

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE**

May 1, 2025

3:23 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Genevieve Mina, Chair  
Representative Andrew Gray  
Representative Zack Fields  
Representative Donna Mears  
Representative Mike Prax  
Representative Justin Ruffridge  
Representative Rebecca Schwanke

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 138

"An Act establishing a behavioral health crisis services surcharge; establishing the behavioral health crisis services fund; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 138 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 195

"An Act relating to the prescription and administration of drugs and devices by pharmacists; relating to reciprocity for pharmacists; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 195 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 64

"An Act relating to the surrender of infants; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 64 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 141

"An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings."

- HEARD & HELD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 138

SHORT TITLE: BEH. HEALTH CRISIS SURCHARGE & FUND

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) MINA

03/17/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/17/25	(H)	HSS, L&C, FIN
04/24/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106
04/24/25	(H)	Heard & Held
04/24/25	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
05/01/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 195

SHORT TITLE: PHARMACIST PRESCRIPTION AUTHORITY

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) MINA

04/15/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/15/25	(H)	HSS, FIN
04/29/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106
04/29/25	(H)	Heard & Held
04/29/25	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
05/01/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 64

SHORT TITLE: SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) TOMASZEWSKI

01/24/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/24/25	(H)	HSS, JUD
03/13/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106
03/13/25	(H)	Heard & Held
03/13/25	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
04/29/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106
04/29/25	(H)	Heard & Held
04/29/25	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
05/01/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 141

SHORT TITLE: PUBLIC BUILDINGS: CHANGING FACILITIES

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) CARRICK

03/21/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
03/21/25	(H)	HSS, L&C
04/15/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106
04/15/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
04/22/25	(H)	HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106

04/22/25 (H) <Bill Hearing Canceled>  
05/01/25 (H) HSS AT 3:15 PM DAVIS 106

**WITNESS REGISTER**

SUSANNA MARCHUK, Executive Director  
Careline Alaska  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 138.

KATY GIORGIO, Staff  
Representative Genevieve Mina  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** On behalf of Representative Mina, prime sponsor, answered questions regarding HB 138.

BRANDON SPANOS, Deputy Director  
Tax Division  
Department of Revenue  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Responded to questions during the hearing on HB 138.

KARA GAGNON, Director of Pharmacy  
North Star Behavioral Health  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified during the hearing on HB 195.

AIMEE YOUNG, Pharm.D.  
Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

DAN HARTMAN, M.D., Medical Director  
Southcentral Foundation  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

STEVEN PEARCE, Director  
Citizens Commission on Human Rights  
Seattle, Washington

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to HB 195.

PAM VENTGEN, Executive Director  
Alaska State Medical Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to HB 195.

BRITTANY KARNS, Pharm.D.  
Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

ERIC HOLLAND, Student  
Doctor of Pharmacy Program  
University of Alaska Anchorage  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

PAUL ZANTO, Pharmacy Manager  
Fred Meyer  
Wasilla, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

MARY KLIX, M.D., Board Member  
Alaska State Medical Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in opposition to HB 195.

KAREN MILLER, Pharm.D.  
Foundation Health Partners  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 195.

BRANDY SEIGNEMARTIN, Pharm.D., Executive Director  
Alaska Pharmacy Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on HB 195.

BRITTANY KEENER, President  
Alaska Pharmacy Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on HB 195.

ASHLEY SCHABER, Pharm.D., Director  
Alaska Board of Pharmacy  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on HB 195.

REPRESENTATIVE FRANK TOMASZEWSKI

Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, provided a wrap-up statement on HB 64.

REPRESENTATIVE ASHLEY CARRICK  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, presented HB 141.

GRIFFEN SUKKAEW, Staff  
Representative Ashley Carrick  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** On behalf of Representative Carrick, prime sponsor, presented HB 141.

CHELSEA BURKE, Health and Social Services Planner  
State of Alaska Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education  
Eagle River, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 141.

JUDY EDWARDS, Campaign Advocate  
Changing Spaces - Alaska Chapter  
Palmer, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 141.

WENDY CLOYD, Board Member  
Key Coalition of Alaska  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Gave invited testimony during the hearing on HB 141.

CHRISTOPHER HODGIN, Statewide Public Facilities Chief  
Division of Facility Services  
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
Fairbanks, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on HB 141.

