

Konrad Jackson

From: doctorem@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2010 9:54 PM
To: Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Kurt Olson; Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Tammie Wilson; Rep. Bob Lynn; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Mark Neuman; Rep. Bob Buch; Sen. Bettye Davis; Thomas Obermeyer; Jeff Stepp; Kendra Kloster
Subject: HB 282, an act relating to Naturopaths, to be heard Monday March 1 at 3:15 PM

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Alaska State Legislature,

HB 282 is co-sponsored by Representative Cathy Munoz and Representative Alan Austerman. Kendra Kloster has provided you with a packet of information including the text of the bill, information about the healthcare professionals, and letters of support. For those of you in House Labor and Commerce who would like a brief overview, I offer here a link to the [legislative "blog"](#) for the naturopathic professionals licensed in Alaska.

In order to practice naturopathic medicine in Alaska, NDs must:

- 1) Graduate with doctorate level training from a US Department of Education accredited school of naturopathic medicine. A 4-year undergraduate degree and current basic science training are the minimal prerequisites for acceptance to an accredited school or university of naturopathic medicine.
- 2) Pass a battery of 14 national licensing exams which include 5 basic sciences and 9 diagnostic and therapeutic subjects ([NPLEX](#)),
- 3) Obtain a state license and be of good moral standing.

Naturopathic doctors have been serving Alaskans as primary healthcare providers for over 25 years, with virtually no disciplinary incidents. This is because our training mandates applying the most effective AND least toxic therapy available at the time our patients seek our care. The legislation governing this profession has become outdated, and no longer reflect the capabilities of naturopathic doctors.

HB 282 would accomplish the following:

- 1) The formation of a Board of Naturopathic Medicine. Naturopaths are currently regulated by the Department of Occupational Licensing. The head of the department feels it is no longer appropriate for bureaucrats to regulate these healthcare professionals. Other mid-level professional healthcare providers in Alaska (such as PAs and nurse practitioners and optometrists) are self-governing, through state appointed boards.
- 2) Mandate continuing education for naturopathic doctors. Lack of such mandate is simply a legal oversight. The bill calls for 35 hours of CME every 2 years, 15 of which must be in pharmacology updates. All the NDs in Alaska pursue continuing medical education, to maintain affiliation with our national professional organization, [The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians](#) and in order to stay current with this dynamic field. Nevertheless, we feel the CME should be formally mandated.
- 3) Allow naturopaths to serve Medicaid patients. There is currently a critical shortage of providers for this patient population in Alaska.
- 4) Provide State prescription endorsement, up to the level of our training, to naturopathic doctors. While we have considerably more training (doctorate level, including deep and broad pharmacology training) than advanced nurse practitioners in Alaska, our scope of practice is narrower.
- 5) Allow naturopathic doctors to practice a uniquely safe and individualized form of medical care to the extent of their considerable training, which includes prescription drug management and minor surgery.

Thanks for your attention. I look forward to meeting you on Monday.

In health,

Dr. Emily A. Kane

Naturopathic Doctor

serving in Juneau AK for over 15 years