

34TH ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Session

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Committee

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REPRESENTATIVE ANDREW GRAY

House Bill 308 (34-LS1426\A) Sponsor Statement March 19th, 2026

Every year, impaired driving shatters families and devastates communities across Alaska. These crashes are not accidents, they are preventable.

HB 308 proposes lowering Alaska's legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit to 0.04. This change would align the state with federal regulations, which recognize the safety hazards of driving with a BAC above 0.04. Under federal law, commercial drivers (CDL holders) must maintain a BAC below 0.04, reflecting the increased risk of impairment at this level. Applying this same limit to all drivers would create consistent and safer driving laws across the state.

Impairment from alcohol begins well before the legal limit of 0.08 BAC. Even at a BAC of 0.02, drivers can experience slower reaction times, reduced coordination, and difficulty tracking moving objects, meaning driving ability is already affected at low levels of alcohol (National Transportation Safety Board). As BAC rises to 0.05, the risk of being involved in a fatal crash is 7 times more likely. In 2023, about 5% of fatal crashes involving impairment in Alaska occurred when BAC levels were between 0.01 and 0.07.

Utah dropped its BAC limit to 0.05, becoming the first state to implement a lower limit, which demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach. The state experienced a notable 19.8% reduction in the fatal crash rate within the first year of implementation. This decline in fatalities occurred without any adverse effects on alcohol sales, overall consumption, or tourism revenue, effectively addressing common concerns that stricter BAC regulations might negatively impact local businesses or the tourism industry (NTSB).

This bill is not about restricting responsible adults or discouraging social gatherings; it is about keeping our roads safe and making it clear that drinking and driving should be separated.

I urge your support for HB 308.