ANDY MILLS, Legislative Liaison  
Office of the Commissioner  
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions during the hearing on HB 141.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[3:23:28 PM](#)

**CHAIR GENEVIEVE MINA** called the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:23 p.m. Representatives Schwanke, Ruffridge, Mears, Gray, Fields, and Mina were present at the call to order. Representative Prax arrived as the meeting was in progress.

**HB 138-BEH. HEALTH CRISIS SURCHARGE & FUND**

[3:24:05 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 138, "An Act establishing a behavioral health crisis services surcharge; establishing the behavioral health crisis services fund; and providing for an effective date."

[3:24:55 PM](#)

SUSANNA MARCHUK, Executive Director, Careline Alaska, testified in support of HB 138. She described Careline Alaska and the resources they provide to individuals contemplating suicide. She said that Careline Alaska employs only Alaska residents, emphasizing their ability to understand the unique mental health challenges of living in Alaska. She also described the training that Careline Alaska responders receive. She said that Careline Alaska collaborates with other agencies, including 911 responders and local tribal authorities. She said that HB 138 is a lifeline that would ensure that no Alaskan experiences a crisis alone. She emphasized that HB 138 would keep Careline Alaska alive and expanding.

[3:28:43 PM](#)

MS. MARCHUK, in response to questions from Representative Fields, said that in urban areas, mental health resources are more readily available, but Careline Alaska will provide follow-up services to any caller for as long as their crisis lasts. She said that her team is very creative and has supported high-risk callers until the proper level of care is available for them. She emphasized that her team will incorporate an individual's support network in their own community when

necessary. She said that Careline Alaska has been grant-funded in the past and is now funded through a contract with the Department of Health (DOH) and the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH).

[3:31:50 PM](#)

MS. MARCHUK, in response to a series of questions from Representative Prax, said that Careline Alaska does not require formalized education to work for the call center. She emphasized the value of peer-support in her line of work. She said that Careline Alaska partners with Alaska 211 so that they can connect callers to all information in the Alaska 211 database. She emphasized that all the information in the Alaska 211 database is available to Careline Alaska employees, which can be forwarded to callers. She said that 911 call centers can directly transfer calls to Careline Alaska call centers. She said that most calls Careline Alaska receives are connected through 988, rather than 911.

[3:36:37 PM](#)

MS. MARCHUK, in response to a question from Representative Schwanke, said that she has some statistics on the location of where calls to Careline Alaska come from, but the majority are from private or blocked phone numbers. She said she can follow up with the data she does have.

[3:37:43 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA opened public testimony on HB 138. After ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, she closed public testimony.

[3:38:25 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked what the next committee of referral would be for HB 138.

KATY GIORGIO, Staff, Representative Genevieve Mina, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Mina, prime sponsor, responded that the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee would be the next committee of referral for HB 138.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX responded that the committee should clarify some details regarding the funds associated with HB 138 with legislative legal services first.

[3:39:15 PM](#)

MS. GIORGIO responded that she did request a legal memo from legislative legal services, but she does not believe HB 138 would create a dedicated fund. She directed the committee to subsections (h) also (g) to clarify this point.

[3:40:26 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RUFFRIDGE said that he has a lingering question, which would be better addressed by the next committee. He asked if HB 138 would best be administered under the Tax Division or the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA).

[3:40:56 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA deferred to Mr. Spanos.

[3:41:21 PM](#)

BRANDON SPANOS, Deputy Director, Tax Division, Department of Revenue, responded that RCA does not administer the 911 surcharge, which he was previously unaware of. He said that they would not be more efficient at administering the 988 surcharge than the Tax Division, so the Tax Division would administer it. He said that the 911 surcharge is administered by individual municipalities across the state.

[3:43:15 PM](#)

MR. SPANOS, in response to questions from Representative Schwanke, said that he does not know who administers the 911 surcharge in areas of Alaska without a municipality.

[3:43:54 PM](#)

MS. GIORGIO responded that she also does not have that information available.

[3:44:09 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:44 p.m. to 3:45p.m.

[3:45:16 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA expressed interest in changing the effective date of HB 138 currently stated on page 4, line 14 to 2026. She said that she would work on having that date changed under the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee.

[3:46:15 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS moved to report HB 138 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 138 was reported out of the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee.

[3:46:36 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:46 p.m. to 3:49 p.m.

**HB 195-PHARMACIST PRESCRIPTION AUTHORITY**

[3:49:27 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 195, "An Act relating to the prescription and administration of drugs and devices by pharmacists; relating to reciprocity for pharmacists; and providing for an effective date."

