



**Representative Eric Croft**  
**Sponsor Statement**  
**Body Piercing and Tattooing Licensure**

HB 54 authorizes the issuance of licenses for the vocation of tattooing and body piercing in order to ensure higher safety standards for the general public. This legislation seeks to increase the safety and health standards of professional tattoo artists and body piercists by licensing them through the Board of Barbers, Hairdressers and Cosmetology, in the Department of Commerce and Economic Development.

*Body decoration* is a growing industry that is not currently licensed in the State of Alaska. By introducing license requirements, as eight other states have done, this legislation attempts to prohibit unscrupulous, careless practitioners from soliciting week-end business off the street, and aims to protect those legitimately involved in the vocation. Training courses, an apprenticeship, and professional requirements of the board, as well as sanitary equipment standards, are required before licensing.

Most, if not all, legitimate tattooing and body piercing establishments already in business will easily meet the license requirements. This guarantees legitimate businesses will have a fair opportunity to continue their practice.

HB 54 was prompted by constituents who relayed stories of their children receiving tattoos/body piercings from unscrupulous operators with no regard for health standards. Infections resulted from contaminated equipment and the general unsanitary conditions under which the piercings and/or tattooings were performed. This licensing creates a safety standard to ensure public health and public confidence in the industry, as well as penalties for those who refuse to comply.

HB 54 is intended to protect the public as well as legitimate businesses.