

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB 67 - Letter of Support
Attachments: Testimony Letter in Support of HB67.docx.pdf

From: Jilli Lindstam
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 09:13
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>; Rep. Andy Josephson <Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB 67 - Letter of Support

Representative Vance,

Thank you for taking the time to hold a hearing on HB67. As a victim of crime any steps towards making the system less traumatizing and cumbersome will make a world of difference. Please see my attached letter of support.

Thank you,

Jilli Lindstam

Please pass HB67 as soon as possible. It will help victims across Alaska – from every community, from every walk of life. Help for those Alaskans who are suffering from a variety of felonies that have been inflicted upon them.

Alaska's criminal justice system is not designed to help victims. It is designed to help offenders – making sure they have legal representation, making sure their rights are respected and upheld, etc. I understand why this is the case, but do not for an instant think that the system also respects and upholds victims' rights. That simply is not the case.

The victim has no legal representation, no one has time to return your calls, or tell you what is happening. Everyone is overwhelmed with hundreds of cases, hundreds of criminals. Victims are a nuisance, just an annoying thing that takes precious time away from work.

You have no idea how bad it is until you are thrown into the system by the bad actions of another.

My story is unpleasant and painful and continues to this day. I was attacked and strangled by my longtime boyfriend a year and a half ago. I told my story to law enforcement, to the emergency room doctors, to the prosecutor, to an AWAIC legal advocate, to the judge, and then was subpoenaed to tell it again at the criminal grand jury proceeding. The District Attorney had told me it was likely going to be a short process. I would go in and say what happened, answer questions if the jury had them and then the responding officer would go in after me and repeat everything I told them and what they witnessed. Then the jury would make a decision and I would finally get a reprieve from the constant retraumatization. The responding officer no showed. I found myself again sitting in the courthouse with a black eye, shaking and waiting and wondering how this became my life and why so much of this responsibility falls on me, the victim.

I have a good job, I own my home, I have a supportive family, and a strong circle of friends. And I am barely able to survive this horror. Surviving the crime itself, then the constant re-living of the crime, ongoing legal hearings (protective orders, electronic monitoring, etc.), then the lack of support, lack of information, and not to mention the Court System granting my attacker the removal of his electronic monitor because, "it hurts his leg when working."

I cannot imagine how hard this is for someone in a similar situation who does not have supportive family and friends, does not have a good job and is struggling every day just to make ends meet. They often cannot repeatedly take time off of work to go re-live their trauma over and over. So often, they just give up. They lose faith that any justice will be done, so they give up and try to put their lives back together, try to forget.

Every small change you can make to reduce trauma, to help victims better survive this often cruel and burdensome process is helpful, especially when it is eliminating a completely unnecessary requirement.

**Please pass HB67 as soon as possible.
Thank you.**

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

From: Andrew Phillips
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 11:04
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Representative Sarah,
Supporting victims of crime is a no brainer. The toll the court system takes on victims is extremely hard to watch, especially with limited ways to help out the friends and family that have to go through the process. HB67 will lighten the load for victims and be a step in the right direction for the State of Alaska. Thank you for holding a hearing in regard to HB67. Please stand up for victims and vote in favor of HB67.

Sincerely,

Andrew Phillips

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: Support for HB67

From: Westlund, Bonnie (HA Group) >
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 11:03
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support for HB67

Hello Representative Vance,

Thank you for holding a hearing on HB67. I support the passage of this law to help victims of crime rather than laws that victimize them again. I really hope that HB67 passes and appreciate your support!

Thank you,
Bonnie Westlund



Bonnie

Bonnie Westlund

Director, Sustainability & Community Relations | Carnival Corporation

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Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

From: Micheala Phillips >
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 11:03
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Representative Sarah,

Supporting victims of crime is a no brainer. The toll the court system takes on victims is extremely hard to watch, especially with limited ways to help out the friends and family that have to go through the process. HB67 will lighten the load for victims and be a step in the right direction for the State of Alaska. Thank you for holding a hearing in regard to HB67. Please stand up for victims and vote in favor of HB67.

Sincerely,

Micheala Phillips

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

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

From: Tami
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 10:32
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Rep Vance,

HB67 will make a big difference for the lives of victims in Alaska. I support victims' rights and hope that you vote in favor of victims. Strengthening our criminal justice system and reducing trauma for victims is the right thing to do. Please support HB67.

I have had a very close friend have to go through this terrible ordeal. She is a strong woman but I ask why do this to anyone?

Thank you
Tami Vania

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

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

From: Robyn Ellison
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 09:45
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Rep. Sarah Vance:

As a friend and coworker of a victim of violent crime, I have had first hand experience witnessing the time and effort it takes for a victim to navigate the criminal justice system. Any steps that can be taken to reduce that impact are positive. I support victims rights and hope that you will pass HB67.

Best Regards,
Robyn Ellison

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:14
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67 Hearing Support

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

From: <>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 09:41
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67 Hearing Support

Representative Vance,

Thank you for holding a hearing in regards to HB67. Please stand up for victims and vote in favor of HB67. I have been impacted by crime through a close friend being assaulted and anything that can be done to reduce the trauma forced back on victims is a step in the right direction.

Best,

Leah

Sent from my iPhone

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:11
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: House Bill 67

From: Paula Lindstam
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 11:22
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Laddie Shaw <Rep.Laddie.Shaw@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: House Bill 67

I support HB67. Anything that can be done to reduce the trauma on crime victims and to streamline the justice process is a good thing, in my book. Please vote for HB67.

Paula Lindstam

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:11
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: Support HB67

From: Larry Lindstam
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 11:56
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Cc: Rep. Laddie Shaw <Rep.Laddie.Shaw@akleg.gov>; Sen. Cathy Giessel <Sen.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov>
Subject: Support HB67

Please support HB 67.

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:10
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

From: Martinson 1>
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 13:32
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Good afternoon Representative Vance,

Thank you for holding a hearing on HB67. I support the passage of laws that help victims of crime rather than laws that victimize them again. Unfortunately in Alaska, we are impacted by the aftermath of violent crime at disproportionate rates from many other states - and supporting victim's rights is just one step of many to help our loved ones move forward toward healing, and finding a regained sense of safety in this great state we all love so much.

Thank You,

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:10
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: House Bill 67 Support

From: Kristie Babcock
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 15:55
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: House Bill 67 Support

Dear Representative Vance,

Thank you scheduling House Bill 67 for a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 67 is important for making Alaska a state less attractive for sex offenders to relocate to.

HB 67 also goes a long way in protecting victims and alleviating some of the unnecessary burdens on crime victims and those who witness heinous crimes.

I encourage the Alaska Legislature to pass House Bill 67 this year.

Sincerely,

Kristie Babcock

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:10
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

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

From: Tuckerman Babcock
Sent: Saturday, February 3, 2024 16:00
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Dear Rep. Vance,

Some serious criminal justice reform is necessary. It is especially important to reform Court Rules that make the tribulations of victims more burdensome and unnecessary.

Thank you for hearing this needed bill.

I encourage all legislators to support these reforms.

Sincerely,

Tuckerman Babcock

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:10
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67 - Strong Support

From: Holly Johnson
Sent: Sunday, February 4, 2024 07:29
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67 - Strong Support

Dear Representative Sarah Vance & team,

I'm writing strong support HB67, the Victim Trauma Reduction Act. You have the power to put crime victims rights first in the challenging criminal justice process by fixing an assuringly accidental loopole in Alaska law.

Your leadership in positive change, and support for those who desperately need it, is priceless and urgent.

Thank you for your time and efforts,

Holly Johnson
Douglas, Alaska

February 7, 2024

Dear Rep. Vance, House Judiciary Chair:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this letter of support for the “**Victim Trauma Reduction Act**” (HB67/SB65, sec. 12) from Alaska Justice, Public Safety, and Victims’ Rights organizations.

Among several critical criminal justice reforms and added protections for victims of crime, this legislation will repeal a Court Rule that requires victims to testify in person at grand jury proceedings, often only days after being victimized, to re-tell their story and re-live their trauma in front of a group of strangers – even though the victim has already provided the information (often audio recorded and/or videotaped testimony) to public officials, medical professionals, law enforcement, and/or a judge.

Alaska’s criminal justice system currently inflicts more trauma on victims of crime than any other state. And it is completely unnecessary!

30 other jurisdictions that utilize Grand Juries (including the federal government) allow grand jury proceedings without requiring the victim to testify.

In Alaska, **ALL** victims of crime – even minors over ten, sex/human trafficked victims, domestic violence, and rape victims – are required to endure the unnecessary additional trauma and hardship of repeated testimony to complete strangers. This additional requirement is both uncommon and unjustified.

As is common practice in other states, the Victim Trauma Reduction Act will allow key witnesses, typically a peace officer or medical professional, to summarize the testimony of victims, and/or play recordings of victim and witness testimony at grand jury proceedings.

The current court system rule is cruel to victims of crime, costly, inefficient, and adds to the court’s backlog.

The Victim Trauma Reduction Act greatly reduces the stress and trauma Alaska crime victims are forced to experience; while making Alaska’s criminal justice system more trauma-informed, compassionate, fair, rational, and efficient.

Although there are many important criminal justice bills pending in the Alaska Legislature, enacting the Victim Trauma Reduction Act (HB67/SB65, sec. 12) will do more to help, and positively impact **ALL** victims of crime in Alaska, than any other piece of legislation.

