



ALASKA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Committed to Advancing Alaska's Public Health Since 1978

ALPHA

April 10, 2021

Alaska House of Labor and Commerce
Alaska House of Representatives
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Co-Chair Fields, Co-Chair Spohnholz, and Members of the Committee,

The Alaska Public Health Association (ALPHA) supports HB145: "An Act relating to the Board of Pharmacy; relating to health care services provided by pharmacists and pharmacy technicians; and relating to the practice of pharmacy," which expands pharmacists' authority to align with the rest of the extensive list of health care providers.

This bill presents an opportunity to modernize pharmacy practice statutes in several key ways.

- Clearly defines patient care activities pharmacists may provide and empowers the Board of Pharmacy to regulate those services;
- Empowers the Board of Pharmacy to more effectively regulate pharmacy support staff;
- Supports reimbursement for health care services by clearly defining those services; and,
- Updates the current provider anti-discrimination statute to support insurance coverage of these patient care services when provided by a pharmacist (pharmacist are one of the only healthcare professionals not listed in this statute).

Over the past year, Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services temporarily modified pharmacist authority for pharmacists to be able to bill for health care services related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This ensured that pharmacists and pharmacy technicians have been able to fill important gaps related to testing, vaccinations, telehealth visits, and helping patients' manager chronic health conditions. This has had significant implications for increasing access to healthcare services in rural and underserved areas.

We believe that HB145 and the expansion of pharmacist authority to engage at a higher level, consistent with much of what they have already been doing over the past year, will more equitably promote and benefit public health across Alaska communities. We urge the committee to support this bill to help make these changes permanent.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this legislation.

The Alaska Public Health Association is a non-profit membership organization of over 150 health professionals, advocates, and community members dedicated to improving the quality of life for all Alaskans. ALPHA is also the state affiliate of the [American Public Health Association](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Hinterberger", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tim Hinterberger, PhD, President
ALPHA Board