



ANDVSA

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault

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Dear Legislators:

The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault offers our full support of efforts to rename the section of the Alaska Safe Children's Act that refers to teen dating violence awareness and prevention education to **BREE'S LAW**.

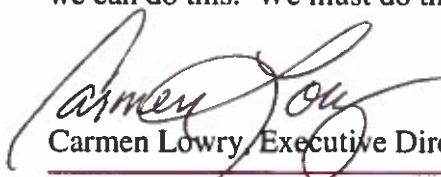
We want to first acknowledge that the increased awareness at this time on dating violence results from, in large part, Bree Moore's death. We offer our deepest condolences to the Moore's for their loss. We further acknowledge the immense courage and perseverance the Moore's have harnessed in order to not only highlight the problem of youth violence, but to keep Bree's spirit and life visible so we all remain mindful: we can prevent violence.

Many take great pride in the rich natural resources in this State, but there are no resources more valuable, more precious, than our young people. Yet the statistics for safety and well-being for young people don't correspond with this value. For example, in 2015, Alaska was recognized as the most "dangerous state in America." Alaska leads in the nation as the state with the highest rates of gun deaths, domestic violence, and rape. For teen-specific data, consider key findings from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- One in 10 students has experienced sexual violence (being forced by anyone to do sexual acts) during the past year;
- Bullying on school property has remained flat (23.3% in 2017), but electronic bullying (19.8%) has increased since 2011;
- There has been both a short- and long-term increase in the percentage of students who do not go to or from school because they feel unsafe at school or on their way to school (11.5% in 2017).

It is time for us to do more to safeguard our most precious resources. You have made a commitment to do so by first enacting the Alaska Safe Children's Act, and now recognizing the specific parts of the act that refers to teen dating violence awareness and education as **Bree's Law**.

No child should ever die as a result of violence: it is not right; it is not acceptable; it is devastating. Together, we can uphold a promise to young people that we will do our part as caring and conscientious adults to keep them safe and be responsible stewards of their development. It is no longer enough to say we can do this. We must do this. No child deserves to feel unsafe, to be bullied, to be harmed.



Carmen Lowry, Executive Director

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