

# ALASKA SENATE MAJORITY



PRESS RELEASE

Senator Josh Revak

907-465-3879 | [Sen.Joshua.Revak@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Joshua.Revak@akleg.gov)

For Immediate Release: March 22, 2021

## **Alaska Senate Passes Bill Merging Oversight of Emergency Medical Services**

JUNEAU – The Alaska Senate today unanimously passed a bill to merge oversight of emergency medical services system (EMS) under a single agency.

Regulation of the EMS system is currently split between the State Medical Board and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). [Senate Bill 21](#) would transfer paramedic licensure to the State Emergency Medical Services Office within DHSS.

The department already has responsibility for certifying emergency medical technicians (EMT), EMT instructors, EMT training, ground ambulance, medevac services, and paramedic instructors and training. Paramedics are, however, currently licensed by the State Medical Board

“This has been years in the making through a deliberative process that has involved hundreds of stakeholders throughout the EMS community,” said **Senator Josh Revak**, R-Anchorage, the bill’s sponsor. “It has been unanimously supported by the State Medical Board and has broad support from paramedics around the state. Aligning all EMS services under a single agency improves public safety and makes the licensure process smoother and more efficient.”

This bill does not change the scope of practice, license requirements, or fee schedule for the approximately 600 paramedics licensed in Alaska. The medical direction will be provided by the existing DHSS Chief Medical Officer and the EMS Medical Director’s Committee comprised of 11 members specialized in emergency medicine.

The bill provides for a smooth transition on January 1, 2022, with an immediate effective date for regulations, provisions to ensure current biennial licenses remain in effect until new regulations are in place, and continuity of license histories with the transfer of files and pending disciplinary cases.

The State Emergency Medical Services Office is well-positioned to support this change with a staff of six full-time positions, five of which are required to have paramedic experience. Existing data systems are ready to incorporate paramedic licensure.

SB 21 passed the Senate by a vote of 19-0, and is now on its way to the Alaska House of Representatives for consideration.

###

**Media Contact:**

Daniel McDonald

Alaska Senate Majority

[Daniel.McDonald@akleg.gov](mailto:Daniel.McDonald@akleg.gov)

(907) 465-4066