

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
**SENATE LABOR & COMMERCE COMMITTEE**

February 6, 2001  
1:30 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Randy Phillips, Chair  
Senator Alan Austerman  
Senator Loren Leman  
Senator John Torgerson  
Senator Bettye Davis

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All Members Present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 58  
"An Act relating to the membership and quorum requirements of the  
State Medical Board."

MOVED SB 58 OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

SB 58 - No previous action to record.

**WITNESS REGISTER**

Senator Donald Olson  
State Capitol Bldg.  
Juneau AK 99811

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Sponsor of SB 58.

Mr. Tom Wilson  
Alaska Academy of Physician Assistants  
548 Aquila St.  
Fairbanks AK 99712

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Supported SB 58.

Mr. Ed Hall  
Alaska Academy of Physician Assistants  
13601 Windward Circle  
Anchorage AK 99516

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Supported SB 58.

Ms. Catherine Reardon, Director  
Division of Occupational Licensing  
Department of Community and Economic Development  
P.O. Box 110806  
Juneau AK 99811

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Commented on SB 58.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

**TAPE 01-3, SIDE A**

Number 001

#SB58

**SB 58-ADD PHYSICIAN ASST TO STATE MEDICAL BOARD**

**CHAIRMAN RANDY PHILLIPS** called the Senate Labor & Commerce Committee meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and announced SB 58 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR OLSON, sponsor of SB 58, said:

[SB 58] adds a physicians assistant to the Alaska State Medical Board. As a consequence, the quorum requirements for meetings have also been adjusted. Under current law, there are seven members of the Medical Board. However, only physicians and public members with no financial connection to the health care delivery system can serve. Presently, there are 250 physicians assistants providing a wide variety of medical services to Alaskans. They are an important part of Alaska's health care delivery system. On an average, there are over 50,000 patient provider contacts per month. In rural settings, they are often the only health care practitioner and responder for emergency life threatening situations.

The examination and licensing of physicians assistants (PAs) is the responsibility of the State Medical Board. In addition to setting license qualifications, the Board determines the scope and nature of medical services that a physicians assistant is authorized to perform. Consequently, the Board also defines the responsibilities that are required of an assistant supervising position. In many ways the effectiveness of PAs is dependent on the working relationship with the supervising physician. Consequently, I believe it is important for the work of the Board that a physician assistant be added to its membership. Having such representation will facilitate the deliberations and broaden the experience of the

Board. In my view, it will increase the Board's effectiveness in maintaining the quality of health care services in Alaska.

SENATOR OLSON noted a letter supporting SB 58 from the Chairman of the State Medical Board.

MR. TOM WILSON, Alaska Academy of Physicians Assistants, supported SB 58 and Senator Olson's testimony. He said that physician assistants had been licensees of the Alaska State Medical Board for 20 years, but don't have a member on the Board. He said that PA issues come before the Board on a very regular basis and that they have attended every meeting of the Board for more than four years.

"I feel that a physicians assistant on the Medical Board will greatly enhance the spectrum of medical practitioners that represent the public as well as the mid-level practitioners here in the State of Alaska in which there are many."

MR. ED HALL, Anchorage Academy of Physician Assistants, supported SB 58, concurring with the previous testimony. He said they work a long time on this bill and he thought it was the right thing to do and the timing was right.

MS. CATHERINE REARDON, Director, Division of Occupational Licensing, said her division provides the staff support to the State Medical Board and they support this legislation.

SENATOR TORGERSON asked how many other boards had an even number of board members.

MS. REARDON answered, "One."

SENATOR TORGERSON asked if this would work with eight instead of seven members.

MS. REARDON replied that she thought it would and explained that for practical purposes they have even numbers whenever there's a vacancy on a board which is not uncommon.

SENATOR DAVIS asked if the funding for this bill would come from receipts.

MS. REARDON said that was right, that it has been identified as receipt supported services.

SENATOR LEMAN moved to pass SB 58 from committee with the \$3000 fiscal note with individual recommendations. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

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CHAIRMAN PHILLIPS adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.