

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE ADAM WOOL

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Interim: May - December
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House Bill 91 Sponsor Statement **Veterinarian Exemption from the Perscription Drug Monitoring** **Program (PDMP)**

The Perscription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) was established in Alaska to track the prescribing activities of actively licensed practitioners holding a federal Drug Enforcement Agency registration number who dispense federally scheduled II-IV controlled substances in the state. Currently, veterinarians are required to participate in the program. As with most medical professionals, veterinarians want to be part of the solution of the opioid crisis; however, veterinary participation in the PDMP has not been an effective mechanism to helping control opioid abuse in Alaska.

While PDMP's have been implemented in all 50 states, there are 33 other states that exempt veterinarians from PDMP requirements. Nine of these states originally required veterinarians to report to the PDMP, but have since exempted veterinarians. This program was designed for use in human medicine to identify doctor shopping by human patients and monitor trends in prescribing practices by health care providers. One national survey found that fewer than 10 cases of veterinary shopping occur annually in the United States. In 2017, veterinarians prescribed just 0.34% of all of the opioids dispensed by retail pharmacies in the country (source: IQVIA National Prescription Audit).

Additionally, by mandating that veterinarians query and report the owner's name and date of birth, there are significant concerns about potential violations of privacy of human medical information. Veterinarians are not trained in privacy regulations concerning human medical data, nor are they trained in appropriate medications, doses, or prescribing practices for human medicine. When asked, many pet owners are not aware that their veterinarian would have access to any part of their medical information and they are often concerned about veterinarian access to this private information. Further, animal patients themselves cannot be effectively tracked through PDMPs. Animals do not have a unique identifier such as a social security number or even date of birth. The animal's name may be changed over time, the date of birth is often not known, and the owner of the pet may change over time.

Exempting veterinarians from the PDMP will not diminish the judicious use of controlled substances that is already practiced by veterinarians and regulated by the Drug Enforcement Agency and the state licensing board. Exempting veterinarians from the PDMP will allow veterinarians to provide timely and appropriate medical management for each individual patient. This bill would increase the

efficiency of the PDMP for its intended purpose by allowing for more accurate interpretation of prescription data and prescribing trends in human medicine.

Please join me in supporting House Bill 91 to exempt veterinarians from the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.

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