CHAIR MINA noted those available for questions.

[3:50:18 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA opened public testimony on HB 195.

[3:50:42 PM](#)

KARA GAGNON, Director of Pharmacy, North Star Behavioral Health, described her experience working in the behavioral health system in Anchorage, Alaska, emphasizing a lack of available providers and resources. She testified in support of HB 195, emphasizing that it would help meet the needs of Anchorage's community members.

[3:52:19 PM](#)

AIMEE YOUNG, Pharm.D., Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, testified in support of HB 195. She said that working for the Indian Health Service has allowed her to practice at the top of her abilities. She described her

experience of providing vaccines and pain management treatments. She said that her medication-related expertise has made her skills highly valuable and emphasized that pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare providers out there. She urged the committee to support HB 195 to allow pharmacists to better serve their communities.

[3:53:57 PM](#)

DAN HARTMAN, M.D., Medical Director, Southcentral Foundation, testified in support of HB 195. He said that HB 195 would allow pharmacists to practice at the scope and level of their training. He described the training and education that pharmacists are required to undergo. He emphasized the important roles that pharmacists play in administering healthcare at Southcentral Foundation. He said the HB 195 would increase access to care for patients and expand the healthcare workforce. He asked the committee to support HB 195.

[3:56:26 PM](#)

STEVEN PEARCE, Director, Citizens Commission on Human Rights, expressed concern regarding the over-prescription of "mind-altering drugs" to patients experiencing mental health issues. He said that it is very easy to prescribe psychiatric drugs to kids and that HB 195 would make it easier for pharmacists to also administer these drugs. He said that psychiatric issues should be treated in other ways that medication and should be limited to psychiatrists and other mental health experts.

[3:58:42 PM](#)

MR. PEARCE, in response to a question from Representative Prax, said that medical doctors defer too much to psychiatrists. He said that he would not advocate for medical doctors to prescribe psychiatric drugs when there are other treatments available for behavioral health issues.

[4:00:30 PM](#)

PAM VENTGEN, Executive Director, Alaska State Medical Association, testified in opposition to HB 195. She said that HB 195 would allow pharmacists to practice medicine without a medical license. She said that pharmacists already have provisions for collaborative practice authority and HB 195 would eliminate the need for collaboration. She emphasized that pharmacists are currently over-worked in Alaska.

[4:02:58 PM](#)

BRITTANY KARNS, Pharm.D., Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, described her education and training in pharmacy. She said that every profession has a scope of practice. She said that she is asking for prescriptive authority within her scope of practice, as a pharmacist. She said that pharmacists are often asked for their advice on prescription dosages by medical doctors. She emphasized that providers are being over-worked and pharmacists could help fill the gaps in care that providers cannot.

[4:05:27 PM](#)

ERIC HOLLAND, Student, Doctor of Pharmacy Program, University of Alaska Anchorage, testified in support of HB 195. He described his training in Idaho, where pharmacists enjoy full prescriptive authority. He said that HB 195 would modernize Alaska's laws, allowing pharmacists to treat illnesses within their scope of training and expertise. He emphasized that pharmacist students in his program want to stay in Alaska, but they also want to practice within their full scope of practice. He said that HB 195 would help keep pharmacists practicing in Alaska.

[4:07:07 PM](#)

PAUL ZANTO, Pharmacy Manager, Fred Meyer, testified in support of HB 195. He described the services Fred Meyer stores provide to the communities they operate in and stated that HB 195 would help expand those services. He said Fred Meyer pharmacists would welcome this ability to further care for their patients. He described the extent of training that is required by pharmacists, preparing them for more prescriptive authority. He said that Fred Meyer strongly supports HB 195.

[4:09:22 PM](#)

MARY KLIX, M.D., Board Member, Alaska State Medical Association, said that pharmacists do not attend medical school and are not trained as physicians. She described the extent and intensity required of physicians. She said that pharmacists do not have diagnostic training and giving them prescriptive authority could be dangerous. She said that pharmacists should engage in collaborative practice agreements if they want to test and treat patients.

[4:11:45 PM](#)

KAREN MILLER, Pharm.D., Foundation Health Partners, described her experience working as a pharmacist in Fairbanks, Alaska. She emphasized the long wait times for patients looking to receive primary healthcare, forcing many into emergency departments. She said that under HB 195, pharmacists would be able to help prevent patients from seeking emergency room services. She urged the committee to support HB 195.

