



**Public Safety Employees Association, Inc.**  
***"Representing Alaska's Finest"***  
**Local 803**



**Public Safety Employees Association Position Paper**  
**Supporting SB 35**

The Public Safety Employees Association is pleased to support SB 35. This bill addresses sex offenses by amending the definition of "sexual contact", enhanced sentencing for strangulation, modifying sentencing in some sex crimes, closes a loophole in sex offender registration, updates child some sex crimes, removes marriage as a defense to sexual assault and updates parole eligibility for sex offenders.

Currently Alaska leads the nation in sex crimes according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report in 2018 and Alaska has more than double the rate of rape than the national average. Western Alaska has had the highest reported rate of felony level sex offenses in the state. The average age of sex crime victims in Western Alaska is 13 years of age while the average age of the suspect is 28.

SB 35 addresses these issues by making sexual abuse of a minor in the third degree a felony when there is a six year age difference, thus increasing the sentencing range from 0-2 to 2-12 years. SB 35 ensures that any prior felony counts as a prior felony for presumptive felony sentencing purposes in sex cases. The bill also clarifies that sex offenders who are ineligible for good time credit are also ineligible for discretionary parole.

SB 35 further protects Alaskan children by making the indecent viewing or production of a picture of a child a registerable sex offense and deletes "online" from the crime of "online enticement of a minor" making any solicitation of a minor for sex a B felony.

In 2017 Justin Schneider was accused of strangling his victim until she was unconscious and then masturbated onto her. The sentence for time served shocked and angered Alaskans, and currently masturbating onto somebody is not a crime in Alaska. SB 35 addresses this by amending "sexual contact" to include unwanted contact with semen a sex offense and creating an enhanced sentencing structure for assault in the second degree.

SB 35 also makes repeatedly sending unsolicited and unwanted images of genitalia to another person harassment in the second degree and repeals marriage as a defense to sexual assault.

The Public Safety Employees Association believes that strengthening Alaska's sex crime laws is essential to reducing the rate of sex crimes in Alaska.

PSEA encourages the passage of SB 35.