

March 13, 2023

Senator Jesse Bjorkman  
Chair, Senate Labor & Commerce Committee  
Alaska State Capitol  
120 4th Street  
Juneau, AK 99801  
[Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov](mailto:Senate.Labor.And.Commerce@akleg.gov)

**RE: AHHA Supports SB 83 Temporary Professional Licensing**

Dear Chair Bjorkman and Committee Members,

For 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

AHHA supports Senate Bill 83, Temporary Professional Licensure legislation. This bill will help streamline the licensing process for the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing and allow applicants with an out-of-state qualified professional license in good standing to begin working right away. We hope this legislation will make the process shorter and smoother for professionals seeking to obtain an Alaska license.

Alaska is experiencing workforce shortages for virtually all licensed health care professions, and it is critical that we streamline the process to allow qualified professionals to get to work quickly in Alaska. The [AHHA 2022 Healthcare Workforce Analysis](#) shows that approximately 7,500 new healthcare workers must be hired across Alaska every year to keep up with service needs (growth and replacement).

AHHA supports the improvements a temporary license process could bring to Alaska, however, this is not an alternative to enacting the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). We agree with the Division of Professional Licensing that the NLC is the very best option to address the nursing shortage in Alaska and reduce application processing times. Only the NLC will reduce the number of applications that come into the state.

We believe this legislation will complement the NLC as it will allow a pathway for qualified nurses from non-compact states to obtain a temporary license quickly and get to work. This legislation will create consistency across licensing boards on the process to obtain a temporary license.



AHHA urges the swift passage of SB 83 to provide one more tool to solve Alaska's healthcare workforce challenges.

Sincerely,

Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA  
President & CEO



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

## Department of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development

Corporations, Business, & Professional Licensing  
Board of Pharmacy

P.O. Box 110806  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806  
Main: 907.465.2550  
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March 20, 2023

Senate Rules Committee  
Alaska State Senate  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
[Senate.Rules@akleg.gov](mailto:Senate.Rules@akleg.gov)

Re: SB 83 – Professional Licensing; Temp Permits– Letter of Support

Dear Senate Rules Committee,

The Board of Pharmacy (“board”) is submitting its position on SB 83, an act relating to professional licensing; relating to temporary licenses for some professions; and providing for an effective date. During its March 20, 2023, meeting, the board discussed SB 83 and voted to support it because it accomplishes the following:

- Expands the temporary licensing period the board currently has in place from 90 days to 180 days
- Provides an efficient pathway for pharmacists and technicians to not only work under a temporary license but also to obtain permanent licensure in Alaska

The board supports this legislation and will continue to be a collaborative resource for ensuring efficient licensing processes while protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of Alaskans.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ashley Schaber".

Ashley Schaber, PharmD, MBA, BCPS (Chair)  
Alaska Board of Pharmacy



Governor Dunleavy,

The Alaska Dental Society supports SB83/HB85 but feels modification to the bill would help Alaskan consumers and new graduates from dental and dental hygiene schools.

SB83 and HB85, as currently written, would reduce wait times for dental professionals looking to relocate to Alaska but would not reduce the time for new graduates from dental professional schools. There is a demarcation line for applicants for dental or dental hygienist licenses – those with over 5 years work experience can apply by using their work history (credentialing) and would be expedited under SB83 and those with less who would continue to wait for their license applications to be processed.

Dental and dental hygiene licensure in Alaska has been a slow process for decades but the recent staffing shortages at Professional Licensing have greatly increased wait times for applicants. University of Alaska Dental Hygiene grads made the news last year when it was discovered some of the applications were taking 6 months to process.

Alaska, like the other 49 states, is currently experiencing a severe shortage of dental hygienists. New graduates faced with a wait of multiple months are taking job offers elsewhere compounding the shortage here in Alaska. The dental hygiene shortage is already causing a shortage of available appointments for consumers and leading to increased dental costs.

We ask the Legislature to recognize this problem and allow new graduates without the requisite work experience to qualify for the temporary license in SB83 and HB85.

Sincerely,

Heather Willis, DDS  
Governmental Affairs Chair, Alaska Dental Society

### **Version one, for all professions**

**Sec. 08.01.062. Temporary license.** (a) The department shall issue an applicant a temporary license under this section to engage in a profession regulated under this chapter if

(1) the applicant

(A) is licensed or credentialed to practice the profession in another state or territory of the United States or province or territory of Canada that

(i) has requirements for a license to practice the profession that are substantially equivalent to or greater than the requirements listed in the applicable chapter of this title; or

(ii) authorizes a scope of practice substantially equivalent to the scope of practice of the corresponding license in this state; **or**

**(B) has graduated from a US accredited professional school within the past 2 years**

Remaining part stays the same but is relettered.

