



Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

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SENATE PASSES OLSON'S FINE-INCREASE BILL FOR UNETHICAL DOCTORS

SB21 is the first Democrat-sponsored bill to pass the Senate this session

JUNEAU – Forwarding the 2001 Democratic agenda that makes public health and safety a priority, the Senate unanimously passed a bill on Friday that increases the State Medical Board's ability to levy stiffer penalties for professional and unethical misconduct.

Introduced by Senator Donald Olson (D-Nome), SB 21 increases the fines from the current limit of \$10,000 to \$25,000. This was the first piece of Democratic legislation to pass the Senate.

"There are always a few bad apples in any profession. Over the years, the costs of the board's investigations and disciplinary actions in these cases have increased," Olson said.

Prior to his election to the legislature, Olson served for six years on the State Medical Board. Olson stated that the size of misconduct fines has not been changed since they were first established fourteen years ago.

"I believe the higher limit will be a more effective deterrent of wrongdoing," Olson said.

The State Medical Board voiced support for SB 21. "They feel that the individuals who bring discredit to their profession in extreme cases of misconduct should suffer a full measure of consequences," Olson said.

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Sen. Bettye Davis, Sen. Johnny Ellis, Sen. Kim Elton, Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, Sen. Donny Olson, Rep. Ethan Berkowitz, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Eric Croft, Rep. John Davies, Rep. Gretchen Guess, Rep. Joe Hayes, Rep. Reggie Joule, Rep. Mary Kapsner, Rep. Beth Kerttula, Rep. Al Kookesh, Rep. Carl Moses