



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES
2016 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RESOLUTION 16-15

- TITLE:** THAT THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE PERMANENTLY REINSTATE THE MONTH OF MARCH AS "SOBRIETY AWARENESS MONTH (SAM)" IN SUPPORT OF ITS DECLARATION OF POLICY UNDER ALASKA STATUTE 47.37.010
- WHEREAS:** The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska and its membership includes 151 federally recognized tribes, 150 village corporations, 12 regional corporations and 12 regional non-profit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs; and
- WHEREAS:** the mission of AFN is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community; and
- WHEREAS:** The declaration of policy for the State of Alaska, under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, is "to recognize, appreciate, and reinforce the example set by its citizens who lead, believe in, and support a life of sobriety"; and
- WHEREAS:** Between the years of 1995 and 2006, the Alaska Legislature designated the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) ten times in recognition and support of Alaska Statute 47.31.010; and
- WHEREAS:** Many Alaskans lead, believe-in and support a life of sobriety, universally agreeing that it is a positive, healthy, and productive way of life, free from the devastating effects of alcohol and drugs; and
- WHEREAS:** These same Alaskans comprise a population for which a voluntary census has never previously been taken before to confirm the population exists. The lifestyle choice they have chosen is proof that they are "Living Examples To The Truth", that life can be lived and enjoyed without having to consume any mood/mind altering substance or beverage; and
- WHEREAS:** Between 1993 & 1995, AFN supported the growing grass-roots sobriety movement in Alaska, and collected more than 10,000 sobriety pledge signatures from men, women and children who claimed the goals of sobriety. These signatures were given to Iditarod Musher for Sobriety Mike Williams, of Akiak, Alaska, who carried these signatures 1,049 miles in the March 1995 Iditarod Sled Dog Race as a symbolic gesture to honor the "serum of commitment" that was needed to help cure alcohol and drug abuse throughout Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** In 1996, AFN learned that no Alaska statute referenced sobriety in accordance with this pledge of sobriety so the Alaska House of Representatives' Judiciary Chair, Representative Brian Porter introduced legislation under HB523A (1996)

to amend Alaska Statute 47.37.010 with language that recognized, appreciated and reinforced the lifestyle many people voluntarily ascribed; and

WHEREAS: In comparison to the pervasive social-ills caused by alcohol and drug abuse in Alaska, there exists an aggregate population of citizens who lead a life of sobriety, whose lifestyle choice has three societal benefits which include, but are not limited to:

1. An improved quality of life and health for individuals, families and communities;
2. An improved reduction in crime and social ills (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual assault, homicide, suicide, etc.) predominately associated with alcohol and drug abuse; and
3. An improved reduction in government spending for local, state and federal treasuries that end up paying for the pervasive social ills caused by and associated with alcohol and drug abuse.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 2016 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that AFN call upon the Alaska State Legislature to permanently reinstate and annually designate, in perpetuity, the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month in accordance with fulfilling, in whole or in part, its declaration policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature enact or amend all state grant services and any state grants federal matching requirements for all substance abuse prevention programs, to set aside up to five percent of their annual program budget to help the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under AS 47.37.010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Alaska's Governor, his or her Cabinet, and any for-profit or non-profit agency(ies) interested in helping the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, develop meaningful and respectful methods to collect census data to prove the existence of Alaska's aggregate citizen population by inviting citizens who are willing to voluntarily self-identify as being among many of the Living Examples To The Truth that life can be lived and enjoyed without having to consume any mood or mind altering substances; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that from the collected census data be used as a baseline established for Alaska's Living Examples To The Truth population, which can be monitored and documented on a voluntarily basis throughout every Alaska community in order to showcase and appreciate all the positive social outcomes or health correlations that are a direct result of this population's chosen lifestyle, and whose documented and monitored healthy baseline findings can be relevantly added to the Healthy Alaskans 2020 Scorecard (<http://hss.state.ak.us/ha2020/>); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that every public and private organization affected by, concerned with, and working toward the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse, be encouraged to pass an identical resolution and publicly invite all Alaska citizens to wear a white ribbon of their choosing during the month of March 2017, Sobriety Awareness Month, as a way to recognize, appreciate, and reinforce those who are truly making a difference by their freely chosen lifestyle of sobriety, which benefits society.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be the policy of AFN until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