[4:13:37 PM](#)

DR. KLIX, in response to questions from Representative Prax, said that there are many medications that both oncologists and family medicine doctors prescribe. She said that the knowledge to prescribe anti-cancer treatments requires an additional two to three years of training, but that training is not a licensed requirement.

[4:15:33 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA, after ascertaining there was no one who wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 195.

[4:16:12 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRAY thanked Chair Mina for sponsoring HB 195. He expressed strong support for HB 195.

[4:17:32 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX said that he does not believe HB 195 would allow pharmacists to prescribe medication outside of their scope of practice

[4:18:59 PM](#)

BRANDY SEIGNEMARTIN, Pharm.D., Executive Director, Alaska Pharmacy Association, at the invitation of Chair Mina to express concerns regarding scope of practice, stated that HB 195 would require pharmacists to either collaborate with or refer to another physician when faced with concerns outside of their scope of practice. She added that pharmacists often receive certifications to further their scope of practice in psychiatry, oncology, and other specialties.

[4:21:09 PM](#)

BRITTANY KEENER, President, Alaska Pharmacy Association, said that pharmacists receive trainings in diagnostics and medication management, and they receive specific trainings based on the specialty areas they may practice within.

[4:22:28 PM](#)

ASHLEY SCHABER, Pharm.D., Director, Alaska Board of Pharmacy, in response to a question from Representative Schwanke, said Idaho and Montana have similar provisions in place and neither has experienced safety issues related to pharmacists having prescriptive authorities.

[4:23:20 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRAY provided an anecdote regarding a pharmacy student that studied medicine alongside him. He emphasized that pharmacists do have the training required for prescriptive authority.

[4:24:36 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS moved to report HB 195 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 195 was reported out of the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee.

[4:24:56 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:24 p.m. to 4:27 p.m.

**HB 64-SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE**

[4:27:48 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 64, "An Act relating to the surrender of infants; and providing for an effective date."

[4:28:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FRANK TOMASZEWSKI, Alaska State Legislature, thanked the committee for the opportunity to present HB 164.

[4:28:40 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRAY expressed interest in expanding HB 164 to include anonymous births.

CHAIR MINA asked which would be the next committee of referral for HB 164.

REPRESENTATIVE TOMASZEWSKI said that the next committee of referral would be the House Judiciary Standing Committee.

[4:29:39 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA emphasized that HB 164 is about ensuring the safety of surrendered babies and she is interested in discussing maternal safety also in the future.

[4:30:28 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS moved to report HB 64, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 64(HSS) was reported out of the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee.

[4:30:48 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 4:30 p.m. to 4:33 p.m.

#### **HB 141-PUBLIC BUILDINGS: CHANGING FACILITIES**

[4:33:38 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 141, "An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings."

[4:34:08 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ASHLEY CARRICK, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, briefly presented HB 141. She said that HB 141 would require the installation of at least one changing facility that is universal in all public buildings during renovation or construction that costs over \$30,000. She said that the addition of these changing tables would foster inclusion for all people, regardless of age, disability status, or medical condition. She added that seven states have passed bills similar to HB 141 into law.

[4:35:29 PM](#)

GRIFFEN SUKKAEW, Staff, Representative Ashley Carrick, Alaska State Legislature, on behalf of Representative Carrick, prime sponsor of HB 141, stated that there are many benefits of universal changing facilities, including ensuring all people are treated with dignity, regardless of age, disability status, or medical condition. He said that these facilities would require private, safe, hygienic restroom spaces for all individuals. He stated that they would also increase public involvement by increasing inclusion and decreasing isolation of individuals, their families, and their caretakers. He then displayed images for the committee to better understand the installation process and stated that they typically cost between \$2,000 and \$5,000.

[4:37:05 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK said that she included Alaska's deferred maintenance listed in her slideshow to illustrate the scope of what would be fixed under HB 141.

[4:38:02 PM](#)

MR. SUKKAEW said that seven states have already passed legislation relating to the use of universal changing facilities. He listed those states as well as the four states pending similar legislation.

[4:38:51 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA, in response to Representative Carrick, asked for the presentation of the sectional analysis.

[4:39:07 PM](#)

MR. SUKKAEW gave the sectional analysis for HB 141 [included in the committee file], which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

**Section 1.** Amends AS 18.35 by adding a section 18.35.150 which relates to universal changing facilities in public buildings.

