

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE ZACK FIELDS

Fairview • South Addition • Forest Park • Downtown • North Star

HB 306 – Sponsor Statement

House Bill 306 clarifies civil liability standards for persons who provide alcoholic beverages in Alaska. Current law generally protects licensed providers from civil liability for injuries caused by an intoxicated person, but HB 306 updates and refines the exceptions to that rule.

The bill confirms that a licensed provider, or the provider's agent or employee, may be civilly liable when alcohol is knowingly provided to a person who is under 21 in violation of state law, unless the provider has in good faith obtained acceptable age-verification documentation. The bill also maintains liability for knowingly serving a drunken person in violation of existing law. In addition, HB 306 adds an explicit civil-liability trigger for knowingly providing alcohol to a person after the lawful hours of operation of the establishment have ended. This change is intended to strengthen accountability and make the statutory standard clearer for courts, licensees, and the public.

Restaurant and bar owners in Alaska are reporting skyrocketing rates for liability insurance in just the past few years.

- A bar in Palmer reported paying \$12,995 in 2022 and \$75,000 in 2023
- A bar in Muldoon: \$15,000 previously and \$45,000 currently
- A bar in Spenard: \$70,000 previously and \$210,000 now
- A bar on Dimond: \$10,000 previously and \$24,000 now
- A bar in Tok: was \$7,000, now \$24,000

HB 306 recognizes the increasing cost of doing business for restaurants and bars in Alaska. It is designed to improve clarity in Alaska's alcohol liability laws and better align civil responsibility with unlawful service practices.