

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

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### **Sponsor Statement**

#### ***House Bill 339 – Motor Vehicle Arson***

House Bill 339 aims to increase public safety by expanding the circumstances where the act of arson may be classified as arson.

Current law provides that damaging a vehicle by fire or explosion may only be charged as arson in the third degree if the crime is committed on state or municipal land. An identical action on private land would be criminal mischief in the third degree. Both crimes are class C felonies.

The narrowness of the Arson 3 statute hinders fire and arson investigators' ability to track repeat offenders. Serial arsonists are often prime suspects when a new arson crime is committed, but difficult to track when they have only been previously convicted of criminal mischief. House Bill 339 would aid investigators in solving these crimes by creating a clearer criminal history. I urge your support of this bill.