

HB

208

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Chair:

MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Member:

JUDICIARY

COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

LABOR AND COMMERCE



REPRESENTATIVE LISA MURKOWSKI

Government Hill • Elmendorf • East Anchorage

Session:

ALASKA STATE CAPITOL

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Sponsor Statement House Bill 208

“An act relating to professional counselors.”

In 1998, the 21st Legislature created statutes establishing a board and license for professional counselors in Alaska. The intent of the statutes was essentially twofold: 1. To create a Board which would oversee activities relating to professional counselors; and 2. To create a requirement of appropriate, quality education and experience for professional counselors seeking licensure. However, key language defining both the authority of the Board and “appropriate, quality education and experience” for professional counselors was inadvertently left out of the original statutes.

In addition to addressing the above omissions, HB 208 also allows for three other housekeeping provisions. Specifically it:

- adds to the list of health professionals allowed to supervise professional counselors;
- adds professional counselors to the Centralized Licensing Statutes section regarding the use of the letters “LPC” after a licensed professional’s name; and
- extends the deadline by six months for current, eligible professional counselors to be “grandfathered” in without having to undergo the supervisory and testing requirements currently required for new entrants into the profession.

This bill strengthens the original statutes for both the public and the profession, and consequently enjoys the support of the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and the American Counseling Association of Alaska.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

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March 30, 1999

Ms. Anne Henry
5750 Glacier Hwy D-10
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Ms. Henry,

Thank you for discussing with me the statute changes proposed by the Board of Professional Counselors. It appears the proposed changes would strengthen the law and I anticipate zero fiscal impact on the Division of Occupational Licensing.

Sincerely,



Catherine Reardon
Director

ANNE L. HENRY, M.A., C.H.T.
5750 Glacier Hwy., Bldg. D, Rm. 12, Box 10
Juneau, AK 99801
Telephone: (907) 780-6345

April 26, 1999

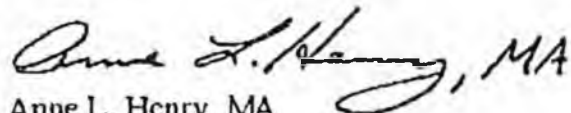
Dear Representative Murkowski:

At the March 25-26, 1999 meeting of the regulatory Board of Licensed Professional Counselors necessary changes to the statutes were discussed. These necessary changes deal with the powers of the Board, the original intent of the statutes to license well qualified professional counselors, and the protection of Alaskan consumers. HB 208 addresses these concerns by making changes to the statutes regarding the Board, and Licensed Professional Counselors.

The Board of Licensed Professional Counselors urges passage of HB 208.

Thank you for your assistance in the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,



Anne L. Henry, MA
LPC Board Chair

Subject: HB 208

Date: Mon, 26 Apr 1999 10:56:39 -0800

From: "Debra Lighthart" <Lamp@mtaonline.net>

Reply-To: "Debra Lighthart" <Lamp@pop.mtaonline.net>

To: <Anne_Gore@legis.state.ak.us>

Anne, I am a counselor in Wasilla Ak who was trained specifically for Licensed Professional Counselor. I send you this email in support of HB208. We have been having trouble with our email server. It took me 4 tries to connect today. Again I am in support of HB208. Debra Lighthart, PhD.

Subject: HB 208

Date: Mon, 26 Apr 1999 09:17:18 -0800

From: "Emerson, Steve E" <Steve_Emerson@health.state.ak.us>

To: Anne_Gore@legis.state.ak.us

Hello... this is to voice my support for HB208. As Regional Coordinator for Community Mental Health Services in the Northern Region I witness on a daily basis the shortage of licensed therapists to whom people can turn for services. By approving the passage of HB 208, and ensuring the subsequent LPC licensure for those qualified individuals applying, the State of Alaska would greatly increase the availability of professional therapists and counselors for it's citizens. This would really be of great benefit to those Alaskans living in remote sites, as well as to those in the urban centers. Please consider this bill as a hugely positive step for the state, and for the mental health of it's citizenry. Thanks, Steve Emerson

• **Subject: HB208**
Date: 26 Apr 1999 10:09:28 -0800
From: "Kent_Brandy" <kent_brandy@msmail.asd.k12.ak.us>
To: "Anne Gore" <Anne_Gore@legis.state.ak.us>

Hi Anne,

My name is Brandy Kent. I'm an elementary school counselor in the Anchorage School District. I just want to take the time to let you know I support HB208 and appreciate all your efforts in getting this bill approved. I believe the benefits would be enourmous.....

Thank you. Brandy

Subject: HB 208

Date: Mon, 26 Apr 1999 10:34:11 -0900

From: sojourner <cenglish@alaska.net>

To: Lisa Murkowski <Anne_Gore@legis.state.ak.us>

I am a clinician at Southcentral Counseling Center. I am writing to express my support of HB208. Thank you for supporting this important bill that will help to ensure quality mental health services for the state of Alaska.

Christopher English
3500 E 66th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99507