



# Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

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**CONTACT: Julia O'Malley • (907) 465-3842, Fax: 465-5125**

**Toll-free: (888) 465-4919, [Julia\\_OMalley@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Julia_OMalley@legis.state.ak.us)**

**Actualities: (907) 465-5001**

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## **REP. KAPSNER INTRODUCES EMERGENCY COMMITMENT BILL**

Bill will allow more healthcare professionals to certify emergency treatment for intoxication

Representative Mary Kapsner (D-Bethel) introduced a bill today that amends existing statute to allow physician assistants and advanced nurse practitioners to sign certificates of necessity to commit patients involuntarily into a treatment facility. Currently, only physicians can sign the certificates.

"We live in a unique state geographically where many of our communities, including those in existing road systems, are not easily accessible to existing health care facilities where physicians or those in private practice may be available," Kapsner said, "Many of these communities have clinics with mid-level practitioners. This bill would eliminate the need to transport patients into centrally located hospitals for initial assessment."

Aside from the central hospitals located in urban and hub-centers throughout rural Alaska, there are now sub-regional clinics being established in communities where mid-level practitioners are being used as the lead primary care providers. Examples are the Aniak Sub-Regional Clinic and soon to be opening the St. Mary's and Emmonak Sub-Regional Clinics along the Yukon within the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region.

This bill has the support of various key health organizations including the Department of Health and Social Services, Divisions of Alcoholism and Mental Health and ARANDAP (Association of Rural Alaskan Native Drug and Alcohol Programs).

Representative Kapsner can be reached toll-free at 1-800-323-4942

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