

Senator Robert Myers
State Capitol Room 7
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Frank Tomaszewski
State Capitol Room 405
Juneau, AK 99801

February 4, 2025

Dear Senator Myers and Representative Tomaszewski,

I am writing you as a constituent, South Anchorage community member, Anchorage Fire Department Telecommunicator and public servant, to lend my support for SB9 and HB64 to expand the Safe Haven Law to allow for safe surrender in an infant safety device. As a nearly 18-year 911 dispatcher, I have personally experienced the trauma of answering a call for an abandoned infant found deceased in an Eagle River Park. I don't wish that trauma on any other First Responders, unsuspecting bystander that finds the infant, or parent who felt like they had no other choice.

Although our current Safe Haven Law allows for safe surrender and confidentiality, it does not fulfill the need for anonymity. The most recent abandoned infant, found November 1, 2024, was located only 1 block from a fire station in downtown Anchorage. On January 1, 2022, an infant was found in a cardboard box in negative 12-degree temperatures in Fairbanks. In September 1986 an infant was abandoned in a cardboard box outside a thrift shop on Muldoon Road in Anchorage.

Allowing infant safety devices would provide a safe and anonymous surrender option. Infant safety devices are voluntary and do not require funding by the local, state or federal government. Funding is often generated through individual donors and/or charitable organizations who support infant safety devices in the community. The devices are secure, monitored and have a temperature-controlled environment.

As of writing this letter, 19 states allow for safe surrender in an infant safety device and 12 other states are currently reviewing the legislation considering the update. As a lifelong Alaskan, I would be incredibly proud to add Alaska to the list of states that allow for safe surrender in an infant safety device.

I wholeheartedly support SB9 and HB64 and am willing to provide testimony if you find that beneficial. Thank you for sponsoring these bills.

Respectfully,

Frances Robinson
907-[REDACTED]

February 10, 2025

Dear Senate Judiciary Committee Members,

I am writing you as a constituent, South Anchorage community member, Anchorage Fire Department Telecommunicator and public servant, to lend my support for SB9 and HB64 to expand the Safe Haven Law to allow for safe surrender in an infant safety device. As a nearly 18-year 911 dispatcher, I have personally experienced the trauma of answering a call for an abandoned infant found deceased in an Eagle River Park. I don't wish that trauma on any other First Responders, unsuspecting bystander that finds the infant, or parent who felt like they had no other choice.

Although our current Safe Haven Law allows for safe surrender and confidentiality, it does not fulfill the need for anonymity. The most recent abandoned infant, found November 1, 2024, was located only 1 block from a fire station in downtown Anchorage. On January 1, 2022, an infant was found in a cardboard box in negative 12-degree temperatures in Fairbanks. In September 1986 an infant was abandoned in a cardboard box outside a thrift shop on Muldoon Road in Anchorage.

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I wholeheartedly support SB9 and HB64 and am willing to provide testimony if you find that beneficial. I hope you consider supporting these bills.

Respectfully,

Frances Robinson

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Frances Robinson.



Mayor
Suzanne LaFrance

Anchorage Fire Department



Fire Chief
Douglas Schrage

The Honorable Senator Robert Myers
State Capitol Room 7
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Representative Frank Tomaszewski
State Capitol Room 405
Juneau, AK 99801

January 31, 2025

Dear Senator Myers and Representative Tomaszewski,

I am writing to lend my support for legislation that expands Alaska's "Safe Haven Law," AS 47.10.013, to provide immunity from prosecution for abandonment to a parent who safely surrenders a newborn infant to an infant safety device designed for that purpose. We are fortunate to have a Safe Haven law that provides immunity to a parent who surrenders a newborn to a firefighter, law enforcement officer or certain health care workers under conditions specified in the Statute. Experience shows that such face-to-face interaction can be a deterrent to a new parent who might be unable to hand over their child directly to one of these professionals.

There have been recent incidents where parents of newborns abandoned their infants even though the Safe Haven Law would have allowed surrender to a firefighter or police officer without fear of prosecution. As recently as November 2024, a newborn infant was found abandoned just one block away from Anchorage Fire Station 1 downtown. In January 2022, a baby was left in a bassinet at a well-travelled intersection in Fairbanks.

Fire departments around the country are equipping their fire stations with safe-surrender baby boxes which are secure, monitored, and environmentally protected vaults in which a parent can safely surrender their newborn infant. These boxes are an alternative for those that might not be up to directly giving up their child to a live person. Once the infant is placed in the box, the fire personnel inside the station and their 911 center are notified with a special alarm after allowing the parent a short amount of time to get away undetected.



Mayor
Suzanne LaFrance

Anchorage Fire Department



Fire Chief
Douglas Schrage

The current Statutes do not provide immunity from prosecution for abandonment in the case of a safe surrender box being used. Thank you for sponsoring legislation to provide the same immunity as if the baby were surrendered to an on-duty firefighter.

I will make myself and my colleagues available for invited testimony if it would be of service to you and the public process. Please let me know if I can provide any addition information.

Respectfully,

Douglas Schrage

February 20, 2025

Senator Robert Myers
State Capitol Room 7
Juneau, AK 99801
Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov

RE: AHHA Supports Senate Bill 9 – Infant Safety Devices

Dear Senator Myers,

For over 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and a growing number of healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

AHHA supports Senate Bill 9, which amends Alaska's safe surrender laws to allow for the use of infant safety devices at designated surrender locations. Hospitals represent a place of safety, especially during times of crisis, and we have long been recognized as designated sites for safe surrender of an infant.

We appreciate your legislation because it represents a practical approach to providing opportunities for safe surrender. Eliminating barriers, increasing safety, and allowing for anonymity align with and improve our safe surrender laws, and we believe it is important that Alaska follow the twenty-two other states that authorize infant safety devices.

In closing, thank you for bringing this important legislation forward and your efforts in prioritizing access to quality, sustainable healthcare for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA
President & CEO