

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

### **Sponsor Statement: SB 214 Animal Cruelty**

The intent of SB 214 is to ensure the most heinous crimes of animal cruelty are treated as felony offenses.

Since the 1970's there has been a documented link between those who abuse animals and offenders of domestic violence and other violent crimes. FBI reports going back to the 1970's show that most serial killers had a history of killing or torturing animals as children. Most victims of domestic violence also report animal abuse in their homes by their batterer.

Felony level penalties for the worst crimes of animal cruelty exist in 46 states. Alaska currently allows perpetrators three chances to commit these horrific crimes before charging them with a felony offence. As the links between animal abuse and domestic violence and other crimes against people become more clear, this bill can help prevent additional violent attacks on members of our communities.

SB 214 will amend the current statute to ensure that the most malicious acts of animal cruelty are treated as felony offenses.

Please join me in supporting this legislation to bring the animal cruelty code in Alaska up to the same standards as 46 other states.