

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## House Judiciary Committee

### SPONSOR STATEMENT House Bill 373

Alaska's traditional criminal justice model of incarceration is ill-suited to effectively deter and reform criminal behavior. Alaska leads the nation in prisoner recidivism with two out of three prisoners returning to prison within three years. Our prison population is growing at three times the rate of the State's population and by 2016, Alaska's prisons will be at maximum capacity. Central to this problem is an overreliance on prison sentences rather than active and accountable monitoring and swift and certain punishment to reverse criminal behavior. If a person reoffends, it may be weeks or months before they are held accountable for their actions and the punishment meted out is often ineffective in successfully encouraging positive behavior and personal life choices.

House Bill (HB) 373 opens a new path for Alaska. Drawing from established programs in South and North Dakota and Montana, HB 373's 24/7 Sobriety Monitoring Program establishes a twice-a-day monitoring and accountability program for certain Alaska drug and alcohol related offenses as well as establishing a responsible means to grant misdemeanor DUI offenders with limited driving licenses. Instead of perpetually revolving in and out of the prison system, Alaskans participating in 24/7 can continue to live their normal everyday lives so long as they comply with active sobriety testing. Failure to do so results in swift yet measured sanctions. HB 373 gives Alaskans who commit alcohol or drug related crimes an alternative to prison and the opportunity to freely live their lives. HB 373 also demands accountability until positive change and sobriety takes hold and the public's trust in the individual is restored.