



THE STATE  
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of  
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February 3, 2020

The Honorable Cathy Giessel  
Alaska State Senate  
Room 111  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Giessel:

Thank you for sponsoring Senate Bill 120, the "Crisis Medication Bill." I believe that the original intent to only have psychiatrists give orders for a crisis period was during the time that Alaska Psychiatric Institute only employed psychiatrists. Over the last number of years, Alaska Psychiatric Institute has added nurse practitioners and physician assistants to its medical staff. Without having the nurse practitioner or physician assistant able to order the crisis period, covering the on-call schedule becomes difficult, considering how there must be a psychiatrist on call for the crisis period when a midlevel provider is on call.

Being the only psychiatrist employed by Alaska Psychiatric Institute puts me on call at least twenty days a month. Like physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants are also licensed independent practitioners; as such, they are qualified to order a crisis period and fully contribute to the on-call schedule at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute. Midlevel practitioners are intimately involved with patient services; accordingly, giving them the ability to order a crisis period greatly contributes to patient continuity of care.

Thank you again for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Alexander", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Alexander, MD  
Director of Psychiatry