

REPRESENTATIVE JULIE COULOMBE

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement

HB 286 – Crime Victim Restitution (33-LS1012\S)

House Bill 286 seeks to make a clarification in the current Alaska statute regarding victim restitution for crimes. Currently, AS 12.55.045(a) allows the court to order a defendant convicted of a crime to make restitution to the victim of that crime for injuries related to counseling, medical, or shelter services. However, the statute does not provide much clarity on what type of services would qualify, resulting in fewer prosecutors asking for that particular type of restitution. HB 286 would clarify that lost income, child care, elder care, transportation, or any other expenses incurred during the victim's participation in legal action related to the case (such as the investigation or prosecution), would be eligible for restitution.

HB 286 will strengthen the ability of victims to receive compensation for costs related to their time spent in court, and make it more difficult for convicted defendants to appeal restitution payment for the costs that their actions have inflicted on the victim. This is particularly relevant to cases involving domestic violence, as the continuation of court cases involving restitution can result in a perpetuation of the cycle of abuse.

I respectfully request the support of my colleagues on HB 286.

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