



March 20, 2025

Representative Andrew Gray
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol
Room 118
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Gray,

On behalf of the Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (AKNWRC), thank you for your work and advocacy in continuing to ensure the safety of all Alaskans in our state. Today, I write to you in support of House Bill 101, Crimes Against Minors, which addresses issues surrounding current loopholes in Alaska law while providing additional protection and justice to our most vulnerable populations.

As you are aware, Alaska leads in the highest rate of rape in the United States, with disproportionate representation affecting Alaska Natives and vulnerable youth. The AKNWRC has witnessed firsthand the devastating impact that sexual violence has on communities, particularly among our youth. Alaska's current legal framework contains gaps that allow perpetrators to exploit minors, creating cycles of trauma that can persist for generations.

The AKNWRC recognizes the significant and often lifelong impacts of sexual abuse on young survivors. By raising the age of consent to 18 years of age, House Bill 101 closes the 'Age of Consent' loophole and presents an opportunity to enhance legal protections for survivors. This change acknowledges the power imbalance that exists between adults and minors and prioritizes the safety and well-being of our children above all else.

Further, this legislation aligns with the AKNWRC's mission of ending violence in our Alaska Native communities. The proposed changes would strengthen our ability to prosecute those who prey on vulnerable youth while sending a clear message that Alaska prioritizes the protection of minors. Our



communities have advocated for these protections for many years, and we believe this bill represents a crucial step forward in safeguarding Alaska's children.

The measures within the bill represent your commitment to protecting child survivors and promoting safety within our communities. Thank you to you and your staff, as well as all sponsors of this bill, for the efforts to address these important issues.

We look forward to the positive impact this legislation will have on our children and communities within our state.

Sincerely,

Tami Truett Jerue

Executive Director
Alaska Native Women's Resource Center

CC:

Representative Jeremy Bynum
Representative Frank Tomaszewski
Representative Sarah Vance
Representative Nellie Unangiq Jimmie

Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Representative Andrew Gray, Chair
Representative Chuck Kopp, Vice Chair
Representative Ted Eischied, Member



Representative Genevieve Mina, Member

Representative Sarah Vance, Member

Representative Mia Costello, Member

Representative Jubilee Underwood, Member