

# Alaska State Medical Association

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February 16, 2023

The Honorable Justin Ruffridge  
Alaska State Senate  
Alaska State Capitol Building  
Room 104  
Juneau, AK 99801

Submitted via email: [Representative.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.Justin.Ruffridge@akleg.gov)

RE: HB 56 "An Act exempting controlled substances prescribed or dispensed by a veterinarian to treat an animal from the requirements of the controlled substance prescription database."

Dear Representative Ruffridge:

The Alaska State Medical Association (ASMA) represents physicians statewide and is primarily concerned with the health of all Alaskans.

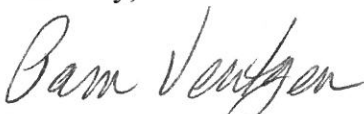
For several years now we have followed the debate over veterinarian use of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program ("PDMP") with great interest in maintaining Alaska's efforts to curtail the misuse and illegal use of prescription drugs but also recognizing the concerns expressed from Alaska's veterinarians. We hear the issues raised from the veterinarians and accept current use of the PDMP is problematic and creates a burdensome time commitment impacting their practice of veterinary medicine.

To date, ASMA's position has been to oppose exempting veterinarians who prescribe or prescribe and dispense controlled substances from using the PDMP and advocated instead for solutions that reduce the burden on veterinarians and maintain utilization of the PDMP. ASMA's goal was to find a path forward where we make the PDMP work for veterinarians and where we all work to make Alaska safer from the abuse of controlled substances.

While we still have concerns over illegal prescription drug use it is clear that the current PDMP does not work for veterinarians and there isn't currently a path forward to alter the PDMP to mitigate the impacts of its use by veterinarians. Given the reality of the situation, and Alaskan's need for veterinary care, ASMA has adopted a new position and does not oppose HB56 and its goal to reduce PDMP burdens on veterinarians.

Please let me know if we need further discussion on this or can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Pam Ventgen, Executive Director  
Alaska State Medical Association