



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Matt Claman

Session: State Capitol, Juneau, AK 99801 Phone: 465-4919

Interim: 1500 W. Benson Blvd., Anch, AK 99503 Phone: 269-0130

House Bill 98 Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to aggregation of crimes under theft in the second degree; relating to fraudulent use of an access device; and relating to the crime of possession of motor vehicle theft tools.”

Law enforcement officials in Alaska have reported increased difficulty when arresting and prosecuting serial theft offenders. House Bill 98 strengthens Alaska’s laws related to theft and other offenses against property and improves public safety by giving police officers and prosecutors additional tools for arresting and prosecuting criminals.

Under House Bill 98, prosecutors would gain an important tool to hold repeat theft offenders accountable. The legislation would allow prosecutors to aggregate crimes under theft in the second degree if they occur within 180 days, the amount is more than \$750 and less than \$25,000, and the property or services are taken from commercial establishments. The bill also updates statutes related to fraudulent use of an access device to include an identification document, which clarifies a gap in the statute identified by the Alaska Court of Appeals in *Kankanton v. State*, 342 P.3d (Alaska Ct. App. 2015). Finally, HB 98 establishes the crime of possession of motor vehicle theft tools as a class A misdemeanor, which will give law enforcement an additional option to prosecute auto theft.

By addressing challenges related to organized theft, retail theft, and motor vehicle theft, House Bill 98 supports hard-working law enforcement officials and prosecutors throughout Alaska.