

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 76(HSS)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/10/21

Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act extending the January 15, 2021, governor's declaration of a public health
2 disaster emergency in response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic;
3 providing for a financing plan; making temporary changes to state law in response to
4 the COVID-19 outbreak in the following areas: occupational and professional licensing,
5 practice, and billing; telehealth; fingerprinting requirements for health care providers;
6 charitable gaming and online ticket sales; access to federal stabilization funds; wills;
7 unfair or deceptive trade practices; and meetings of shareholders; relating to informed
8 consent for COVID-19 vaccines; relating to personal objections to the administration of
9 COVID-19 vaccines; and providing for an effective date."

10 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

11 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
12 to read:

1 FINDINGS. (a) The legislature finds that

2 (1) on March 11, 2020, the governor issued a declaration of a public health
3 disaster emergency under AS 26.23.020 in anticipation of the spread of COVID-19 to the
4 state and has since issued multiple new disaster declarations for the COVID-19 outbreak;

5 (2) since the initial outbreak through the present day, the outbreak of COVID-
6 19 has resulted in serious consequences for residents of the state and the state's economy;

7 (3) many communities in the state, including the state's largest city of
8 Anchorage and the capital city of Juneau, have seen fit to impose lockdown or hunker-down
9 orders, which have severely reduced economic activity in those communities;

10 (4) lockdown orders and other pandemic-related factors have forced numerous
11 state businesses to close their doors and lay off employees or reduce service levels and
12 employee hours far below what would otherwise have been provided, to the detriment of both
13 those businesses and their hard-working employees;

14 (5) interstate and intrastate travel restrictions of varying levels of
15 restrictiveness, while intended to contain the spread of COVID-19, have resulted in further
16 reduction of economic activities in the state;

17 (6) the state has established and facilitated multiple programs to provide
18 economic assistance to struggling state residents and businesses, but the programs, while
19 providing much-needed relief, generally fall short of fully replacing regular levels of
20 voluntary economic activity;

21 (7) as a result of voluntary and government-imposed reductions of economic
22 activity,

23 (A) the state lost 29,000 jobs between October 2019 and October 2020;

24 (B) many businesses in the state have temporarily or permanently
25 closed;

26 (C) at least 45,000 students in the Anchorage School District have
27 been denied in-person education for a significant period during the pandemic;

28 (8) the shift from in-person learning to distance learning has negatively
29 affected students in the state in terms of the students' learning progression and emotional and
30 social development;

31 (9) the shift from in-person learning to distance learning has been associated

1 with increased instances of child abuse and food insecurity;

2 (10) multiple vaccines for COVID-19 have been developed and are currently
3 being distributed, allowing the state to move into a new phase of its COVID-19 recovery
4 efforts;

5 (11) due in part to the state's robust COVID-19 response efforts, the state
6 currently has the third-lowest COVID-19 fatality rate in the United States; and

7 (12) because of the diligent efforts of the state, Alaska has the highest
8 vaccination rate of all 50 states.

9 (b) Based on the findings in (a) of this section, the legislature finds that it is in the
10 best interest of the state to

11 (1) take appropriate steps to continue to contain the spread of COVID-19 and
12 to distribute COVID-19 vaccines statewide with the utmost diligence and dispatch;

13 (2) take appropriate steps to limit further harm to the state's economy, to
14 enable displaced workers in the state to return to work, and to allow students in the state to
15 rejoin in-person classes with their peers; and

16 (3) extend the public health disaster emergency declaration issued by the
17 governor on January 15, 2021, and all the powers granted under AS 18.15.390 and
18 AS 26.23.020, to September 30, 2021.

19 * **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
20 read:

21 PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER EMERGENCY; EXTENSION OF DISASTER
22 EMERGENCY. (a) Under AS 26.23.020(c), the Alaska State Legislature extends to
23 September 30, 2021, the declaration of a public health disaster emergency issued by the
24 governor on January 15, 2021. The extension under this subsection includes an order,
25 proclamation, or regulation issued under AS 26.23.020 and an action taken by the Department
26 of Health and Social Services under the authority granted to the Department of Health and
27 Social Services under AS 18.15.390.

28 (b) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, if the commissioner of health and social
29 services certifies to the governor that there is no longer a present outbreak of novel
30 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) or a credible threat of an imminent outbreak of COVID-19,
31 the governor shall issue a proclamation that the public health disaster emergency identified in

1 the declaration issued by the governor on January 15, 2021, no longer exists as of a date
2 determined by the governor. The certification must be based on specific information received
3 from a state or federal agency or another source that the commissioner determines to be
4 reliable.

