

SB

302

GARY WILKEN

SENATOR
West Fairbanks

Interim:
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Alaska State Legislature

Senate

During Session:
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Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
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Website: www.garywilken.com
E-Mail: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Fred Dyson, Chairman
Health, Education and Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator Gary Wilken

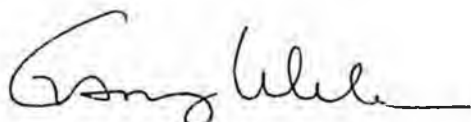
DATE: April 18, 2002

RE: Senate Bill 302 - Mental Health Professionals

I respectfully request that Senate Bill 302, *Mental Health Professionals*, be scheduled for a hearing before the House Health, Education, and Social Services Committee.

Senate Bill 302 recognizes the growth in the clinical mental health profession and broadens the definition to include all qualified mental health experts. A more inclusive mental health professional definition increases the capacity of Alaska's mental health system to protect our youth and adults who are experiencing acute psychiatric crisis in our communities.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in scheduling a hearing.



GARY WILKEN

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Sponsor Statement CS for SB 302 (JUD) - Mental Health Professional Definition

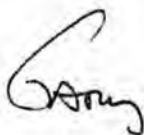
Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 302 (JUD) recognizes the growth in the clinical mental health profession and broadens the "mental health professional" definition to include (1) a licensed clinical social worker, (2) a licensed marital and family therapist, and (3) a licensed professional counselor. The current Title 47 definition was written in 1981 prior to the passage of Alaska's licensing requirements governing these master level mental health clinicians.

A more inclusive mental health professional definition increases the capacity of the Alaska's mental health system to protect our youth and adults who are experiencing acute psychiatric crisis in our communities. Today, not enough mental health professionals are authorized under the current definition to respond to some critical public safety situations, particularly in rural Alaska. And yet there are hundreds of licensed professionals who are qualified to aid these Alaskans, but cannot, as they do not fall within the current statutory definition. Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 302 (JUD) recognizes this problem and updates the Title 47 definition.

The expanded "mental health professional" definition, as stated in Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 302 (JUD), increases the number of trained professionals who will be:

- Allowed to provide mental health treatment for prisoners
- Authorized to evaluate children and minors in custody to determine placement in residential treatment centers
- Required to report incidents of harm to vulnerable adults
- Allowed to conduct civil commitment evaluations

I respectfully request your consideration and support for Senate Bill 302.



April 16, 2002

Home of the
University of Alaska

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2002 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: 1
 Bill Version: SB 302
 (s) Publish Date: 3/6/02

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Health & Social Services
 Title: DEFINITION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL BRU: Community Mental Health Grants
 Component: Svcs/Chronically Mentally Ill
 Sponsor: WILKEN
 Requestor: SENATE (HES) Component Number: 800

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
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CHANGE IN REVENUES (0)						
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL						

Estimate of any current year (FY2002) cost: _____

Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2003 budget proposal:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SB 302 changes the definition of Mental Health Professional (MHP) by adding the licensed disciplines of clinical social worker, marital and family therapist and professional counselor, and allowing experienced unlicensed master's level mental health graduates who are seeking licensure and are supervised by a licensed MHP, to do the work of a MHP. The bill increases access to mental health services to several different consumer populations by increasing the pool of prospective employees in a time of shortage. It also encourages licensure of experienced individuals which increases the quality and accountability of the professions serving vulnerable Alaskans.

No cost is identified with these changes.