NOTE: criminal grand jury proceedings are completely different than investigative grand juries. HB67/SB65 does not impact nor alter investigative grand juries in any way.

NOTE: victims of crime will still be required to testify at trial.

We urge your support of this bill.



1057 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 230
Anchorage, AK 99503

Crisis Lines: 907.276.7273 or 800.478.8999
Tel. 907.276.7279 | staralaska.com



Signers:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Keeley Olson".

Keeley Olson
Executive Director, STAR

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suki Miller".

Suki Miller
Executive Director, Victims for Justice

Jake Almeida

From: Delayna Davis
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 11:00
To: House Judiciary
Subject: HB 67 support

Hi my name is Delayna West, I am in district 6.
I am in support of HP 67.
Every Little step we take in protecting victims and survivors is a step in the right direction.
I strongly encourage the committee support on this bill and other like legislation.
Thank you for your time,
Delayna West

Sent from my iPhone



March 16, 2023

Josh Louwerse, Chair
Sgt. Todd Keams, Vice-Chair
BJ Coopes MD
Brittany Madros
Carla Erickson
Cathy Baldwin-Johnson MD
Elsie Boudreau
Gayle Garniques
Joy Rigby
Judge Terrance Haas
Katie Tepas
Kim Guay
Kira Bishop
Marsha Tandeske
Pam Karalunas
Ron Prewitt
Shayle Hutchison

This letter is submitted by the Alaska Children's Justice Act Task Force (CJA). We are federally mandated under Section 107(d) of Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act requiring us "to undertake a comprehensive review and evaluation of law, policy and the investigative, administrative and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect and to make training and policy recommendations."

Established in 1999, the Alaska CJA is a 17-member group of public, government and non-profit sector subject matter experts in child abuse, neglect and child exploitation. Our vision statement is to work to improve safety and healing for Alaskan children by evaluating and promoting:

- Early and effective interventions for abused children and their families,
- The integration of agencies and systems involved to reduce the risk of further trauma to children, and
- The continuum of services that abused children may need to become strong, productive, and stable adults.

With the exception of Judge Haas, who must abstain from expressing an participating in any way, it is our individual and collective professional opinion that sections of HB67/SB65 protect children in three important ways:

Protection from Re-traumatization and Duplication

First, it protects children from having to describe the bad things they experienced or witnessed in a grand jury proceeding. Grand juries often convene before a child and family have begun the therapeutic process. Children who are victims or witnesses to traumatic events such as domestic violence, sexual offenses committed against them or loved ones can be re-traumatized by being forced to discuss such events in non-therapeutic settings.

Child advocacy centers (CACs) provide a safe place for children to share information about traumatic events. One of the core principles upon which CACs are based is a forensic interview conducted in a neutral, nonduplicative manner that is developmentally and culturally responsive. Trained professionals interview the child in a child-friendly room where the entire interaction is video-recorded. This bill provides for the CAC video recording to be summarized or played at a grand jury proceeding, thus eliminating the need for children to testify before 12-18 adult strangers.

Multidisciplinary Team's Expanded Scope Promotes Healing

Second, HB67/SB65 protects children and helps them to heal by authorizing CACs to conduct interviews of children under the age of 13 who have engaged in sexualized behavior with other children under the age of 13. An interview at a CAC allows the multi-disciplinary team to determine what services may be needed for the children and families when the conduct is developmentally



inappropriate. Therapeutic intervention, family support and advocacy, and medical evaluation and treatment are all hallmarks of the services provided by CACs. Without this statutory change, parents, who are often overwhelmed, scared, and confused, seldom receive the clear and unbiased support, information, and referrals they need to protect, support and ensure positive outcomes for their children.

In-State Registration for Out-of-State Sex Offenses

Finally, HB67/SB65 protects children by requiring out-of-state sex offenders to register as sex offenders in Alaska if they are required to register as such in the state of their conviction. This both ensures Alaska does not serve as a haven for sex offenders seeking to avoid registration requirements by relocating to another state, and it helps parents evaluate preventive and safety measures they can take to protect their children from known risks.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Louwerse".

Josh Louwerse
Chair, Alaska Children's Justice Act Task Force

Covenant House Alaska
Director Statewide Initiatives

Jake Almeida

From: Rep. Sarah Vance
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 17:09
To: House Judiciary
Subject: FW: HB67

From: Carol Fraser
Sent: Sunday, February 4, 2024 16:53
To: Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: HB67

Representative Vance;

Thank you for holding a hearing on HB67. I absolutely support strengthening the rights of crime victims in the criminal justice process and hope HB78 passes. I have been a victim, as have friends of mine and supporting more rights for Victims is not just honorable but should be one of the highest priorities for our government officials. Thank you for your support.

Carol Fraser



Carol Fraser

Anchorage • Kenai • Soldotna • Homer • Juneau • Sitka • Haines

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