

# STATE OF ALASKA

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**OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER**

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## **Sponsor Statement**

**CS HB 150 (JUD)** "An Act relating to the protection of property of persons under disability and minors; relating to the crime of violating a protective order concerning certain vulnerable persons; relating to aggravating factors at sentencing for offenses concerning a victim 65 years or older; relating to the protection of vulnerable adults; amending Rule 12(h), Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure; amending Rule 45(a), Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure; amending Rule 65, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure; amending Rule 17, Alaska Rules of Probate Procedure; amending Rule 9, Alaska Rules of Administration; and providing for an effective date."

HB 150 strengthens the laws against financial exploitation and enhances the ability to obtain emergency protection orders for seniors. The bill also improves the ability of those investigating reports of harm to obtain vital information in a timely manner, and will lead to better services and safety for vulnerable adults who are abused, neglected, or exploited and unable to protect their own interests.

Financial exploitation of the elderly and other vulnerable adults is a growing problem. Victims of financial exploitation may not need a guardian, but may need assistance stopping immediate misuse or theft of their money. These victims find it difficult to access the courts and obtain prompt and inexpensive relief. With a temporary conservator, the vulnerable victim retains autonomy while receiving assistance. The ex parte relief from fraud procedure is similar to the existing domestic violence protection law, providing a means for vulnerable adults to independently obtain straightforward, expedited relief from immediate financial exploitation.