

From: Sen. Matt Claman
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 2:36 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: FW: Support for HB 101

-----Original Message-----

From: Scott Slone <scott@mightyak.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 5:23 PM
To: Sen. Matt Claman <Sen.Matt.Claman@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB 101

Dear Senator Matt Claman,

I'm writing to share my support for HB 101 and to express how important this issue is to many of us working with survivors across Alaska.

HB 101 passed the House unanimously and seeks to update several areas of law so that protections align with the reality that 16- and 17-year-olds are still minors. In many situations, they are still in school and under the authority of adults, which is why strengthening protections until age 18 is meaningful.

I understand there have been questions raised about the fiscal note and the uncertainty around how many cases may be affected. Even so, when gaps in law allow harmful situations to slip through, the impact can extend far beyond a single case. Over time, those gaps can contribute to cycles of harm that leave lasting effects on individuals, families, and communities.

With Alaska continuing to face high rates of abuse and exploitation, many of us believe it's important to look for opportunities to strengthen protections and prevention wherever we can.

I appreciate the careful review the Senate is giving this bill and hope HB 101 continues moving forward so these questions can be fully considered.

If there are specific questions or concerns that would help move the bill forward, I would welcome the opportunity to understand them.

Thank you for your service and for the work you and the Judiciary Committee do on these complex issues.

Respectfully,

Scott Slone

Mighty AK / Founder

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907-306-6029

[REDACTED]

From: Daryl Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2026 7:55 AM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: Hb101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I support raising the age of consent to 18 in the state of Alaska in HB101.

Daryl Johnson
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Lila Lee Little [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2026 7:31 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: Support HB 101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 101, which would raise the age of consent in Alaska from 16 to 18.

Protecting young people from sexual exploitation should be a priority for our state. Raising the age of consent helps close legal gaps that can leave vulnerable minors at risk. It strengthens protections for youth and better reflects what many parents, educators, and community members believe is appropriate for safeguarding children as they continue to grow and develop.

Aligning Alaska's law with many other states that have already established 18 as the age of consent is a common-sense step that demonstrates our commitment to protecting minors and preventing exploitation.

I appreciate the work of the bill's sponsors and the legislators who have supported this effort. Thank you for considering HB 101 and for your continued work to protect Alaska's youth.

Sincerely,
Lila Johnson

[REDACTED]

From: Maureen Knutsen [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2026 5:58 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: H.B. 101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I strongly support the adoption of H.B. 101 and would suggest that even raising the age of consent to 19 or even 21 should be considered.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to comment.

Maureen Knutsen
[REDACTED]
Naknek, AK 99633

[REDACTED]

From: nancynkevin [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 21, 2026 7:38 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: HB 101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I am writing this to express my full support of HB101. As a country, state and people we need to do more to protect our young people from predators. Passing this bill will be a move in the right direction!

Thank you,
Nancy Racek

[REDACTED]

From: darleen masiak [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2026 7:23 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: HB101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I support passage of HB101. darleen masiak Fairbanks AK 99712

[REDACTED]

From: Melissa Chaney [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2026 12:40 PM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: HB101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly support raising the age of consent from 16 to 18.

It is time to hold sexual predators accountable for abuse of minors.

Sixteen year olds are minors.

Please vote to pass this bill.

Melissa Chaney
Anchorage, AK

[REDACTED]

From: Rozlyn Grady-Wyche [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 8:01 AM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: NAACP ALASKA Oregon and Washington in Strong support of HB 101

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche, and I serve as the Alaska Education Chair for the NAACP Tri-State Area Conference, representing Alaska, Oregon, and Washington. I am writing in strong support of HB 101.

As an educator, advocate, and community leader, I work daily with young people and families across our state. I see firsthand the gaps in protection that leave our youth especially our most vulnerable students at risk. Raising the age of consent from 16 to 18 is not just a policy adjustment; it is a necessary step toward aligning our laws with our responsibility to safeguard children.

At 16, many of our youth are still navigating identity, stability, and safety. They are still in our schools, still under our care, and still deserving of clear, consistent protections. HB 101 helps close legal loopholes that can be exploited and strengthens accountability for those who would take advantage of minors.

From an educational and equity lens, this bill is critical. We know that marginalized youth including Black students, Indigenous students, and those from low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by systems that fail to protect them. Strengthening legal protections is one way we move closer to justice and safety for all children.

This legislation also brings Alaska in alignment with many other states, reinforcing a national standard that prioritizes the well-being of young people.

As the NAACP Alaska Education Chair, I stand firmly in support of policies that protect children, uphold dignity, and promote safe learning environments. HB 101 reflects those values.

I urge you to pass this bill and continue advancing policies that center the safety and futures of our youth.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Alaska's children.

In service,

Roz'lyn Grady-Wyche

Alaska Education Chair

NAACP Tri-State Area Conference

[Redacted]

From: Sean McPhilamy [Redacted]
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2026 10:28 AM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: In support of H.B. 101, Raising the Age of Consent

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good day,

I write this email in support of the passage of House Bill 101.

The changes within the proposed legislation to increase the age of consent from age 16 to 18 are substantial and ought to be adopted.

Thank you,
Sean
~
Sean McPhilamy

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



P.O. Box 91054
Anchorage, Alaska 99509

March 23, 2026

Attn: Letter of Support for House Bill 101

Dear Members of Senate Judiciary,

As the executive director of the Alaska Children's Alliance, I am writing to express strong support for House Bill 101, sponsored by Andrew Gray. This legislation represents a critical step toward strengthening protections for Alaska's youth and addressing the state's persistently high rates of sexual violence and exploitation.

