



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Administration

VIOLENT CRIMES COMPENSATION BOARD

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Representative LeDoux
State Capitol, Room 118
Juneau, AK 99801

March 3, 2016

Dear Representative LeDoux:

Re: House Bill, 324: An Act relating to the Violent Crimes Compensation Board.

I write on behalf of the Violent Crimes Compensation Board in support of House Bill 324.

I have been Chairman of the Board since 2003. The Board is comprised of three members. AS 18.67.020 currently requires that one member of the Board must be a physician. This is for good reason; the input of a physician is invaluable in assisting the board in determining whether or not a treatment was appropriate, whether the symptoms ascribed to the scope of injuries are credible, whether the length of treatment or prescription medication prescribed is reasonable etc. These are all questions we come up against, time and again.

During my tenure on the Board, there have been significant periods of time where it has been difficult to find a physician who can actively participate on the Board. For one whole year the Board had to function without an appointed physician. In two separate year-long periods, the Board had a physician in theory, but for all intents and purposes they were absentee board members. This is understandable: physicians are extremely busy people, and service on the Board is entirely voluntary. But for the Board to function effectively, three actively participating members are required (not least in order to be able to have a simple majority if there are disagreements as to the eligibility of a given).

We are currently very fortunate to have the services of Dr. George Brown, a retired pediatrician, and we look forward to several more years of his active service. However, by amending AS 18.67.020 in order to open Board membership up to advanced nurse practitioners in addition to physicians, we hope to ensure that future Boards will experience fewer problems with completing its slate of members, whilst at the same time retaining the requisite medical knowledge to ensure fully informed Board decisions.

Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gerard Godfrey", written over a horizontal line.

Gerard Godfrey
Chair, Violent Crimes Compensation Board