



Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii

Representative Claman
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Bill 112

March 2nd, 2017

Dear Representative Claman,

On behalf of Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii, I write today to thank you for sponsoring HB 112, which would hold law enforcement in our state accountable and put in place commonsense protections by expanding Alaska's current sexual assault statute. As a health care provider that serves thousands of Alaskans annually, Planned Parenthood is committed to advocating for the safety and health of all victims of sexual assault. This bill is an important step towards justice for all victims.

Alaska is in the midst of a public health crisis. Alaska has the highest rate of reported rape in the country, almost three times the national average, and our child sexual assault rate is six times the national average. By extending important sexual assault protections to crime victims, witnesses, and those under active investigation, this bill will put us one step closer to ensuring that all Alaskans can live safely and without fear of sexual assault.

All people tasked with protecting public safety, including peace officers, should be held accountable under state law for sexually assaulting or abusing a person who is in their custody or under investigation. These actions are not only deplorable in their own right: they are also detrimental to public safety and public trust. It is appalling and unjust that current state law allows police officers to abuse their position of power and take advantage of vulnerable populations, rather than being held to the same standards as the people they are employed to protect. Alaskans depend on police officers to protect public safety, and this bill will hold officers accountable and promote public trust.

All people deserve to be protected from the threat of sexual violence, and law enforcement must be held accountable to reach our shared goal of creating communities that are safe for all. We appreciate your leadership to promote healthy communities in Alaska and look forward to supporting your efforts.

Sincerely,

Alyson Currey
Regional Field Organizer and Legislative Liaison

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