

February 16, 2026

**Alaska State Legislature**

**House Labor and Commerce Committee**

Co-Chair Representative Zack Fields

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Co-Chair Representative Carolyn Hall

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**Re: House Bill 195 – Pharmacist Patient Care Services [Support]**

Dear Chair Fields, Chair Hall, and Members of the House Labor and Commerce Committee:

On behalf of Albertsons Companies (ACI), I write in support of House Bill 195. ACI operates 21 community pharmacies across Alaska under the Carrs and Safeway banners with more than 1,700 pharmacies nationwide. In many Alaska communities, the local pharmacy is one of the most accessible healthcare touchpoints. HB 195 represents a careful and practical modernization of Alaska law that improves access to timely treatment while maintaining strong safeguards for patient safety.

**Safe Access to Care: Real-World Experience**

Albertsons Companies has successfully and safely implemented pharmacist prescribing across numerous states for preventive care, management of minor acute conditions, and evidence-based test-and-treat services supported by point-of-care diagnostics. In practice, pharmacists serve as a front-line access point for patients who may not have an established primary care provider or who face delays in scheduling appointments.

Our experience has shown that pharmacist prescribing enhances care rather than fragmenting it. Pharmacists are trained to assess presenting symptoms, identify red flags, initiate appropriate therapy when clinically indicated, and refer patients when a presentation exceeds their scope of practice. In many communities, pharmacies function as triage hubs, ensuring patients receive the right level of care at the right time. This model can reduce unnecessary urgent care and emergency department utilization while preserving strong coordination with other healthcare professionals.

**Education and Clinical Preparation**

Pharmacist education is rigorous, standardized, and clinically intensive. Every licensed pharmacist must graduate from a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), pass the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX), and obtain state licensure. Their education specifically prepares them to perform patient assessments; order and interpret laboratory tests; administer medications; and prescribe drug therapies consistent with community standards of care. In addition, pharmacists complete a minimum of 1,740 hours of supervised clinical training across community pharmacies, hospitals, and primary care settings.

For comparison, advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), who practice independently in Alaska under full practice authority, complete roughly 750 hours of clinical training in their graduate education. Pharmacists complete more than double that amount of supervised clinical training during their professional education, with a concentrated focus on pharmacotherapy, medication safety, therapeutic monitoring, and risk management.

### **Standard of Care and Professional Accountability**

HB 195 operates within the same professional accountability framework that governs other licensed healthcare providers in Alaska. Pharmacists must recognize the limits of their education and training and consult or refer when appropriate. They remain subject to the community standard of care, oversight by their licensing board, and professional liability standards. This is the same enforceable benchmark applied to physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. It reflects a clear standard-of-care model that protects patients while allowing trained professionals to fully utilize their education, training, and experience.

### **Proven Success in Other States**

States such as Idaho, Colorado, Montana, and Iowa have enacted pharmacist full practice authority reforms in recent years under a community standard-of-care model. In those states, pharmacists independently assess, diagnose within defined categories, and prescribe consistent with their education and training. The experience to date shows no evidence of patient safety concerns arising from this model. For Alaska, where geographic barriers and workforce shortages are persistent realities, this approach is both practical and measured. Pharmacists are already embedded in communities across the state and serve as one of the most accessible healthcare touchpoints. HB 195 allows them to utilize their training more fully while remaining accountable to established professional standards.

### **Conclusion**

House Bill 195 is a balanced and forward-looking reform that aligns Alaska with other states that have safely modernized pharmacist practice. It strengthens access to care while operating squarely within Alaska's established standard-of-care regulatory model.

Albertsons Companies respectfully urges the Committee to support HB 195. We would welcome the opportunity to provide additional data or answer any questions regarding pharmacist prescribing implementation in other states.

Sincerely,

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