



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Lynn Gattis

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HB 281 Sponsor Statement

House Bill 281, "An Act relating to prescription of drugs by a physician without a physical examination."

Much of our contemporary life is conducted online or over the phone. In this age of prevalent communications technology it should not be necessary to drive to the doctor's office and have a physical consultation for many common ailments.

Under HB 281 patients will be able to obtain over-the-phone or online consultations where physicians can diagnose an ailment and, if necessary, provide a prescription. This practice is called telemedicine. Telemedicine based medical care would be delivered by fully trained and qualified primary care physicians residing in Alaska. Some benefits of telemedicine are:

- Convenience for the patient.
- Affordability (\$40 average consultation fee vs. over \$1000 for the ER).
- Rapid access.
- Higher productivity from a healthy workforce.
- Primary care access for business and leisure travelers when they are away from their home state.

These practices can favorably impact access to care for individuals living in both rural and urban settings. With 20% of our population living in rural areas it is imperative that access to routine medical care be as quick and economical as possible. Anyone needing medical care would be a candidate for this system but imagine the benefits for a working mother with a sick kid, a rural homesteader, or an employee who cannot take time off of work. HB281 will revolutionize how we access our primary care providers and I ask for your support in this bill.

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