5 (c) The governor shall submit a proclamation issued under (b) of this section to the
6 revisor of statutes, the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, and
7 the lieutenant governor.

8 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
9 read:

10 PUBLIC HEALTH DISASTER EMERGENCY; FINANCING PLAN. (a) Under
11 AS 26.23.020(k), the Alaska State Legislature approves this financing plan for the declaration
12 of a public health disaster emergency issued by the governor on January 15, 2021, as extended
13 by sec. 2 of this Act, and provides that the following appropriations and authorizations may be
14 used to cope with the public health disaster emergency:

15 (1) the appropriations made in sec. 8, ch. 2, SLA 2020;

16 (2) the appropriations made in sec. 10, ch. 7, SLA 2020;

17 (3) the authorization made in sec. 1, ch. 8, SLA 2020, Department of Health
18 and Social Services, allowing for up to \$20,000,000 in transfers between all appropriations
19 made in the Department of Health and Social Services, except for transfers from the Medicaid
20 services appropriation;

21 (4) the appropriations made in sec. 28, ch. 8, SLA 2020, Department of Health
22 and Social Services,

23 (A) of federal receipts received during the fiscal year ending June 30,
24 2021, for Medicaid services; and

25 (B) to the Department of Health and Social Services public health
26 emergency response for the purpose of responding to the novel coronavirus disease
27 (COVID-19) public health disaster emergency;

28 (5) the appropriation made in sec. 38, ch. 8, SLA 2020, to the disaster relief
29 fund under AS 26.23.300(a);

30 (6) the appropriation made in sec. 37(a), ch. 8, SLA 2020, of excess federal
31 receipts received during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021;

1 (7) the authorization made in ch. 32, SLA 2020, for expenditure of federal
2 CARES Act receipts;

3 (8) federal receipts received by any state agency for purposes of mitigating the
4 public health disaster emergency subject to use of the process prescribed in
5 AS 26.23.020(k)(2) if the legislature is not in session and, if the legislature is in session,
6 subject to a request to include the federal receipts in an existing appropriation bill;

7 (9) any future appropriations made for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2021,
8 and June 30, 2022, for the cost of responding to and mitigating the risk of the coronavirus
9 disease (COVID-19) outbreak.

10 (b) The governor may not expend more than a cumulative total of \$10,000,000 of
11 state funds from the disaster relief fund under AS 26.23.020(h) - (k) or 26.23.300(b) in
12 response to the declaration of a public health disaster emergency issued by the governor on
13 January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act.

14 (c) Notwithstanding AS 26.23.050(b), the expenditure of state funds to cope with the
15 effects of the declaration of a public health disaster emergency issued by the governor on
16 January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, is limited to the appropriations and
17 expenditure authority identified in (a) and (b) of this section.

18 * **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
19 read:

20 **REPORTS.** Beginning March 1, 2021, the office of management and budget shall
21 electronically submit, on the first day of the month, a report to the legislative finance division
22 that lists the total expenditures incurred by the state in its response to the public health
23 disaster emergency, including mitigating, preventing, and controlling novel coronavirus
24 disease (COVID-19). The report should include cumulative expenses incurred by category,
25 beginning March 11, 2020, and the date the governor issued the initial declaration of a public
26 health disaster emergency and should reflect changes over the last monthly reporting period.
27 The office of management and budget shall submit a final report not later than November 30,
28 2021, or 60 days after the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the
29 public health disaster emergency no longer exists, whichever is earlier.

30 * **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
31 read:

1 PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING. (a) Notwithstanding any
2 other provision of law, during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) public health
3 disaster emergency declared by the governor on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of
4 this Act, a professional or occupational licensing board listed in AS 08.01.010, or the director,
5 with respect to a profession regulated by the Department of Commerce, Community, and
6 Economic Development,

7 (1) may not increase licensing fees; and

8 (2) may grant a license, permit, or certificate on an expedited basis to an
9 individual who holds a corresponding license, permit, or certificate in good standing in
10 another jurisdiction to the extent necessary to respond to the public health disaster emergency;
11 a license expedited under this section expires on the earlier of

12 (A) September 30, 2021; or

13 (B) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the
14 public health disaster emergency no longer exists.