### **Version 2, just for dental**

**Sec. 08.01.062. Temporary license.** (a) The department shall issue an applicant a temporary license under this section to engage in a profession regulated under this chapter if

(1) the applicant

(A) is licensed or credentialed to practice the profession in another state or territory of the United States or province or territory of Canada that

(i) has requirements for a license to practice the profession that are substantially equivalent to or greater than the requirements listed in the applicable chapter of this title; or

(ii) authorizes a scope of practice substantially equivalent to the scope of practice of the corresponding license in this state; **or**

**(B) has graduated from a US accredited dental or dental hygiene school within the past 2 years**



March 6, 2023

**LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY**  
Senate Bill 83

Senate Labor & Commerce

Senator Bjorkman, Chair

Senator Bishop, Member

Senator Dunbar, Vice Chair

Senator Gray-Jackson, Member

Senator Merrick, Member

Chair Bjorkman, & Members of Senate Labor & Commerce,

According to the Goldwater Institute<sup>1</sup>, a quarter of all jobs in the U.S. require an occupational license, which is essentially a government-issued permit to work<sup>2</sup>. Moving to another state can be a challenge for licensed and qualified workers because they must take additional tests or training, and pay extra fees, to obtain a license in their new state for the same job.

Overall, licensure can oftentimes be excessive, limit competition, raise consumer prices, and have an unequal impact on minorities and low-income residents.

Temporarily accepting out-of-state occupational licenses with training or testing requirements that an applicant has already completed will eliminate costly, time-consuming, and often unnecessary barriers to employment. In addition, there is a need for more skilled workers in Alaskan industries, such as school bus drivers,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.goldwaterinstitute.org/policy-report/low-income-families/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2015/article/the-de-licensing-of-occupations-in-the-united-states.htm>



speech pathologists, workers in construction and transportation services, and other healthcare professionals.

Universal licensing may benefit businesses and organizations dependent on these professionals. For example, states like Arizona adopted universal licensing reforms and saw a growth in the number of professionals working in diverse fields, such as medicine and engineering<sup>3</sup>.

Occupational licensing can restrict job opportunities, particularly for low-income and disadvantaged workers<sup>4</sup>, and can lead to higher prices for goods and services<sup>5</sup>. Reducing licensing barriers and increasing occupational mobility can increase competition, lower prices, and boost economic growth.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Erick Cordero Giorgana  
Vice President of Operations

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.goldwaterinstitute.org/policy-report/universal-recognition-hb-2569/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ncsl.org/labor-and-employment/the-national-occupational-licensing-database>

<sup>5</sup> <https://ij.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/licensetowork1.pdf>



## Support for SB 83|HB 85: Universal Temporary Licensure

The Archbridge Institute is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization dedicated to lifting barriers to flourishing and increasing opportunities for upward social and economic mobility. We are proud to work with a variety of academic and policy experts to offer research and solutions oriented toward increasing the opportunities for individuals of all backgrounds to climb the income ladder, particularly across generations. To that end, we are writing in support of SB 83 and HB 85, which would implement processes for qualified professionals to acquire temporary occupational licenses in the state of Alaska.

Occupational licensing has been a consistent area of study for our academic researchers and public policy scholars. Occupational licensing restrictions represent the most stringent form of professional regulation, forbidding residents from working in a profession before meeting various requirements including completing minimum levels of education, passing exams, and paying fees to the state. A 2018 study found that in Alaska, nearly 1 in 5 workers are licensed.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, between 1993 and 2012, the state of Alaska added 33 new low-income occupational licensing requirements, which economic research suggests has reduced upward economic mobility by 4 percent and increased income inequality by 9.1 percent.<sup>2</sup>

Licensing restrictions also represent a significant barrier for professionals looking to move across state lines. Economic researchers have estimated that occupational licensing restrictions reduce geographic mobility by as much as 7 percent.<sup>3</sup> The explanation for this reduction is simple: not allowing licensed workers to transfer their license and continue to work in the occupation for which they have already been trained discourages relocation. This status quo effectively prohibits Outside qualified professionals with a license from using their skills and experience to serve Alaskans. These are unnecessary losses that will negatively affect current and future Alaskans for years to come, especially since Alaska already experienced net out-migration in 2022.<sup>4</sup> Allowing for the temporary recognition of out-of-state licenses would be a major step toward mitigating these problems.

