

HB 239 – Criminally Negligent Homicide & Failure-to-Render-Assistance

Senate Judiciary Committee
April 8, 2026

Office of Representative Chuck Kopp

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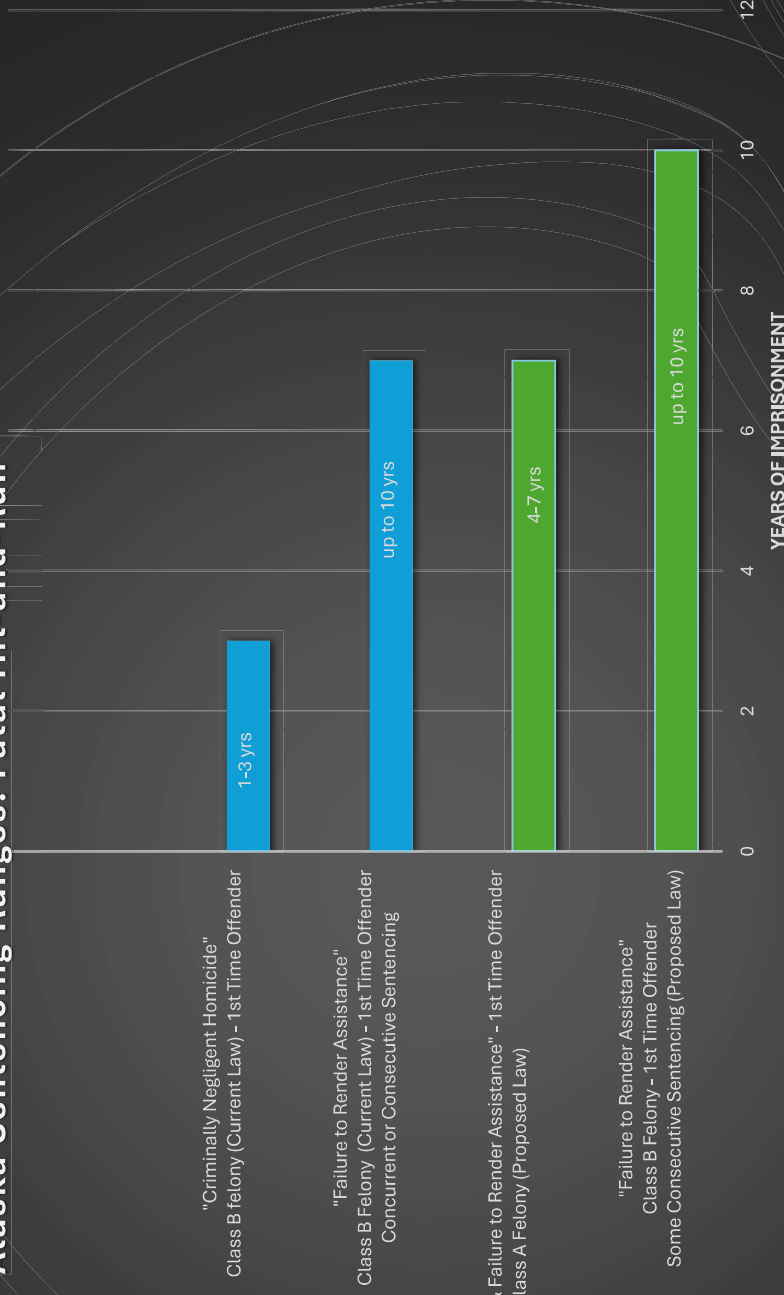
HB 239 - Pedestrian Hit and Run Fatalities & Failure-to- Render-Aid

What does the bill do?

- Elevates the crime of “Criminally Negligent Homicide” from a class B felony to a class A felony when the person is convicted of **both** Criminally Negligent Homicide & Failure to Render Assistance;
- Increases the current presumptive sentence for 1st time offenders from 1-3 yrs to **4-7 yrs**
- **AND**
- If convicted of both “Criminally Negligent Homicide” and “Failure to Render Assistance” it requires **some** additional time (allows judicial discretion on the amount of **time to be served consecutively**).

HB 239 As Compared to Current Law

Alaska Sentencing Ranges: Fatal Hit-and-Run



****If convicted of both
Criminally Negligent
Homicide & Failure to Render
Assistance**

Alaskans expect that when a driver’s criminal negligence takes a life—and the driver flees instead of helping—that there is accountability, aiming to ensure that the loss of a loved one results in significant legal consequences for the perpetrators.

Recent cases show that it isn’t always happening.

Police seek hit-and-run pickup driver in Anchorage collision that killed motorcyclist

By Anchorage Daily News
Published: July 22, 2025



Driver charged with hit-and-run and DUI after pedestrian fatally struck on sidewalk

By Zaz Hollander
Published: September 20, 2025

‘You killed someone’: Driver in East Anchorage pedestrian hit-and-run sentenced to 4 months

By Zaz Hollander
Published: 17 hours ago

Anchorage hit-and-run leaves woman fighting for life, police looking for driver

By Lars Hanson
Published: Feb. 3, 2026 at 5:20 PM AKST
Updated: 16 hours ago

In 2021, 26-year-old **Chase Bowerson** was killed along the Glenn Highway.



The defendant pled guilty to **criminally negligent homicide** and **leaving the scene**, receiving **4.5 years with 2 years suspended**, leaving **2½ years to serve**.

Ultimately, the defendant **actually served eight months or 27%** of the actual sentence in prison because of “Good Time” and was eligible for parole after serving 1/3 of the sentence.

A sentence that does not reflect the gravity of causing a death and abandoning the victim to die in the street.

Why now?

Courts and prosecutors have repeatedly confronted fatal pedestrian hit-and-run crashes where plea constraints, low presumptive sentence ranges, sentence reductions for “Parole” and for “Good Time”, and concurrent sentencing for a Class B criminally negligent homicide **pull sentences down**—even when a driver flees and/or conceals evidence. The result is a perceived mismatch between culpability and consequence, eroding public trust.



Office of Representative Chuck Kopp

HB 239 ESTABLISHES A

4 - 7 Year Presumptive Range

for first time felony offenders

Death caused by
criminal negligence

And

**The driver must fail to
render aid to the victim**

Sets a meaningful floor for sentencing in fatal hit-and-run cases.



**If criminally negligent homicide
and
failure to render aid arise
from the same incident**

HB 239 requires

some consecutive time

**Ensures the failure to assist
is not absorbed into a single sentence.**

A pair of glasses with a chain resting on an open book. The background is a textured, dark brown surface.

HB 239 does **NOT**:

- **Change** the definition of criminal negligence
- **Eliminate** judicial discretion
- **Apply** when a driver stops and renders aid

If a driver remains at the scene and provides assistance, current law remains unchanged.

HB 239 Stop. Help. Stay.

Strengthening penalties for failing to stop and render aid after a crash.

STOP. HELP. STAY.

You must stop, render aid, and remain at the scene.

STOP



STOP

HELP



HELP

STAY



STAY

- **HB 239** addresses failures to stop and render aid after serious vehicle crashes.

- The bill **strengthens penalties** when a driver leaves the scene of an accident involving serious injury or death.

- The goal is simple: **discourage hit-and-run behavior** and protect lives.

What happens after a crash matters.