Prepared by: Sarah Brinkley, Administrative Manager Phone 465-3167
 Division Mental Health & DD Date/Time 02/27/2002
 Approved by: Elmer A. Lindstrom, Deputy Commissioner Date 02/28/2002
 Agency Department of Health & Social Services

For distribution information, call the Governor's Legislative Office

Comparison Chart for Mental Health Disciplines covered under SB302

Current Definition

Added by Senate Bill 302

License Requirement	Psychologist	Psych. Assoc.	CSW	MFT	LPC
Education	Ph.D. from program approved by Board	MA from program approved by the Board	MA from program approved by the Board	MA from a Regional Accrediting agency (Specifies course work)	MA from a National or Regional Accrediting Agency (60 total graduate hours)
No Improper Conduct or Investigations in other states	Not engaged in dishonorable conduct	Not engaged in dishonorable conduct	Of good moral character	Has not engaged in conduct that is grounds for disciplinary sanctions	Not under investigation in this or another jurisdiction, & has not had any license suspended or revoked
Post Graduate Supervised Experience	1 year	2 years	2 years or 3000 hours	1500 clinical contact hours, 100 hours of individual supervision, 100 hours of group supervision	3000 hours of clinical contact, 1000 hours of face to face counseling, 100 hrs face to face supervision
Exam Required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Professional References	5 required by regulation	2 required by regulation	3	1 verification of supervised experience & fitness	2 references and 1 verification of employment for 2 years
Practice Definitions	Diagnosis Treatment Emotional/Mental Disorders Individual group	Dependent on experience and training	Diagnosis Treatment Mental & Emotional Disorders Individuals, families, groups, communities	Diagnosis Treatment Mental & Emotional Disorders Individuals, families, groups	Diagnosis Treatment Mental & Emotional Disorders Individual, group, and organizations

For details please see Statutory Definitions of Alaska's Mental Health Disciplines document

Prepared by DHSS - based on current law

SB302--Changing the Definition of Mental Health Professional

How the Initial Civil Commitment Evaluation for Ex Parte Works

When a person experiencing a mental health crisis needs an evaluation for possible admittance to a mental health hospital, a "mental health professional" (MHP) is called in to conduct an evaluation. The goal of the evaluation is to determine if the person has a mental illness, and as a result, is suicidal, homicidal or "gravely disabled". If the MHP determines that the person fits these criteria, and the individual refuses voluntary hospitalization, a call is placed to a consulting psychiatrist or physician. If the consulting psychiatrist or physician concurs with the evaluation that the person is at dire risk, the MHP contacts a judge, who hearing the results of the evaluation makes the decision whether or not to involuntarily commit the individual to a 72-hour hold. While hospitalized, a psychiatrist examines the person. If there continues to be sufficient risk of harm, there is a court hearing for extended commitment. At anytime during this process if the person no longer meets commitment criteria, they are released.

Current Definition

The current definition included every discipline of mental health practitioner at the time: licensed psychiatrist or physician, licensed clinical psychologist or licensed psychological, registered nurse with a master's degree in psychiatric nursing, or any kind of social worker with a master's degree and experience.

Since the statute was written in 1981, the nation and Alaska have been licensing Clinical Social Workers (LCSW), Licensed Marital and Family Therapists (LMFT) and Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC).

To do an ex parte eval you must work in a hospital or State funded mental health center. Across the state, there are approximately 140 mental health clinicians doing emergency services evaluations. In reality, only half of these clinicians fit the current definition.

Under current statute there is a legal precedent for having unlicensed, social workers with experience do evaluations. SB302 would include master's level clinicians who are experienced, but also supervised and working toward licensure.

- LMFTs, LPCs and LCSWs are clinically qualified to serve these needs.
- Including all licensed mental health disciplines and requiring that unlicensed clinicians hold a master's degree, be experienced, supervised and working toward licensure, enlarges the pool of MHPs who must meet legislatively mandated standards of education, experience and professionalism to qualify for one of the 140 present emergency services positions. **People who do not hold one of these jobs cannot do civil commitment evaluations. A judge makes the decision about commitment.**