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<sup>1</sup> Morris M. Kleiner and Evgeny S. Vortnikov, *At What Cost? State and National Estimates of the Economic Costs of Occupational Licensing* (Arlington, VA: Institute for Justice, November 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Edward Timmons et al., *Too Much License: A Closer Look at Occupational Licensing and Economic Mobility* (Washington, D.C.: Archbridge Institute, April 2018).

<sup>3</sup> Janna E. Johnson and Morris M. Kleiner, "Is Occupational Licensing a Barrier to Interstate Migration?," *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 12, no. 3 (2020): 347–73.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, *Vintage 2022 Estimates*.



Additionally, allowing for even temporary recognition out-of-state licenses would hardly be an untested risk by a lone state. Over the past few years, 12 states, including Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Wyoming, have enacted broad universal recognition of out-of-state occupational licenses.<sup>5</sup> Even more states have passed lighter or qualified versions of universal recognition or universal recognition for military spouses.

Overall, allowing licensed professionals to transfer their licenses to the state of Alaska, even on a temporary basis, would provide an opportunity for licensed professionals to move to Alaska and continue working with minimal interruption. This means businesses would have a wider pool of potential applicants available to fill needed roles and licensed professionals considering a move to Alaska would be able to continue serving customers and earning a living by working in the occupation for which they have been trained—all while still protecting Alaskans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Wilterdink". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ben" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wilterdink".

Ben Wilterdink  
Director of Programs, Archbridge Institute  
P: (907) 538-2332 | E: [bwilterdink@archbridgeinstitute.org](mailto:bwilterdink@archbridgeinstitute.org)

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<sup>5</sup> Heather Curry, Breaking Down Barriers to Work with Universal Recognition (Phoenix, AZ: Goldwater Institute, January 2023).



March 8, 2023

*Submitted electronically via email*

***RE: Letter of Support for Universal Temporary Licensure – Senate Bill 83 & House Bill 85***

Dear Members of the Senate and House Labor & Commerce Committees,

The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce is the premier business advocacy organization in the Interior of Alaska, representing over 650 businesses, organizations, and thousands of employees. Worker shortages across all sectors continue to be one of the top concerns of Fairbanks area businesses. We appreciate the administration's and legislature's efforts to help develop meaningful solutions to attracting and retaining talent, supporting the reciprocity of professional licenses for employees moving to Alaska who bring valuable skills to the economy, and addressing the barriers to obtaining occupational licenses.

The Fairbanks Chamber supports Senate Bill 83 and House Bill 85, Universal Temporary Licensure legislation. These bills will help streamline the licensing process for the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing and allow newcomers with an out-of-state qualified professional license in good standing to begin working right away. We hope this legislation will make the process shorter and smoother for professionals seeking to obtain an Alaska license.

According to the Alaska Department of Labor, state economists predict Alaska will add 5,300 jobs in 2023. However, even as the state's economy recovers, the ongoing challenge of filling open positions remains. Universal temporary licensure is a concept many states are adopting. We must continue demonstrating that Alaska is open for business and our state is a great place to live and work.

The Fairbanks Chamber is committed to supporting and encouraging policies and initiatives that remove barriers and facilitate efforts to increase

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LifeMed Alaska  
Lynden  
MAC Federal Credit Union  
McDonald's of Fairbanks  
Northrim Bank  
Robinson & Ward PC  
Sourdough Fuel  
Spirit of Alaska Federal Credit Union  
Stewart Title Company – Yukon Division  
Tower Hill Mines-Livengood Gold Project  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Vivamore Companies

employment across all sectors. Therefore, we encourage and support the timely passage of SB 83 and HB 85 in this legislative session.

Thank you for your service to the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

GREATER FAIRBANKS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Jeremy Johnson  
President and CEO



Patrick Cotter  
Board Chair

Cc: Governor Mike Dunleavy, State of Alaska  
Members of the Alaska State Legislature  
Senator Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senate  
Senator Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senate  
Congresswoman Mary Peltola, U.S. House of Representatives  
Julie Sande, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Community, Commerce & Economic Development  
Sylvan Robb, Director of Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing  
Kati Capozzi, President, Alaska Chamber  
Jomo Stewart, President, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation  
Members of the Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce