

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001
907-465-3500



550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1700
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-269-7450

Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

January 16, 2024

The Honorable Cathy Tilton
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill to establish timelines for submitting sexual assault examination kits to the lab for testing and to establish a sexual assault examination kit tracking system. The amendments in this bill will assist in the timely transmission and testing of sexual assault examination kits, as well as assist victims in tracking the kits associated with their cases.

When a sexual assault examination kit is used to collect evidence, it is the responsibility of law enforcement to submit that kit to the lab for testing. This means that if a health care provider uses a sexual assault examination kit to collect evidence, law enforcement is responsible for picking up the kit from the health care provider and submitting it to the lab. Current law contains timelines for law enforcement agencies to submit sexual assault examination kits to the lab for testing; however, the law does not include timelines for the health care providers who collect evidence using the kits to notify law enforcement that the kits are available for pickup.

Therefore, this legislation requires health care providers to notify law enforcement that a kit is available for pickup within seven days of using the kit to collect evidence. Adding this timeline for health care providers will help ensure that sexual assault examination kits do not sit awaiting pickup and submission longer than necessary. This will, in turn, help ensure that sexual assault examination kits are processed in a timelier manner as intended by the underlying statute.

Additionally, this legislation establishes a sexual assault examination kit tracking system. The tracking system will be used throughout the collection and testing process. Health care providers and law enforcement will be able to upload information about when a kit was collected and sent to the lab. The lab will also be able to update the information as the kit is processed for testing. Victims will have the ability to log into the system and see where the kit associated with their case is in the process. They may even elect to receive automated notifications as the kit moves

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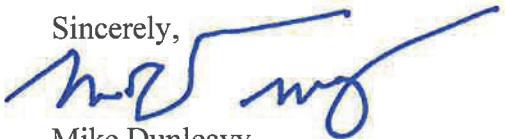
Page 2 of 2

through the process. Requiring the use of the sexual assault examination kit tracking system at every phase of the process will go a long way towards helping victims stay informed.

These changes will help ensure timely processing of important evidence and will help increase transparency and accountability as sexual assault examination kits moves through the process. This is the least we can do for the victims of these horrendous crimes.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "m" and "mg".

Mike Dunleavy

Governor

Enclosure