**Subsection a.** Establishes requirements for the installation of at least one universal changing facility in all public buildings during any new construction or remodel that costs over \$30,000. These requirements include

-buildings having at least one public restroom with a universal changing facility

-buildings having at least one universal changing facility in both the men's and women's restroom if all restroom in the building are divided by gender

**Subsection b.** Establishes exemptions to subsection a. These exemptions include

-if the instillation of a universal changing facility is not practicable

-if the instillation of a universal changing facility would cause the restroom to no longer meet accessible building standards

**Subsection c.** Establishes that the owner or building tenant must report the location of the universal changing facility

**Subsection d.** Establishes that the department must include the location of the universal changing facility on the departments publicly accessible website

**Subsection e.** Requires that the department adopt regulations which establish the standards of universal changing facilities

**Subsection f.** Establishes that the violation of these requirements results in an individual right to sue, with court ordered awards that may include prevailing plaintiff injunctive and declaratory relief, actual damages, and attorney fees and costs

**Subsection g.** Definitions

-establishes the "department" to be the Department of Transportation and Public facilities

- establishes "public building" to be a building that is owned, controlled, and held by the state or political subdivision of the state for public use, or a public transportation facility which is supported by public funds

-establishes a "universal changing facility" to be a table or device that is suitable for providing personal care for both a child and an adult

[4:41:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GRAY, referring to page 1, line 15, in Section 1 of HB 141, expressed concern that the "not practicable" language would provide an "easy out" to avoid universal changing facilities. He asked if there is a standard for what would be considered practicable or not.

[4:42:21 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK responded that this is one issue with the current language of HB 141, stating that it would be up to the committee to define what would be practicable and not. She added that "practicable" is commonly used in statute.

[4:43:17 PM](#)

MR. SUKKAEW, in response to questions from Representative Gray, stated that the fourth floor of the Capitol does not have a universal changing facility; it is just a larger youth changing table. He said that the weight limit for a universal changing facility should hold up to 400 pounds and measure 70 inches by 30 inches.

[4:44:37 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK, in response to Representative Gray, stated that the cost of installing a universal changing facility can vary, depending on the different styles of the facility. She added that the larger, gender neutral bathroom on the ground floor of the Capitol would be the most effective renovation location.

[4:46:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK, in response to Representative Prax, stated that universal changing facilities are not required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but there are many state facilities that do not currently meet all ADA requirements.

[4:46:38 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced invited testimony on HB 141.

[4:46:54 PM](#)

CHELSEA BURKE, Health and Social Services Planner, State of Alaska Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, testified in support of HB 141. She said that HB 141 would address the right that all Alaskans have to safe, sanitary, and hygienic restroom facilities. She said that currently, many individuals with complex disabilities are required to change in unsafe, unsanitary, and undignified ways in public buildings,

including often on the floors of restrooms. She emphasized that HB 141 would ensure privacy and dignity, and would allow individuals with disabilities, their families, and their caregivers to participate more fully in community life, without constantly worrying if sanitary accommodation would be available. She referred to Judy Edwards, another invited testifier, and her personal story that inspired change in the Anchorage community. She said that HB 141 would send the clear message that all Alaskans are welcome, wanted, and included in public spaces.

[4:50:20 PM](#)

JUDY EDWARDS, Campaign Advocate, Changing Spaces - Alaska Chapter, testified in support of HB 141. She shared a personal anecdote about a medical trip she took with her son, during which she had to change him on the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport bathroom floor in the middle of the night. She described the experience for both herself and her son as risky, difficult, and demeaning. She said that when she knows there might not be a proper changing facility available, she limits her son's intakes to avoid the need for a restroom while traveling, which is unsafe for him. Ms. Edwards added that her other options include leaving her son in spoiled clothing, which is extremely unsanitary, or avoiding social situations in general. She emphasized that even hospitals lack proper changing facilities for people with complex disabilities and emphasized the committee to support HB 141.

[4:53:55 PM](#)

MS. EDWARDS, in response to a question from Chair Mina, said that she is only aware of a few universal changing facilities in Alaska, including at the Arts Center in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Health Foundation in Wasilla.