Alaska continues to face some of the highest rates of sexual violence in the nation. According to the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center and its Alaska Victimization Survey (2020), Alaska's rates of child sexual abuse are nearly six times higher than the national average and the rate of rape is more than three times higher. The survey further found that over 35% of Alaskan women reported experiencing sexual abuse before the age of 18 (Alaska Victimization Survey, 2020). These data underscore the urgent need for policies that better protect minors and support accountability for those who exploit them.

Adolescents, particularly those aged 16 and 17, are in a critical stage of brain development that increases their vulnerability to coercion and exploitation. Peer-reviewed research in Neuroscience demonstrates that the prefrontal cortex—the region responsible for impulse control, decision-making, and risk assessment—continues to mature into the mid-20s (Steinberg, 2013). During this developmental period, significant structural and functional changes contribute to heightened sensitivity to external influences, increased risk-taking, and a reduced ability to fully evaluate long-term consequences (Sowell et al., 2020). This scientific consensus reinforces what practitioners across Alaska already see: youth are more susceptible to grooming, manipulation, and exploitation by older individuals.

Under current Alaska law, the age of consent creates a legal gap that can be exploited by perpetrators and complicates prosecution in cases involving coercion, trafficking, or abuse. House Bill 101 addresses this gap by raising the age of consent to 18, while maintaining reasonable close-in-age exemptions that ensure consensual peer relationships are not criminalized. This balanced approach both strengthens protections for vulnerable youth and preserves fairness within the law.

Aligning Alaska's statutes with current research and best practices is essential to improving outcomes for children and holding offenders accountable. By recognizing the

developmental realities of adolescence and closing existing legal loopholes, House Bill 101 represents a meaningful and necessary step toward reducing exploitation and protecting Alaska's most vulnerable populations.

I urge you to support House Bill 101 and stand in commitment to the safety, dignity, and future of Alaska's children.

Respectfully,



Joanna Penfold

Executive Director
Alaska Children's Alliance
director@akchildrensalliance.org
907-654-9022

References

University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. (2020). *Alaska victimization survey*. University of Alaska Anchorage. <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/justice-center/research/alaska-victimization-survey>

Steinberg, L. (2013). The influence of neuroscience on U.S. Supreme Court decisions about adolescents' criminal culpability. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, *14*(7), 513–518. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nrn3509>

Sowell, E. R., Thompson, P. M., Holmes, C. J., Jernigan, T. L., & Toga, A. W. (2020). Structural reorganization of the prefrontal cortex during adolescence. *Progress in Neuro-Psychopharmacology and Biological Psychiatry*, *98*, 109804. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pnpbp.2020.109804>

[REDACTED]

From: Hope Meyn [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 10:51 AM
To: Senate Judiciary
Subject: HB101

Dear Senate Judiciary,

I am writing in support of HB 101. This bill would provide essential protection for minors from adult sexual predators, without criminalizing consensual acts with peer minors. My husband worked as a probation and parole officer with sexual offenders and saw firsthand how predators, often as parts of organized crime, target these minors at a higher rate here in Alaska than elsewhere. This law is essential to protect these vulnerable minors. As an expectant parent, this is especially close to my heart. I ask that you support HB 101 to protect our kids.

Best,
Hope Meyn

To: House Judiciary
Subject: RE: Public Testimony HB 101 March 23, 2026 House Judiciary Hearing

From: B.R. Swenson [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 22, 2026 8:54 PM
To: House Judiciary <House.Judiciary@akleg.gov>
Subject: Public Testimony HB 101 March 23, 2026 House Judiciary Hearing

Chair Gray, Vice Chair Kopp, and Members Costello, Eischeid, Mina, Underwood, and Vance of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to support the proposed amendments in HB 101 to Alaska statutes for sexual assault crimes reflecting the age of minors to now be under 18, so that victims who are older adolescents may receive equal justice from our legal system. The harm done to children ages 16 and 17 is no less because they are those ages. They should not have to struggle more for justice. They deserve justice as much as any other child.

I remember those ages not distinguishing me from my suffering or circumstances of being trapped in abuse by my stepfather and neglectful mother. He started sexually abusing me when I was no older than 8 years old. He had been abusing me in other ways since I was 3, as soon as he invaded and occupied my life. He maintained so much coercive control over me I did not escape and receive civil legal support, as protective orders, until I was 21. I opened a criminal case of historical child sexual abuse against him in March 2021, but, fortunately, I did not have to suffer through the complexities of applying the ever-changing statutes (both for crimes and sentencing) to the many years of my trauma for safety and justice because he finally died. Let's try to simplify and equalize justice for future child victims of sexual assault/abuse as much as we can.

Sincerely,

B.R. Swenson

(a resident of the Kenai Peninsula Borough)

Afterthought: As I find these amendments as improvements to these statutes, I remember the Legislature's recent success changing the minimum age to marry in Alaska from 14 to 16. I understand these two matters as related, as sexual assault/abuse of minors is sometimes covered up with marriage and married minors do not gain the same legal rights as the adults they may be married to, which creates a power imbalance easily exploited and resulting in domestic abuses.

In my experience, my stepfather-abuser tried and failed to groom me into "having a little girl with" him, marrying him, and letting him "take care of" me for all of my life. He spoke of these things while he was still married to my mother so this was not legally possible, but he was trying to groom me into someday submitting to his hijacking of my genetic legacy and being legally trapped to him in marriage. Abusers think in ways of controlling others and use any means they can.

Could we please carry this momentum forward and try again to end child marriage in Alaska by raising the minimum age to marry to 18, no exceptions?