

Dear Representative Kurka,

My name is Mario Townsend and I am the managing Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) at Wasilla Veterinary Clinic. I have been practicing veterinary medicine since 1994. I am honored and joined in practice by Dr. Andrew Wiskin and Dr. Margaret Bellows. We are all very passionate and driven to provide progressive and comprehensive care to our patients and clients.

I urge your support for HB 91 – an ACT exempting veterinarians from the requirements of the controlled substance prescription database, known as the prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) in Alaska. The current law in place requiring the participation of veterinarians in the PDMP is not a practical and effective solution for the intended purposes of the PDMP. The system is not usable for veterinarians and animals, it is creating unnecessary and disproportionate business burdens for veterinarians and it is leading to increased taxpayer costs.

These are some of the reasons as to why it makes sense to **exempt veterinarians** from the PDMP.

- **Veterinarians don't treat humans and animals are not listed in the PDMP independently which renders the PDMP database unusable. Animals are lacking a permanent identifier: There is no permanent identifier for an animal. Animals can have different names and owners throughout their lifetime. The animal can also have different owner names from within the same household.**
- **Potential privacy violations: Searching the PDMP database by the owner could provide medical information the owner is uncomfortable with their veterinarian knowing. Secondly, veterinarians are not trained in human medication doses much like physicians are not trained in the dose ranges for dogs, cats, birds, elephants, etc.**
- **Veterinarians already adhere to controlled substance regulations: Veterinarians who prescribe or dispense controlled substances are licensed through Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). There is already a significant level of accountability, record keeping, and medication storage requirements that these veterinarians adhere to.**
- **Cost: PDMP review and reporting constitutes a disproportionate impact on veterinarians as small business owners. Veterinary clinics lack the standardized software used in human health care facilities, so reporting is more labor-intensive and costly. Additionally, the cost to investigate veterinarians who fail to use the database correctly is a waste of very limited resources.**

As a medical provider it is important to me that the PDMP is used correctly to track trends of human opioid shopping. 32 states have found exemption for their veterinarians from participating in the PDMP. The exemption of veterinarians from the PDMP will increase the efficacy for the system's intended

purpose, by allowing for accurate interpretation of data and trends in human medicine. Veterinarian exemption will allow them to continue to provide appropriate care and medical management for their patients.

Sincerely,


Mario Townsend, DVM


Andrew Wiskin, DVM


Margaret Bellows, DVM

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