[4:54:40 PM](#)

WENDY CLOYD, Board Member, Key Coalition of Alaska, testified in support of HB 141. She described her professional and personal experience advocating for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She said that many with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience incontinence and universal changing facilities would ensure equity and inclusion for all individuals in public spaces. She shared a story of changing her son in a public restroom tucked in a tiny stall for privacy and shared that many individuals and

caregivers must leave events when they lack sanitary changing facilities. She emphasized that universal changing facilities provide dignity, privacy, and safety for personal care. She said that the Key Coalition of Alaska strongly supports HB 141.

[4:57:20 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX requested a call to discuss the practical aspects of HB 141.

[4:57:59 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK noted that there is a nationwide map online that shows only two universal changing facilities in public facilities in Alaska.

[4:58:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS asked how the renovation limit on cost was decided.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK responded that that threshold was suggested by the Governor's Council on Disabilities and that she supports the proposed limit.

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS asked if there is an international building code or other standard for the construction of universal changing facilities.

CHAIR MINA noted that there are individuals online available to answer questions.

[5:00:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK deferred to someone online to answer Representative Mears' question.

[5:01:11 PM](#)

CHRISTOPHER HODGIN, Statewide Public Facilities Chief, Division of Facility Services, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), responded that he is not aware of a standard for universal changing facilities within the international building codes.

[5:02:38 PM](#)

MR. SUKKAEW added that there is code regarding universal changing facilities in the 2024 international building code, under Section 1110.4

[5:03:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK, in response to a question from Representative Prax, said that \$30,000 is not a lot for construction or renovation projects, and the intent of HB 141 would indeed be to install as many universal changing facilities as possible.

[5:05:10 PM](#)

MR. HODGIN said that the majority of DOT&PF's remodels and renovations cost over \$30,000.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX asked if there is a threshold when a repair would exceed "normal maintenance" covered under the operating budget.

MR. HODGIN responded that he is unaware of a threshold of that kind.

[5:06:26 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK, in response to a question from Representative Gray, said that questions regarding the fiscal note could be directed to the department. She agreed that having one free-standing changing table in every public facility in Alaska could be a cost-effective way to mitigate this problem.

[5:09:28 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA asked about the cost of installing the universal changing facility at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport.

[5:09:57 PM](#)

MR. HODGIN responded that the installation cost \$70,000. He said that it included extending the restroom space and electrical system.

[5:10:55 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SCHWANKE said that the words "public building" are very broad and that many public buildings in the state have no public restrooms.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK responded that she shares those concerns and she supports the committee working to clarify language in HB 141.

CHAIR MINA thanked DOT&PF for its work on the fiscal note. She noted that there are 706 public facilities in Alaska, and she said that she supports narrowing the language of the bill. She asked Mr. Mills to provide clarity on the fiscal note.

[5:13:56 PM](#)

ANDY MILLS, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, responded that the fiscal note illustrates the interagency funding that would be required for the installation of a universal changing facility. He said he appreciates Representative Gray's problem solving.

CHAIR MINA asked what the funding mechanism in the budget is that would enable the installation of these facilities.

MR. MILLS responded there would be exemptions for the case where the installation of a universal changing facility is not practicable. He said that he would help analyze and define what the threshold for what "practicable" conditions for installation would be.

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK, in response to Representative Gray, said that her intention, as prime sponsor, would be to have at least one universal changing facility in every public-school building, and two to three facilities for each university campus in the state. She reiterated that she is very interested in working with the committee to refine the language of HB 141. She emphasized that if cost were not a barrier, she would like to see a universal changing facility in every single public building.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX commented that he thinks HB 141 is a good idea but is way too broad of an idea. He expressed concern about laws being abused.

CHAIR MINA clarified that someone's disability cannot always be identified by their appearance and that not all disabled individuals use a wheelchair.

[5:21:00 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK emphasized, "You can't use what is not available for you to use." She said that this is a clear and present need and that the legislature should do what it can to address this need.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX agreed that this is a need and expressed hope to accommodate it. He emphasized that the legislature cannot accommodate all needs.

[5:22:37 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced HB 141 was held over.

[5:23:17 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 5:23 p.m. to 5:25 p.m.

**HB 64-SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE**

[5:24:58 PM](#)

CHAIR MINA announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 64, "An Act relating to the surrender of infants; and providing for an effective date."

[5:25:14 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS made a motion to rescind the committee's action in reporting HB 64 from committee. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

[5:25:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MEARS moved to report HB 64 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 64 was reported out of the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee.

[5:25:52 PM](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 5:26 p.m.