Initial Civil Commitment for Ex Parte

1. Person experiences a mental health crisis and needs an evaluation for possible admittance to a mental health hospital.
2. A "mental health professional" is called in to conduct an ex parte evaluation.
3. The evaluator must work in a hospital (a doctor or psychiatrist) or be employed at a state-funded community mental health center.
4. The evaluation is to determine if the person has a mental illness and, as a result, is suicidal, homicidal or "gravely disabled", each of these criteria require there to be an indication of real, imminent risk. Examples of "grave disability" are an individual who stops eating and is near starvation because they hear voices that say someone has poisoned the food, or they are so delusional that they are at risk of freezing to death because they have no awareness of their bodies needs for survival.
5. If the mental health professional determines the person fits this criteria and the individual refuses voluntary hospitalization, a call is placed to a consulting psychiatrist or physician.
6. If the consulting psycniatrist or physician concurs that the person is at risk, the mental health professional contacts a judge.
7. Upon hearing the results of the evaluation, the judge makes the decision as to whether or not there is sufficient criteria to initiate an ex parte hold of the individual for up to 72-hours for purposes of obtaining a full psychiatric evaluation done by a psychiatrist.
8. If there continues to be sufficient risk of harm, a court hearing is held to determine the appropriateness for a civil commitment.
9. Anytime throughout this process if the person no longer meets the commitment criteria, the individual is released from the hospital.

Mental Health Professional

Current Definition

1. Licensed Psychiatrist
2. Licensed Physician
3. Licensed Clinical Psychologist
4. Licensed Psychological Associate
5. Registered Nurse with a Master's Degree in Psychiatric Nursing
6. Any Type of Social Worker with a Master's Degree and Experience

SB 302 New Definition

1. Licensed Psychiatrist
2. Licensed Physician
3. Licensed Clinical Psychologist
4. Licensed Psychological Associate
5. Registered Nurse with a Master's Degree in Psychiatric Nursing
6. Licensed Clinical Social Worker
7. Licensed Marital and Family Therapist
8. Licensed Professional Counselors
9. Master-level clinician, with experience, under supervision and seeking licensure



March 14, 2002

Senator Gary Wilken
Room 514
Alaska Senate Office Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: SB 302

Dear Senator Wilken:


I wish to strongly recommend the inclusion of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) in the definition of "mental health professional" as discussed in SB 302.

Licensed Professional Counselors in the State of Alaska are required to have a minimum of a Master's Degree in counseling, have completed a certain number of supervised hours as a counselor and pass a nationally recognized exam. Additionally, Licensed Professional Counselors are required to annually complete professional development courses to maintain license currency in the State of Alaska.

Our national organization, the American Counseling Association, defines Professional Counselors as: "An employee of or independent contractor for an institution ... whose official responsibilities include counseling to the members of the institution's community and who is functioning within the scope of his/her license or certification..."

Licensed Professional Counselors in the State of Alaska currently meet standards similar to all of the other professions included in SB 302; they also provide similar professional health care services.

Thank You,


Jeannette E. Lawson
President, Alaska Counseling Association

The TRUST

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

March 1, 2002

The Honorable Gary Wilken
Alaska Senate
State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Wilken:

I am writing to you to thank you for your sponsorship of SB302, the bill to change the definition of mental health professionals (MHP). The Trust supports updating the definition to include all the licensed mental health professions and experienced practitioners seeking licensure. The proposed definition increases access to vital, often lifesaving services for the beneficiaries of the Trust. In recent years we have been privy to many anecdotal reports of beneficiaries suffering hardships and indignities due to the lack of services in rural and urban locations. Service providers speak to the difficulties of meeting the current MHP definition requirements for hiring staff.

The Trust is actively supportive of addressing the recruitment and retention issues that impact Alaska's health care professions and providers that serve the needs of Alaska's youth and adults who are experiencing acute psychiatric crisis in our communities, who protect and safeguard vulnerable adults from harm, and who treat mentally ill adults in correctional facilities. We understand that this definition change increases the pool from which professionals can be hired by over 40% of licensed practitioners, and significantly more who are currently working toward licensure.