SUBMITTED BY:	COOK INLET REGION, INC.
COMMITTEE ACTION:	PASS
CONVENTION ACTION:	AMEND AND PASS



Julie Kitka

President



Sobermiut: Reviving Our Spirit Anchorage, Alaska

Resolution 2016-01

- Entitled:** For the Alaska Legislature to permanently reinstate the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) in support of its declaration of policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010
- WHEREAS:** The declaration of policy for the State of Alaska, under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, is *"to recognize, appreciate, and reinforce the example set by its citizens who lead, believe in, and support a life of sobriety."*; and
- WHEREAS:** Between the years of 1995 and 2006, the Alaska Legislature designated the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) ten times in recognition and support of Alaska Statute 47.31.010 with the passages of HCR011A (1995), SCR004A (1997), SCR021A (1998), SCR012A (2000), SCR002B (2001), SCR022A (2002), SCR005Z (2003), SCR021A (2004), HCR001Z (2005), HCR033Z (2006); and
- WHEREAS:** Many Alaskans that lead, believe-in, and support a life of sobriety universally agree that it is *"a positive, healthy, and productive way of life, free from the devastating effects of alcohol and drugs"*; and
- WHEREAS:** These same Alaskans represent an aggregate population for which a voluntary census has never been taken before to confirm the population exists, the lifestyle choice they have chosen is proof that they are *Living-Examples-To-The-Truth (LETTT)* that life can be lived and enjoyed without having to consume any mood/mind altering substance or beverage (e.g., the same as vegetarians are proof that life can be lived without consuming meat); and
- WHEREAS:** Between 1993 & 1995, the Alaska Federation of Natives, Incorporated (AFN), with its AFN Sobriety Movement (AFNSM) program was geared to support the growing signs of an aggregate population, which was only then recognized or referred to as a grass-roots sobriety movement growing in Alaska, did collect over 10,000 sobriety pledge signatures from men, women, and children who claimed the goals of AFNSM, and these signatures were given to none other than Iditarod Musher for Sobriety Mike Williams, of Akiak, Alaska, who carried these signatures 1,049 miles in the March 1995 Iditarod Sled Dog Race in a symbolic gesture to honor them as the "serum of commitment" that was needed to help cure alcohol and drug abuse throughout Alaska; and
- WHEREAS:** In 1996, AFNSM learned nowhere in Alaska statute was sobriety referenced in accordance with the conceptual understanding of the 10,000 Alaska citizens who signed the AFNSM Sobriety Pledge, whose signatures were honored and carried on the Iditarod Trail. It was, then, Alaska House of Representatives' Judiciary Chair, Representative Brian Porter, introduced legislation, under HB523A (1996), to amend Alaska Statute 47.37.010 with language that was more in line with recognizing, appreciating, and reinforcing the lifestyle so many people voluntarily ascribed, and provided so many unseen and unmeasured societal health and cost benefits; and
- WHEREAS:** In comparison to the pervasive social-ills caused by alcohol and drug abuse in Alaska, there exists an aggregate population of citizens who lead a life of sobriety, whose lifestyle choice has three societal benefits, which include, but are not limited to:
1. An improved quality of life and health for individuals, families, and communities;
 2. An improved reduction in crime and social ills (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse & neglect, sexual assault, homicide, suicide, etc.) predominately associated with alcohol and drug abuse;
 3. An improved reduction in government spending for local, state, and federal treasuries who end up paying for the pervasive social ills caused by and associated with alcohol and drug abuse.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Sobermiut: Reviving Our Spirit, hereby call upon the Alaska State Legislature to permanently reinstate and annually designate, in perpetuity, the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) in accordance with fulfilling, in whole or in part, its declaration policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska Legislature enact or amend all state grant services and any state grants with federal matching requirements for all substance abuse prevention programs, to set up to or set aside a maximum of 5% of their annual program budget to help the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under AS 47.37.010; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that Alaska's Governor, his or her Cabinet, and any for-profit or non-profit agency(ies) interested in helping the State of Alaska meet its declaration of policy under Alaska Statute 47.37.010, develop meaningful and respectful methods to collect census data to prove the existence of Alaska's aggregate citizen population, by inviting citizens who are willing to voluntarily self-identify, as being among many of the *Living-Examples-To-The-Truth (LETTT)* that life can really be *lived and enjoyed* without having to consume any mood/mind altering substances; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that from the collected census data a baseline be established for Alaska's LETTT population, which can be monitored and documented on a voluntarily basis throughout every Alaska community in order to showcase and appreciate all the positive social outcomes or health correlations that are a direct result of this population's chosen lifestyle, and whose documented and monitored healthy baseline findings can be relevantly added to the Healthy Alaskans 2020 Scorecard (<http://hss.state.ak.us/ha2020/>); and be it