15 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and to the extent necessary to respond
16 to the public health disaster emergency, a board listed in AS 08.01.010, the commissioner of
17 commerce, community, and economic development, or the director, as applicable, may take
18 additional action necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare, including

19 (1) temporarily waiving or modifying the continuing education requirements
20 required for licensees to renew a professional license, permit, or certificate in calendar year
21 2021;

22 (2) regulating the scope and duration of any license, permit, or certificate
23 issued under this section;

24 (3) requiring any individual granted a license, permit, or certificate under this
25 section to arrange and agree to supervision, in person or by other means, by an individual who
26 holds a license, permit, or certificate in good standing for the applicable profession or by an
27 administrator of a facility licensed under AS 47.32.

28 (c) An individual seeking or holding an expedited license, permit, or certificate under
29 this section who travels to the state from outside the state must comply with travel restrictions
30 ordered or guidelines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
31 United States Department of Health and Human Services, that are in effect at the time the

1 individual arrives in the state.

2 (d) In this section, "director" means the director of the division in the Department of
3 Commerce, Community, and Economic Development responsible for business and
4 professional licensing.

5 * **Sec. 6.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
6 read:

7 **TELEMEDICINE AND TELEHEALTH.** (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of
8 law, during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) public health disaster emergency
9 declared by the governor under AS 26.23.020 on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of
10 this Act, the provisions of AS 08.64.170 and AS 08.68.160 do not apply to a health care
11 provider who is providing treatment, rendering a diagnosis, or prescribing, dispensing, or
12 administering a prescription, excluding a controlled substance listed under AS 11.71.140 -
13 11.71.190, through telehealth as defined in AS 47.05.270(e), without first conducting an in-
14 person physical examination, if

15 (1) the health care provider is licensed, permitted, or certified to provide
16 health care services in another jurisdiction and is in good standing in the jurisdiction that
17 issued the license, permit, or certification;

18 (2) the health care services provided without an in-person physical
19 examination are within the provider's authorized scope of practice in the jurisdiction that
20 issued the provider's license, permit, or certification;

21 (3) in the event that the health care provider determines that the encounter will
22 extend beyond the scope of practice or scope of services described in this section, the health
23 care provider advises the patient that the health care provider is not authorized to provide the
24 services to the patient, recommends that the patient contact a health care provider licensed in
25 the state, and terminates the encounter.

26 (b) The amount charged by a health care provider for services provided under this
27 section must be reasonable and consistent with the ordinary fees typically charged for that
28 service and may not be more than five percent above the ordinary fees typically charged for
29 that service. A health care provider who is required to terminate an encounter under (a)(3) of
30 this section may not charge for any services provided during the encounter.

31 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during the COVID-19 public health

1 disaster emergency, the commissioner of health and social services may waive any state law
2 or regulation if compliance would substantially prevent or impede the provision of health care
3 services under this section. Nothing in this subsection may be construed to abrogate authority
4 granted to the commissioner of health and social services under AS 18.15.390.

5 (d) In this section, "health care provider" has the meaning given in AS 18.15.395.

6 * **Sec. 7.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
7 read:

8 FINGERPRINTING. For the duration of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
9 public health disaster emergency declaration issued by the governor on January 15, 2021, as
10 extended by sec. 2 of this Act, the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic
11 Development shall coordinate with the Department of Health and Social Services and the
12 Department of Public Safety to expedite the process for applicants under AS 08.29, AS 08.36,
13 AS 08.64, AS 08.68, AS 08.71, AS 08.72, AS 08.80, AS 08.84, and AS 08.86 to submit
14 fingerprints.

15 * **Sec. 8.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
16 read:

17 MEETINGS OF SHAREHOLDERS; NOTICE OF SHAREHOLDER MEETINGS;
18 CORPORATIONS. (a) Notwithstanding AS 10.06.405, a meeting of shareholders may be
19 held by electronic communication to the extent the corporation's board authorizes and adopts
20 guidelines to govern an electronic meeting.

21 (b) Notwithstanding AS 10.06.410, a corporation that has distributed or is planning to
22 distribute, on the effective date of this Act, a proxy statement and notice of annual meeting to
23 its shareholders may renote or notice the annual meeting so that the annual meeting may be
24 held by electronic communication authorized under (a) of this section.

