



ANDVSA
Alaska Network on Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault

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Rep. Carolyn Hall
State Capitol Room 434
Juneau, AK 99801
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HB 222 Workplace Violence Protective Orders 34-LS0864\I

Please accept this letter as one of support for HB222. The Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA) is the federally recognized state coalition of twenty-four community-based domestic violence and sexual assault service providers. ANDVSA supports HB222.

Unfortunately, we have member programs that need to use this type of protection. People who choose to use violence against family members will also choose to use intimidation tactics and physical force against victim service agencies and their staff. An overarching goal of Workplace Violence Protective Orders is to ensure employees' safety and psychological well-being while they are in their professional environment. Employers have an ethical and legal duty to provide a safe workplace. This includes a duty to protect employees from threats of violence. We applaud the creation of these orders hoping that use of them will indeed offer protection to our member programs' staff.

Allowing the court to order the respondent to stay away from the workplace of the petitioner, or space adjacent to the workplace of the petitioner, or any specified place frequented by the petitioner, during the normal course of the petitioner's business is an essential protection and one we believe will be often requested. If there is enforced separation, the respondent may move away from further threats or actual acts of violence. If not, facing a criminal penalty(misdemeanor) and stiff fine (up to \$25,000) is a just consequence.

We also appreciate sections 7 which amends AS 18.65.865 to add subsection (e) and section 9 which amends AS 18.66.150 to add subsection (e) both of which will prohibit courts from awarding attorneys fees against a protective order petitioner. Victims often lack resources; the fear of paying an abuser's legal fees can deter them from seeking necessary protection and discourage them from acting on reasonable fear. Abusers may use legal fee threats to intimidate victims into dropping cases or to cause financial distress, essentially using the court to continue the abuse.

Thank you for introducing this important piece of legislation. We appreciate your efforts.

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 | Palmer AFS | Petersburg WAVE | Seward Seward's Safe Harbor| Sitka SAFV | Unalaska USAFV | Utqiagvik AWIC | Valdez AVV