FINALLY RESOLVED that *every public and private organization, affected by, concerned with, and working toward the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse*, be encouraged to pass an identical resolution and publicly invite all Alaska citizens to wear a white ribbon of their choosing during the month of March 2017, Sobriety Awareness Month, as a way to *recognize, appreciate, and reinforce* the unsung population of LETTTs who are truly making a difference by their freely chosen lifestyle, which benefits society in the three-
aforementioned ways above.

The Board of Directors for Sobermiut: Reviving Our Spirit unanimous passed this resolution on September 20, 2016.


Signature of Gregory Nothstine Board President


Date


Signature of Sheila Randazzo Board Secretary


Date



March 1, 2018

Sent Via Electronic Mail
The Honorable Ivy Spohnholz Alaska
House of Representatives
State Capitol Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 138, A Bill to Establish March as Sobriety Awareness Month

Dear Representative Spohnholz,

The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 186 federally recognized tribes, 177 village corporations, 12 regional corporations and 11 regional non-profit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs. AFN's mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic, and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

AFN strongly supports HB 138. Sobriety and healthy living has been a top priority of AFN for many years.

In 2016 Convention Resolution 16-15: that the Alaska legislature permanently reinstate the month of March as "Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM)" in support of its declaration of policy under Alaska statute 47.37.010, it is noted that between the years of 1995 and 2006, the Alaska Legislature designated the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month (SAM) ten times in recognition and support of Alaska Statute 47.31.010. It is time to reestablish this official recognition of the benefits of health lifestyles on the quality of life of all Alaskans.

AFN calls on the Alaska State Legislature to permanently reinstate and annually designate, in perpetuity, the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

Julie Kitka
President

Cc. Board of Directors, AFN



March 6, 2018

The Honorable Ivy Spohnholz
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol Room 421
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: *HB 138, A Bill to Establish March as Sobriety Awareness Month*

Dear Representative Spohnholz,

In 2016, CIRI sponsored the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention Resolution 16-15 resolving that the Alaska legislature permanently reinstate the month of March as "Sobriety Awareness Month." CIRI is writing today to voice its wholehearted support for your legislation, HB 138, which seeks to codify Sobriety Awareness Month into the Alaska statutes. Currently, an epidemic of opioid, methamphetamine and alcohol abuse results in an unacceptable social burden upon Alaskans. Your legislation reflects the deep concern that CIRI, and our family of non-profit organizations, share regarding the negative consequences of drug and alcohol abuse on all Alaskans. While this problem seems large and difficult to attack, a positive step forward from your legislation can be made by reaffirming sobriety and freedom from substance abuse as our societal norm.

CIRI believes your legislation helps point the way towards wellness as a goal for all Alaskans and is committed to helping you achieve the outcomes included in AFN Resolution 16-15, specifically:

1. An improved quality of life and health for individuals, families and communities;
2. An improved reduction in crime and social ills (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual assault, homicide, suicide, etc.) predominately associated with alcohol and drug abuse; and
3. An improved reduction in government spending for local, state and federal treasuries that end up paying for the pervasive social ills caused by and associated with alcohol and drug abuse.

CIRI joins your call to the Alaska State Legislature to permanently reinstate and annually designate the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month. Thank you for your service and please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Cook Inlet Region, Inc.

Sophie Minich
President and Chief Executive Officer



CHAIRMAN & PRESIDENT

March 9, 2018

The Honorable Ivy Spohnholz, Chair
House DHSS Committee
State Capitol Building
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Spohnholz:

On behalf of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), I write in support of House Bill 138, an Act establishing the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month.

ANTHC is a statewide tribal health organization serving all 229 tribes and more than 166,000 Alaska Native and American Indian (AN/AI) individuals in Alaska. ANTHC and Southcentral Foundation co-manage the Alaska Native Medical Center, the tertiary care hospital for all AN/AIs in Alaska. ANTHC also provides a wide range of statewide public health, community health, environmental health, and other programs and services for Alaska Native people and their communities.