Sincerely,



Jeff Jessoe

Executive Director

Cc: Board of Trustees

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR
STATE OF ALASKA

431 N. Franklin, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Office: (907) 465-3071
Fax: (907) 465-3079

February 28, 2002

The Honorable Gary Wilken
Alaska Senate
State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Wilken:

The Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) wishes to convey to you its position on SB 302. As the entity tasked by state law with planning, evaluation, and advocacy for public mental health services in Alaska, the AMHB works regularly and closely with a wide range of stakeholders in that system. The Board considered the issues prompting the bill and agrees with the Department of Health and Social Services that the time is ripe to update the statutory definition of a mental health professional. The benefits of increasing the pool of licensed professionals that meet professional standards are clear. Civil commitment based on mental health issues is a serious matter. The State's responsibility to ensure that the professionals that perform the evaluations that initiate the commitment process are qualified to do so seems clear to us. The current situation under which evaluations in many cases must be conducted by providers that cannot be licensed because they are not defined as mental health professionals should be rectified.

The AMHB appreciates your willingness to sponsor this needed legislation. Please let us know if we can assist as the bill makes its way through the Legislature. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,

/s/ Richard Rainery

Richard Rainery
Executive Director

Subject: SB 302

Date: Sun, 24 Feb 2002 08:16:22 -0800 (PST)

From: Sally Donaldson <sallyannhd@yahoo.com>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Wilkin,

Please support SB302, as it includes licensed professional counselors, marital and family therapists and clinical social workers under the term "mental health professional".

This bill will enable qualified, licensed professional mental health care providers, especially in rural Alaska, to care more inclusively for those who need services.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Sally Donaldson, LPC, School Counselor
Juneau

Do You Yahoo!?
Yahoo! Sports - Coverage of the 2002 Olympic Games
<http://sports.yahoo.com>

Please support SB302

Subject: Please support SB302

Date: Tue, 19 Feb 2002 23:27:58 EST

From: CathrynMFS@aol.com

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Senator Wilken:

I am a licensed professional counselor working in Anchorage. SB302 will provide Alaskans with better, more accessible mental health care by authorizing professionals with the proper training to perform civil commitments and other necessary services. It also provides accountability to the public that these critical functions are carried out in an ethical and effective manner. Rural areas in particular are in great need of professional services and these services are currently being limited by outdated legislation. Please support Alaskans by supporting SB302 and working for its speedy passage.

Thank you,
Cathryn Simon
12320 Tracy Rd., Apt. A
Anchorage, AK 99516

Subject: SB 302

Date: Wed, 20 Feb 2002 14:31:11 -0900

From: "Judith Anne Morotti" <jmorotti@northstar.k12.ak.us>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Senator Wilken,

I write to urge you to support SB 302. It is important to have

licensed professional counselors available for all Alaskans. This bill provides Alaskans, especially those in rural areas access to mental health care.

Thank you, Judith Morotti, M.Ed.

Subject: SB302

Date: Thu, 21 Feb 2002 15:03:14 -0900

From: Jim Lorence <jlorence@crsd.k12.ak.us>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Senator Wilken: I support SB302 because I see that it will provide more access to mental health services in rural Alaska. Living in the Copper River area, it is often difficult for people to get into places like Matsu or Anchorage to obtain the services they need. This bill, by recognizing all clinical mental health disciplines as being valid for carrying out important services, will make it much easier for people in our area to access the mental health services they need.

Sincerely,

Jim Lorence, Guidance Counselor, Copper River School District

Subject: SB 302 / Please Support

Date: Wed, 20 Feb 2002 09:50:59 -0900

From: "Shawn Marsh" <shawn_c_marshall@hotmail.com>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Senator Wilken,

I am writing today to respectfully encourage you to support SB 302. This bill advocates a change in the definition of "mental health professional" to include a variety of well-qualified occupational groups in Alaska. As a lifelong Alaskan and National Certified Counselor (NCC), I believe this change is clearly in the best interest of consumers (e.g. provides improved access to qualified professionals) and clinicians (e.g. increased accountability).

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Shawn Marsh, M.Ed.

National Certified Counselor

Mental Health Clinician

Fairbanks, Alaska

(907) 488-8230

Chat with friends online, try MSN Messenger: [Click Here](#)

Subject: SB302

Date: Wed, 20 Feb 2002 22:13:42 -0900

From: "Kelly Seman" <kellyseman@hotmail.com>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Senator Wilkens -

I would like to express my support for SB302 which will broaden the definition of a "Mental Health Professional" in the state of Alaska. I am currently a Licensed Professional Counselor in both the state of Montana and Alaska. While living in Montana I worked for community mental health and was considered a mental health professional. I conducted evaluations for involuntary commitments and provided crisis services. When I moved to the state of Alaska two years ago I was surprised to learn that the LPC was not well recognized and my skills could not be utilized because of this. I believe many jobs have remained unfilled because of the narrow definition of "Mental Health Professional", especially in rural areas. I hope you will consider supporting this bill. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kelly Seman-Ewalt , LPC #318

Get your FREE download of MSN Explorer at <http://explorer.msn.com>.

Susitna Family Services

Vivian C. Finlay, M.Ed.

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Clinical Member: The American Association
For Marriage & Family Therapy

2/22/02

Please see attached information
sheet written by Anne Henry LPC

Dear Senator Wilken,

I have just reviewed a copy of SB 302.

I wanted you to know that I am in full support of this bill. In private practice I may not be in a position to address the populations mentioned in the bill, however, I believe more of us experienced mental health practitioners should be "allowed" to address these situations.

I have been in practice for 26 years, 15 of these have been in my own practice in Wasilla. I believe I have a wealth of experience with clients. I also am an Approved Supervisor for Marriage and Family Therapists, so I may supervise clinical people who may be addressing the populations listed in SB 302.

I see absolutely no reason, from a clinical competency basis, why all mental health professionals are not being treated equally in the state of Alaska. We all may come from different training backgrounds, but we all treat and serve similar mental health needs.

Sincerely,

Vivian C. Finlay

P.O. Box 872433 • Wasilla, Alaska 99687 • (907) 373-6006

c.c. Senator Lyda Green - please schedule a hearing on this bill as soon as possible. Thank you.
Vivian C. Finlay

The original statutory definition for "mental health professional" (MHP) was written into Title 47, when psychiatrists, physicians, psychologists, master's level psychologists (psychological associates) and psychiatric nurses were the only licensed mental health professions. At that time, master's level social workers were not licensed, but were acknowledged under the definition and allowed to do civil commitment evaluations if they had "substantial experience". Since then, the clinical mental health field has expanded to license social workers, marital and family therapists (MFT), and professional counselors (LPC).

In addition to the use of the mental health professional definition for persons evaluating adults in acute psychiatric crisis and facing mental health commitment, the definition also applies to those working with incarcerated adults with mental illnesses, youth in the custody of the Divisions of Family and Youth Services or Juvenile Justice, and with vulnerable adults in a variety of health care settings.

Licensing these professional mental health clinicians is critical to the public safety, and to hold accountable people working with vulnerable populations. Today, there are not enough people within the current definition of a mental health professional licensed to do this work. At the same time, there are hundreds of licensed professionals who do not fall within the current definition and cannot do the work.

This bill changes the definition of MHP to acknowledge the licensing of clinical social workers (LCSW), MFTs and LPCs, and makes provisions for those working toward licensure. By including experienced master's level clinicians working toward licensure, the bill also increases the capacity of our mental health system to protect Alaska's youth and adults who are experiencing acute psychiatric crisis in our communities, to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults from harm, and to treat mentally ill adults who are incarcerated.

Changing the definition of MHP would increase the number of trained professionals working in the field who are:

- required to report incidents of harm to vulnerable adults;
- allowed to provide mental health treatment to prisoners;
- authorized to evaluate children and minors in custody for appropriateness to be placed in secure residential treatment centers;
- eligible to work in one of the 140 jobs at community mental health centers where emergency evaluations are done on individuals experiencing a crisis, to determine suicidality, homicidality and grave disability in preparation for a judge's decision on appropriateness for mental health civil commitment to a hospital in Fairbanks, Anchorage or Juneau.

Subject: Sponsor SB302

Date: Mon, 25 Feb 2002 08:35:28 -0900

From: "Lynn Paterna" <lypaterna@acsalaska.net>

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

February 23, 2002

Dear Senator Wilken:

Please sponsor SB302. I strongly support his bill, because the original statutory definition for "mental health professional" (MHP) was written into Title 47, when psychiatrists, physicians, psychologists, master's level psychologists (psychological associates) and psychiatric nurses were the only licensed mental health professions. At that time, master's level social workers were not licensed, but were acknowledged under the definition and allowed to do civil commitment evaluations if they had "substantial experience". Since then, the clinical mental health field has expanded to license social workers, marital and family therapists (MFT), and professional counselors (LPC).

In addition to the use of the mental health professional definition for persons evaluating adults in acute psychiatric crisis and facing mental health commitment, the definition also applies to those working with incarcerated adults with mental illnesses, youth in the custody of the Divisions of Family and Youth Services or Juvenile Justice, and with vulnerable adults in a variety of health care settings.

Licensing these professional mental health clinicians is critical to the public safety, and to hold accountable people working with vulnerable populations. Today, there are not enough people within the current definition of a mental health professional licensed to do this work. At the same time, there are hundreds of licensed professionals who do not fall within the current definition and cannot do the work.

This bill changes the definition of MHP to acknowledge the licensing of clinical social workers (LCSW), MFTs and LPCs, and makes provisions for those working toward licensure. By including experienced master's level clinicians working toward licensure, the bill also increases the capacity of our mental health system to protect Alaska's youth and adults who are experiencing acute psychiatric crisis in our communities, to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults from harm, and to treat mentally ill adults who are incarcerated.

Changing the definition of MHP would increase the number of trained professionals working in the field who are:

- required to report incidents of harm to vulnerable adults;

- allowed to provide mental health treatment to prisoners;

- authorized to evaluate children and minors in custody for appropriateness to be placed in secure residential treatment centers;

- eligible to work in one of the 140 jobs at community mental health centers where emergency evaluations are done on individuals experiencing a crisis.

- judge's decision on appropriateness for mental health civil commitment to a hospital in Fairbanks, Anchorage or Juneau.

I am the President-elect of the Alaska Counseling Association and a family therapist who works with families at risk of losing their children because of neglect and abuse. I daily realize the tremendous help I and my mental health colleagues provide for Alaska's families and children. Please sponsor SB302.

Thank you,

Lynn S. Paterna, MS, LPC

Family Therapist

THE
FOLLOWING
DOCUMENT(S)
ARE
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ORIGINAL
COPIES

Robert D. Schultz
3406 Glacier Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801

March 4, 2002

Re: SB302

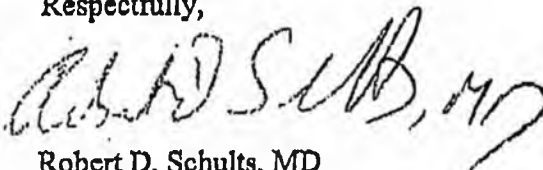
Dear Senator Wilkins:

This letter is written in strong support of the addition of marital and family therapists licensed by the Board of Mental Health and Family Therapy, Professional Counselors licensed by the board of Professional Counselors, Clinical Social Workers licensed by the Board of Social Work Examiners and a person with a Masters Degree in the field of Mental Health and who has at least 24 months of post masters, working experience in the field of Mental Illness, who is in the process of qualifying for licensure by a board named above and who is working under the supervision of a type of license listed in SB 302 to be able to be listed as Mental Health Professionals under the statute.

This will recognize the people's skills and ability for help, get the work done which requires a mental health professional such as relating to the evaluation of prisoners who may need psychological or psychiatric treatment for the purpose of statutes relating to the evaluation of children in need of aid and delinquent minors who may need to be confined in a secure residential psychiatric treatment center or who should be released from such a center, for the purpose of statutes requiring certain professionals to report the possibility that a vulnerable adult has been abused or neglected, and for the purpose of statutes relating to mental health civil commitments.

Thank you for your interest in this matter

Respectfully,



Robert D. Schultz, MD
Psychiatrist

two bills currently in process

Subject: two bills currently in process

Date: Fri, 1 Mar 2002 17:01:44 -0900 (AKST)

From: Dan and Ann Swift <dswift@ptialaska.net>

To: Senator_Gary_Wilken@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Gary,

I am writing you about two bills currently under consideration in the Legislature.

SB 302 - Thank you for introducing this bill. As a public member of the licensing board for marital and family therapists, I see the need for expanding the definition of mental health professional. As you are probably aware, there is a great shortage of mental health professionals in this state and, unfortunately, no shortage of people with mental health problems.

I have seen the care with which our board scrutinizes all applications for licensure and the process of supervision for those who have not yet had sufficient hours of practice to be licensed. (Marital and family therapists are mental health professionals, not simply marriage counselors. An applicant for licensure must have a masters or doctorate degree in a mental health field, as well as three years of practice, supervised by an accredited supervisor.) By including in this bill those "working under the supervision of a . . . licensee," more people likely will be able to access the services of mental health professionals.

SB 182 - I urge you to vote against this bill. It would certainly impact the most vulnerable Alaskans. Cutting funds to help the poor, elderly and disabled would not likely save much money--and the little the state might save would seem a lot to those affected by the cuts.

Thank you, Ann Swift

3181 Arella Ave.
Fairbanks, AK 99709

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7)

Date Referred to Committee: April 18, 2002

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 4-25-02

Rule

The HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES Committee considered:

CSSB 302(JUD)

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 302(JUD)

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

"An Act defining the term 'mental health professional' for the purpose of statutes relating to the evaluation of prisoners who may need psychological or psychiatric treatment, for the purpose of statutes relating to the evaluation of children in need of aid and delinquent minors who may need to be confined in a secure residential psychiatric treatment center or who should be released from such a center, for the purpose of statutes requiring certain professionals to report the possibility that a vulnerable adult has been abused or neglected, and for the purpose of statutes relating to mental health civil commitments."

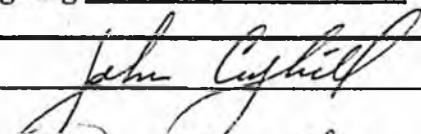
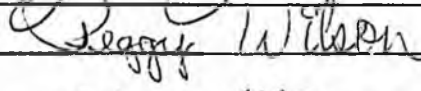
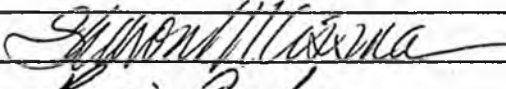
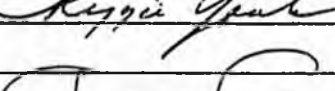
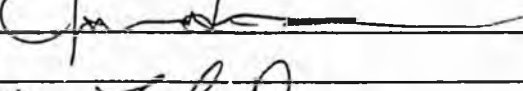
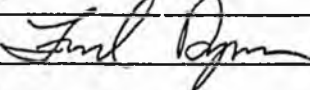
Recommends it be replaced with House CS for CS for SB 302 (HES) [X] Same Title [] New Title
 For Senate Bill: with new title: [] Technical Title [] New Title: HCR _____

- [] attach amendments
- [] add new referral to _____ Committee
- [] Letter of Intent _____ Committee

List of Abbrev. for Depts.:
 ADM
 CED
 COR
 CRT
 EED
 DEC
 DFG
 GOV
 HSS
 LAA
 LAW
 LWF
 MVA
 DNR
 DPS
 REV
 DOT
 UA

<u>NEW FISCAL NOTES</u>				
*For Chief Clerk's Office Use Only				
List by Dept(s):	*FN#	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero

<u>PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTES</u>				
List by Dept(s):	FN#	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero
HSS	1			X

<u>Signing with recommendations</u>	Printed Last Name	DP	DNP	NR	AM
	Coughlin	(6) ✓			
	Wilson	✓			
	CISSNA	✓			
	Jank	-			
	STEVEN	X			
Chair: 	Dyson	✓			
Chair: 