

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol, Room 428
Juneau, AK 99802
Phone: 465-2689
Fax: 465-3472
Toll Free (800) 665-2689



345 W. Sterling Highway
Suite 102B
Homer, AK 99603
Phone: 235-2921
Fax: 235-4008

REPRESENTATIVE Paul Seaton

District 35

Sponsor Statement

HB 51

“An act requiring pharmacists to include generic drug information on containers in which brand-name prescriptions drug orders are dispensed.”

As medical technology advances, many citizens, especially our seniors, are taking many different prescription medications to live a longer, healthier life. Seniors receive prescriptions from many different sources, AARP, internet pharmacies, mail order companies, insurance companies and local pharmacies. Increased sources of prescription drugs, may lead people to accidentally take multiple medications of the same drug, which could be sold brand or generic names. Double dosing may cause severe over-medication leading to serious side effects or even be life-threatening. [House Bill 51](#) was introduced to safeguard Alaskans from overdosing on the same medication, but labeled under different names.

HB 51 requires state pharmacists to include the generic drug name on containers in which a brand-name prescription drug is dispensed. Under this bill, if a person receives a prescription for drug X, then the generic equivalent would be required to be listed on the label as well. This additional requirement would allow consumers to identify duplicate medications.

One recent case involves a woman with Parkinson’s disease. The woman placed an order with her insurance company for a particular drug, which they shipped in the generic form arriving about ten days later. In the meantime, the woman went to her local pharmacy and refilled her brand name prescription. Weeks later, her family became increasingly worried when the woman began hallucinating. The family and her doctor were concerned after learning that the woman was double-dosing on the same drug. If the woman would have had the additional labeling requirement required by HB 51, the woman and her family would have been able to quickly identify her accidental double-dosing.

While no statistics directly measure the extent of the double-dosing problem in Alaska, elderly administrators have implied that it is a serious problem. Providing one extra piece of information when prescriptions are filled could immeasurably help in saving lives. HB 51 simply requires additional generic labeling on all brand name prescriptions filled in the state, to inform and safeguard all Alaskans from over-dosing on the same medication.