ANTHC concurs with the legislative findings and intent "to call attention to Alaskans who choose a positive and healthy lifestyle by not consuming mood- or mind-altering substances, and who, by virtue of their freely chosen lifestyle, serve as examples that life can be lived and enjoyed without the consumption of mood- or mind-altering substances."

From 2014-2016, 58 percent of Alaska Native adults reported no alcohol use. In 2017, 80 percent of Alaska Native high school students reported no current use of alcohol. Based on a report from the McDowell Group, *Protective Factors for Youth Substance Abuse and Delinquency*, positive connection to adults, strong role models and healthy social norms are protective factors that enhance healthy development among our youth.

ANTHC supports these findings as well as the healthy and positive lifestyle chosen by those committed to sobriety. The passage of HB 138 would serve as a statement to all Alaskans on the importance of sobriety, helping to facilitate public and private sector activities dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the individual and shared health benefits of sobriety.

Sincerely,

Andy Teuber
Chairman and President

Our Vision

Alaska Native people are the healthiest people in the world

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

3090 Ambassador Drive | Anchorage, Alaska 99508

907/242-1063



ALASKA THERAPEUTIC COURT ALUMNI GROUP
417 Barrow St. Anchorage, AK. 99501 • 907-272-1192

March 12, 2018

To Whom it May concern:

This letter serves as a testimony in support of Alaska's HB 138/SB 208 on behalf of the Alaska Therapeutic Court Alumni Group (AKTCA).

The AKTCA members are graduates of the Alaska State Therapeutic Courts, whose mission is to promote healthy lifestyles through a safe and supportive self-governed body and to uplift and encourage participants towards positive change that promotes sobriety and right living for therapeutic court participants and graduates. The Court's model offers a collaborative court team, including a judge, defense counsel, and substance abuse/mental health treatment providers that assist participants struggling with addiction.

The AKTCA have developed and fostered collaborative relationships with local and national organizations in successful efforts to promote therapeutic justice and sobriety in Alaska. They are an integral link in the chain of healthy recovery and utilize collaboration along with innovative strategies in order to reduce recidivism and promote long term sobriety.

Given the work we do in supporting the Therapeutic Courts, we wholeheartedly support the implementation of a "Sobriety Month" in Alaska. The AKTCA not only promotes healthy living for court participants in recovery, but also celebrates and applauds the sobriety of our alumni. A state-wide, recognized "Sobriety Month" would allow the public to have a greater understanding that recovery is to be acknowledged as a way of providing support for those still suffering.

We hope you will continue to support this legislation and works towards its implementation.

Sincerely,

Ron Wilson
AKTCA Board Chair
(907) 947-2055



Soldotna High School

425 W. Marydale Avenue
Soldotna, AK 99669
(907) 260-7000
Fax (907) 262-4288
<http://soldotnahighschool.bloga.kpbod.k12.ak.us/wpmu/>

Tony Graham - Principal
Randy Neill - Assistant Principal
Kyle McFall - Athletic Director
Nathan Erfurth - Activities Director

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

February 28th, 2018

To the Honorable Members of the 30th Alaska Legislature,

It has come to the attention of the Soldotna High School Student Government that HB 138 is set to be presented to the Alaska State House. The Soldotna High School Student Government offers its wholehearted support for this bill because it raises awareness of and encourages sobriety around the state.

As high school students, sobriety is essential to creating healthy learning environments. Unfortunately, many of us can tell stories of neighbors, friends, and family member who have had their lives destroyed by substance abuse. At Soldotna High School, we are lucky to have educational spaces free of addiction and harmful substances. We support this bill because it recognizes and encourages healthy lifestyles.

For the first time, many of us are at a time in our lives when our decisions have long-term consequences. Alcoholism and substance abuse can have devastating effects not just on our current situations but on our decisions for years to come. Sobriety offers students the opportunity to take control of their actions and determine their own futures. This bill will raise awareness about the enormous benefits of sobriety.

With students understanding the potential that their lives have when sobriety is a forefront, the lives of students not only at Soldotna High School, but all over our state, will improve drastically. We strongly urge you to support HB 138.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Soldotna High School Student Government



3/14/2018

Senator David Wilson
State Capitol Room 115
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Wilson and the Senate Health and Social Services Committee,

I am the executive director of Recover Alaska, a multi-sector action group working to reduce excessive alcohol use and harms across the state. I live and work in Anchorage, and recently moved downtown into Senator Begich's area. Recover Alaska's Partners include the Rasmuson Foundation, The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Mat-Su Health Foundation, Providence Alaska, Southcentral Foundation and the State of Alaska's Department of Health and Social Services. The vision for Recover Alaska is for Alaskans to live free from the consequences of alcohol misuse, so we are empowered to achieve our full potential.

