive. This training includes nearly 1300 hours of clinical experience, which encompasses prescribing practices.

We find ourselves in a primary care crisis in Alaska, and granting NDs the ability to prescribe, as trained professionals, would be a significant step toward alleviating the burdens faced by our healthcare system.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We appreciate your consideration of our position on House Bill 147.

Sincerely,

Valerie Phelps

Valerie Phelps, PT, ScD

Chair, Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy