

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE

RULES

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ETHICS



SENATOR Tom Begich
Senate Democratic Leader

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Senate Bill 8

Sponsor Statement

“An Act restricting the release of certain records of convictions; amending Rule 37.6, Alaska Rules of Administration; and providing for an effective date.”

Senate Bill 8 would make confidential the records of individuals who have been convicted of minor marijuana crimes, and no other crime. The records would automatically be removed from courtview. The records would also be removed from some background checks administered by the Department of Public Safety, if requested by the individual.

In 2014, Alaskans voted to legalize the cultivation, sale, and possession of marijuana for those 21 years old or older. Despite this change in the law, some Alaskans remain blocked from employment and housing by previous marijuana possession convictions that would no longer be a crime today.

According to a report prepared by Legislative Research, there were more than 700 Alaskans convicted of low level marijuana crimes between 2007 and 2017. Those convictions can make obtaining housing and gainful employment challenging.

Now that voters have legalized marijuana, this legislation would allow those previously convicted to move on with their lives, while ensuring those in the criminal justice field still have access to needed background information.

Thank you for your consideration.

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