This work requires individual, social and systemic change. We do this by making connections between organizations and people seeking help, by elevating the conversation to raise awareness of the negative impacts of alcohol misuse, by advocating for policy change to create safer built environments, and by shifting perceptions.

We want to make it more normal and comfortable to talk about alcohol misuse. We want to correct the falsehood that addiction is a moral failing and emphasize that it is a chronic disease. We know that treatment works and that recovery is possible. We are not an abstinence only initiative and we work to promote healthy levels of drinking; and we recognize that for some people, that means no alcohol consumption. Rather than hiding those folks in a dark basement, we work to celebrate recovery and highlight the courage and strength of people living clean and sober lives.

I myself am a person in long-term recovery; I've been sober for 8 and a half years. It has been my experience that talking about my alcoholism has often made people uncomfortable. When I brought up my troubles while still active in my drinking, people assured me that I didn't need to quit entirely, I just needed to moderate. There is so much stigma associated with sobriety that to them it sounded worse than the multiple, horrible situations I found myself in while drinking.

Early in my sobriety I disclosed my substance use disorder to my doctor, and after ensuring my drinking had never been the direct cause of hospitalization she advised me not to tell medical professionals about my disease. So just in case I was beginning to overcome the devastating shame that comes with substance use disorder, the reality of stigma slapped me in the face. I was then offered prescription pain medication for a sinus infection, to tide me over until the antibiotics kicked in but that's another story. It bears repeating: my doctor advised me not to disclose my relevant medical history. The denial of my full self by that doctor was a huge setback to my self-worth and knocked me back into shame and isolation.



But I'm stronger for it. And I have found my voice. I owe my life to recovery, and I am so grateful to be able to give my life back to recovery. I am humbled and proud to share part of my story with you, and I am honored to stand for not only myself, but for the thousands of people living in sobriety across our great state.

Designating March as Sobriety Awareness Month will give all of us the opportunity to step out from under the shroud alcohol has over Alaska, and to be proud about our choice to take back control of our lives. Whether a person is sober because they are alcoholic and cannot drink safely, or for religious beliefs, or because they are pregnant or supporting a pregnant partner, or simply choose not to consume mood or mind-altering substances, we should all celebrate that choice. Alcohol use is related to so many negative consequences that choosing to abstain has a positive effect on not just the individual, but the whole community. Alcohol costs our state \$1.84 billion every year, so in addition to the human lives this legislation will improve, encouraging, celebrating and supporting sobriety will also improve our fiscal climate.

In Recover Alaska's work throughout the year, we focus on the full spectrum, from prevention to treatment to recovery. However, people so often want to see metrics that it is easy for recovery to get pushed to the backburner. It is difficult to track people's success when we stop showing up in emergency rooms or being arrested due to alcohol related issues. Plus the negative associations to substance use disorders make people want to hide that part of themselves, like a dirty secret instead of a health condition. Designating a full month to call attention to the benefits of sobriety helps justify my organization's efforts in bringing nonalcoholic drink options to every restaurant and bar, and throwing sober dance parties to create safe spaces for people who want to socialize without the negative consequences of alcohol all around them. And by the State Legislature passing this bill, and honoring those of us who choose this path, it validates this fight for our lives that we work on every day and showcases us as an important, positive part of our community. Addiction is a disease of isolation and this bill champions one of the most important aspects of recovery – connection.

Recover Alaska would like to thank the Alaska Federation of Natives Sobriety Movement for initiating this special month and for all their work in promoting healthy, sober lifestyles. Special thanks to Representative Spohnholz for taking up HB138, and for serving as such a strong and positive role model of what a full, healthy, sober life can look like. Thank you all for this opportunity and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Hall
Recover Alaska

Tasha Elizarde

From: Michael Carson <carsons@mtaonline.net>
Sent: Monday, March 12, 2018 10:03 AM
To: Tasha Elizarde
Subject: HB138

Date: March, 2018

To: Rep. Ivy Spohnholz, Berta Senator Gardner & Senate HSS

From: Michael P. Carson

Cc: Tasha. elizarde@akleg.gov & Jacob. tatum@akleg.gov

Re: Sobriety Awareness Month in Alaska (HB 138 & SB 208)

But, by the Grace of God, this year I will celebrate 30 years clean & sober. Again, but, by the Grace of God. My imagination has been fired and this past 30 years have been the most satisfactory years of my life. And, I know the future will be bright and hopeful with many opportunities to engage more deeply with my family, friends, strangers and my community.

My name is Michael Carson. I am a co-founding board member of MyHouse in the Mat-Su. Also, I am the V.P. and the Recovery Specialist at MyHouse. In addition, I am currently the Chair of the Mat-Su Opioid Task Force. And, I have been leading a teen recovery group at the Mat-Su Youth Facility for the past 15 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of HB 134, Sobriety Awareness Month (March) in Alaska. Recovery is every aspect of building relationships to overcome addiction and isolation. I believe recovery has to be lived out in the open to convince those still suffering there is hope. What a better way to bring more attention to sobriety and for those still suffering than having an awareness month and with celebrating it across our entire State.

With the opioid epidemic taking 99 lives this past year (Dr.Jay Butler) due to overdoses, we have to recognize recovery is possible for everyone. It does not matter how far down the scale a person has gone, there is always hope. Even with the total bewilderment and

despair of addiction, hope is eternal. And, that hope is shared by those in recovery. In fact, those that have suffered, owe to the suffering.

That is the reason why recovery is imperative to share through an awareness month. The message of those in recovery is, " If I can get sober, you can too. And, let me share with you how I did that. NOT ALONE!"

Addiction wants to live in the darkness and wants to stay there alone. Recovery is all about coming into the light and building relationships. And, recovery is to be shared with others to re-enforce one's own recovery. Can you imagine all those in the recovery community sharing their personal stories and shouting out their light and hope?!

And, the message of those in recovery would be, 'We are miracles and most importantly, the age of miracles is still with us. Our recovery community proves that!'

Thank you for considering a Sobriety Awareness Month.

LessDopeMoreHope

Michael

Special note- some of the above statements are modified or re-stated from the Big Book of A.A.

Dear members of the Alaska Legislature:

I am writing on my own behalf in representation of nothing other than my own personal experience. I have lived in Wasilla since 1986 and have spent much of my life in that community. I've seen the introduction and expansion of new businesses, as well as the reduction of many locally owned small businesses. I've watched our road system expand and have witnessed the increase in demand for further development in travel capability within the Valley. Peripheral to all these developments has run the growth of a problem that has reached epidemic proportion within recent years. Drugs have proliferated in my community and there seems no way of entirely comprehending their impact.

Sobriety awareness is only one way to combat the impression drugs are having; but in my experience, it is one of the most effective. When I was 29 years old, I found myself in a place of hopelessness. I had been recklessly drinking alcohol and using illicit and prescription drugs since I was 13. Faced with a doomed future, I asked a higher power for help and was immediately reminded of those who had graced my life and had shared with me their experience using, drinking, and (most significantly) living with sobriety. The miracle of that moment was the lasting imprint the memory of their sobriety had on me. It would follow me into today where I have been sober for over three years – and am remarkably happy to share that fact!

Sobriety awareness is an ideal upon which anyone can relate perception, experience, and most importantly ... hope. To designate an entire month in the name of sobriety awareness allows a platform for those seeking solution to their dilemma, whether in their own lives or their family members' lives, to come together and share visions of growth and courage that they may create an amalgam of hope greater than any individual. Please designate March as "Sobriety Awareness Month" in our beautiful state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Leonard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matt Leonard

fozzyleonard@yahoo.com

Tasha Elizarde

From: Barbara Doty <Barbara.Doty@matsugov.us>
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 3:59 PM
To: Tasha Elizarde
Subject: HB 138 SB 208

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

As a family physician and member of the Mat Su Borough Assembly I ask you to support HB 138 and SB 208. These are important bills to pass expediently. The more awareness we have in our communities of the costs of addiction and substance misuse, the more likely we will effectively address the issue.
Barbara Doty M.D. Assembly Dist 6 Mat SU

Tasha Elizarde

From: Alyssa Jones <ajones@citci.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 1:04 PM
To: Tasha Elizarde; Jacob Tatum; Senate Health and Social Services
Subject: HB 138/SB 208

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I support this bill! Thank you for your efforts.

Alyssa Jones, MS, LPC, NCC, CDC I
Mental Health Professional Clinician
Recovery Services
Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc
907-793-3166
ajones@citci.org

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