



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Representative Genevieve Mina

Chair, House Health and Social Services Committee

Serving House District 19: Airport Heights, Mountain View, & Russian Jack

HB 27 Sponsor Statement

"An Act relating to medical care for major emergencies."

A coordinated statewide system of care enhances the chance of survival in life-threatening, time-critical emergencies in adults and children. Trauma and specific medical emergencies addressed within this system ensure that Alaskans receive care from the "right person, at the right place, at the right time."

Trauma, strokes, and heart attacks represent the leading causes of death in Alaska. In 2022 alone, 744 Alaskans died from trauma, 217 died from strokes, and 510 died from died from cardiovascular disease such as a heart attack. By enabling a statewide systems of care approach for major emergencies, death rates caused by these time-sensitive emergencies can improve. Importantly, these are conditions for which interventions exist that can markedly alter their otherwise dismal prognoses.

HB 27 seeks to expand the scope of the Section of Rural and Community Health Systems within the Department of Health to include strokes and severe heart attacks in:

- Developing training programs for ambulance and first responder services on a standardized protocol.
- Communicating the urgency of the patient's condition to the local receiving hospital or clinic.
- Assist in establishing statewide guidelines, helping physicians and advanced practice practitioners determine if local treatment is appropriate or to expedite transport to the suitable treatment facility.

This legislation also focuses on expanding AS 18.08.010 and AS 18.08.200, allowing the Department of Health (DOH) to replicate those systems and processes that have improved trauma care and apply those principles to stroke and severe heart attacks.

With the success of the Trauma Center program, HB 27 will ensure that the receiving specialty hospitals meet DOH-adopted national criteria for being a voluntary stroke or heart attack center. It also establishes a registry specific to these major emergencies, a means to measure outcomes, and guide changes that will inevitably be needed.

The overall goal of HB 27 is that a trauma, cardiac, or stroke patient returns home as a functional member of the community and embraces life changes that will improve their future health.

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