



**STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF VICTIMS' RIGHTS**

January 17, 2012

The Honorable Hollis French, Senator
State of Alaska Senate
Chair, Judiciary Committee
Alaska State Legislature
State Capital
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Senate Bill 135, Continuances in Criminal Trials; Victims

Dear Senator French:

I write in support of Senate Bill 135, Continuances in Criminal Trials; Victims.

The proposed legislation strengthens notification standards for informing crime victims of any request for a continuance that may substantially delay the prosecution, the date of trial, sentencing, an appeal, and any hearing which the defendant's release from custody is considered.

The amendments to Alaska Criminal Rule 45 strengthen a crime victim's right to address the court, and for the court to consider the crime victim's perspective, before issuing an order based on a motion for continuance.

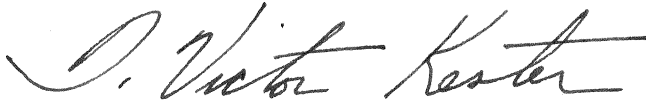
Both components to the proposed legislation fortify a crime victim's statutory rights and Alaska Constitutional rights to be "treated with dignity, respect, and fairness" and "to timely disposition of the case..." (Alaska Constitution, Article 1, Section 24). The proposed legislation also stands to amplify the crime victim's voice before the court and other criminal justice agencies regarding delay in the criminal justice process.

I believe strongly that the administration of justice is improved when a crime victim's voice is heard and considered within the Alaska criminal justice system.

In sum, the proposed legislation wisely aligns with the Alaska Constitutional rights of a crime victim - especially with regard to the timely disposition of a criminal case.

I stand ready to testify in support of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Victor Kester". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

D. Victor Kester
Executive Director