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May 3, 2022

Representative Rasmussen
State Capitol Room 418
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for HB 325, Domestic Violence

Dear Representative Rasmussen:

Please consider this a letter of support for HB 325. The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) is the State's coalition of 23 domestic violence and sexual assault intervention and prevention programs. ANDVSA supports adding "publishes or distributes electronic or printed photographs, pictures, or films that show the genitals, anus, or female breast of the other person or show that person engaged in a sexual act" to the statutory definition of domestic violence and crimes involving domestic violence.

People who choose to use violence to control partners will use any means necessary to keep that control and coerce their partner into doing or not doing things that benefit the person causing harm. A single act of posting explicit images can cause significant harm to a victim, impacting their mental health, relationships, and career. Such images can be very effective weapons and it is right to treat them as such.

A person causing harm may threaten to send the pictures to a victim's family, children, and even employers if they don't comply with their demands, which could include things like staying in the relationship or not reporting abuse to friends or the police. A person causing harm may keep sending the photos to a victim as a cruel reminder of the threat they face and the power the person holds over them.

Nonconsensual pornography is becoming a common ways to try to control and intimidate a partner. Threats to use images are now being seen as a "favored weapon" in domestic violence. We must acknowledge this crime when used against a household member as the domestic violence that it is.

Thank you for sponsoring HB 325.

Sincerely,

Brenda Stanfill
Executive Director

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR | Hooper Bay Bay Haven | Bethel TWC | Cordova CFRC | Craig HOPE | Dillingham
SAFE | Emmonak EWS | Fairbanks IAC | Haines Becky's Place | Homer SPHH | Juneau AWARE |
Kenai LeeShore Center | Ketchikan WISH | Kodiak KWRCC | Kotzebue MFCC | Nome BSWG | Petersburg WAVE |
Seward Seward's Safe Harbor | Sitka SAFV | Unalaska USAFV | Utqiagvik AWIC | Valdez AVV