



March 4th, 2015

RE Letter in support of HB 117

Natasha's Justice Project stands in strong support of HB 117 - legislation aimed at identifying and counting untested rape kits in Alaska.

A victim who agrees to a forensic examination after a sexual assault reasonably expects evidence collected from that exam to be analyzed. Untested rape kits mean lost opportunities to develop DNA profiles, search for matches, link cold cases, prosecute offenders, and bring resolution to rape victims. Delays in testing can also preclude criminal charges from ever being filed against rapists who are identified long after their crimes.

At the age of 19, I was raped and robbed at gunpoint in New York City. It took nearly a decade to process my rape kit and identify my attacker. During the 10 years that my rape kit sat in a police storage facility collecting dust, my attacker was on a nationwide crime spree, harming others and creating a public safety hazard. In 2008, the man that raped me was convicted of multiple charges including rape, sodomy, and sexual abuse and was sentenced to 44 to 107 years in prison.

By passing HB 117 Alaska joins other states across the nation that understand that counting unprocessed rape kits is a vital step towards creating safer communities and supporting victims of this violent crime. I commend the lawmakers, legislators and advocates in Alaska for their bravery and dedication to public safety and justice.

Respectfully,

Natasha Alexenko
Founder and Spokesperson