

From: [Lisa Parady](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Sen. Anna MacKinnon](#); [Laura Pierre](#)
Subject: Written testimony to Senate Finance Committee regarding HB44
Date: Wednesday, June 10, 2015 4:31:03 PM

Good Afternoon Members of the Senate Finance Committee,
For the record, my name is Dr. Lisa Skiles Parady, Executive Director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators which includes the Alaska Superintendents Association (ASA) the Alaska Association of Secondary Schools Principals Association (AASSP), the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals and the Alaska School Business Officials (ALASBO).

This is difficult territory. I understand the statistics, as both a parent of four daughters and an educator who lived in bush Alaska for many years. This session I joined all of you in listening intently to the heart wrenching presentations by David Holthouse and Erin Merryn and the many horrific Alaska stories.

Let me begin by thanking the Senate Finance Committee for allowing written testimony on behalf of Senate CS for House Bill 44 version F. I also want to thank Senator Gardner, Senator McGuire and House Majority Leader Millet, Representative Tarr, Senate Education and the additional sponsors of the bill in its different stages who have put the public spotlight on child sexual abuse in Alaska and ultimately brought this bill forward for consideration. It addresses a critical concern we all share – the safety of our students.

Let me be clear - educators fully embrace our fundamental responsibility for all students in our schools. We share that responsibility – with families, with social services, with law enforcement, with our communities – but we also own that responsibility. Students in school must be cared for and safe.

Each and every school day when parents and families say goodbye to their children as they head to school, they do so with the understanding that that school will do all that it can to keep them safe. With this background I want to state that the public educators who I represent place the safety and welfare of their students as their number one priority every day. It is important then, that you understand that ACSA supports the intent of this legislation. We also want the bill to be as workable as possible.

Where we differ, as with many things in life, is in the details – the process, the best way to accomplish the goal. On behalf of Alaska's educators and principals, we want to share several complexities involved with this specific solution. Let me offer three themes for your consideration:

1. We appreciate the regulatory relief from some of the unfunded mandates contained in this version of the bill. During the legislative session ASA worked closely with AASB to identify statutes and regulations that over the years have created a layer of unfunded mandates. We thank you for considering reform to existing mandates that already take substantial time and resources to administer.

Districts only have ten days per year of Professional Development. The more mandated trainings are added, the less districts are able to cover the vital staff development on instruction. It is not a question that this new bill is vital, it is that you are adding it to a window that is already overly full. Think of district time/teacher time as a full box - if you put more into the box, other items either need to go or get

smaller.

Principals are scrambling to make it all work with their staff now.

2. The bill carries a zero fiscal note and costs will reside with the school districts. Funding would be helpful, to meet the vital need identified in the legislation. Although there may be foundation help, which is useful, the full cost will reside with districts.

ACSA has already written a grant to try to assist with some of these costs and we will work closely with those entities that have put forth the promise of assistance on behalf of districts.

3. We also ask that Section 24 be amended to add a member of ACSA, specifically a superintendent representative to the proposed task force, to help inform their work from a district perspective.

I will close by noting that we support the legislation, but want it to be as workable as possible.

Thank you for your time and for considering our request. Thank you for your service. Respectfully,

Lisa

Elizabeth Skiles Parady, J.D., Ed.D.

Executive Director / ACSA/ASA / 234 Gold St., Juneau, AK 99801

tel 907-586-9702 / fax 907-586-5879 / lparady@alaskaacsa.org / alaskaacsa.org