25 (c) Notwithstanding AS 10.20.061 - 10.20.076, a meeting of the members of a
26 nonprofit corporation organized under AS 10.20, including meeting notice and determination
27 of a quorum, may be held by telecommunication to the extent the corporation's board adopts
28 or amends bylaws to allow for an electronic meeting.

29 (d) Notwithstanding (a) - (c) of this section and a provision of AS 10.06 or AS 10.20
30 to the contrary, a meeting, including the notice of the meeting and determination of a quorum,
31 of the shareholders of a Native corporation organized under AS 10.06 or the members of a

1 Native corporation organized under AS 10.20 may be held by electronic communication or
2 telecommunication to the extent the corporation's board of directors authorizes holding
3 meetings by electronic communication or telecommunication and adopts guidelines to govern
4 a meeting held by electronic communication or telecommunication. In this subsection,
5 "Native corporation" means a corporation organized under 43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq. (Alaska
6 Native Claims Settlement Act).

7 * **Sec. 9.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
8 read:

9 DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE; CHARITABLE GAMING ONLINE TICKET
10 SALES. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for the duration of the novel
11 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) public health disaster emergency declared by the governor
12 under AS 26.23.020 on January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, the Department of
13 Revenue may permit online charitable gaming ticket sales specified in (b) of this section to
14 benefit charities in the state.

15 (b) Notwithstanding AS 05.15.640, a permittee, operator, or multiple-beneficiary
16 permittee may sell tickets online for a raffle or lottery, dog mushers' contest, derby, or type of
17 classic defined in AS 05.15.690. A permittee may draw winning tickets online.

18 (c) A ticket seller may not sell a ticket online unless and until the seller verifies that,
19 at the time of sale, the purchaser is

20 (1) of legal purchasing age;

21 (2) physically present in the state; and

22 (3) not physically present within an option area where charitable gaming is
23 prohibited.

24 (d) The Department of Revenue shall establish standards for online ticket sales to
25 ensure compliance with charitable gaming laws, including

26 (1) age and location verification requirements reasonably designed to block
27 online ticket sales to a person who is

28 (A) located outside the state; or

29 (B) not of legal purchasing age; and

30 (2) appropriate data security standards to prevent unauthorized online ticket
31 sales to a person whose age and current location has not been verified.

1 * **Sec. 10.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
2 read:

3 INFORMED CONSENT FOR COVID-19 VACCINES. A health care provider may
4 not administer a COVID-19 vaccine to an individual without first obtaining the informed
5 consent of the individual or, if the individual is a minor child, of a parent or guardian of the
6 minor child.

7 * **Sec. 11.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
8 read:

9 PERSONAL OBJECTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF COVID-19
10 VACCINES. An individual may object to the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine based
11 on religious, medical, or other grounds. A parent or guardian of a minor child may object to
12 the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine to the minor child based on religious, medical, or
13 other grounds. A person may not require an individual to provide justification or
14 documentation to support the individual's decision to decline a COVID-19 vaccine or to
15 decline a COVID-19 vaccine for a minor child.

16 * **Sec. 12.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
17 read:

18 CIVIL LIABILITY. A person may not be held liable for an action taken on or after
19 February 14, 2021, and before the effective date of this Act that complies with or does not
20 comply with an order, proclamation, or declaration adopted by the governor to respond to the
21 declaration of a public health disaster emergency as extended by sec. 2 of this Act.

22 * **Sec. 13.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska enacted in sec. 37, ch. 10, SLA 2020, is
23 amended to read:

24 Sec. 37. Sections [25, 26, 28,] 29 [,] and 31 of this Act are repealed March 11,
25 2021.

26 * **Sec. 14.** Sections 25, 26, and 28, ch. 10, SLA 2020, are repealed on the earlier of

27 (1) September 30, 2021; or

28 (2) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the
29 public health disaster emergency declared by the governor under AS 26.23.020 on
30 January 15, 2021, as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, no longer exists.

31 * **Sec. 15.** Sections 1 - 3 and 5 - 12 of this Act are repealed on the earlier of

- 1 (1) September 30, 2021; or
2 (2) the date the governor determines, under sec. 2 of this Act, that the public
3 health disaster emergency declared by the governor under AS 26.23.020 on January 15, 2021,
4 as extended by sec. 2 of this Act, no longer exists.

5 * **Sec. 16.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
6 read:

7 RETROACTIVITY. If this Act takes effect after February 14, 2021, this Act is
8 retroactive to February 14, 2021.

9 * **Sec. 17.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).