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WHILE IN SESSION  
State Capitol  
Room 11  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 465-4930



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WHILE IN ANCHORAGE  
1500 W. Benson Blvd.  
Room 229  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 269-0174

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**SENATOR BERTA GARDNER**  
SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER  
Senate District 1

### **Sponsor Statement**

#### **SB 208 “An act establishing the month of March as Sobriety Awareness Month”**

SB 208 celebrates and calls attention to the many Alaskans who live healthy lives free of mind and mood-altering substances by establishing March as Sobriety Awareness Month.

Alaska has some of the highest rates of substance abuse and alcoholism in the nation, at an economic cost to the state totally nearly \$3 billion per year. Although this number is staggering, it still does not fully quantify the cost to communities and families of those who have been afflicted by drug and alcohol abuse.

By promoting and celebrating the tens of thousands of Alaskans who live their lives free of mood and mind-altering substances, we not only mitigate the costs associated with substance abuse, but also help foster a culture that is conscious of this State’s multi-faceted substance abuse challenges and how they can ultimately be overcome. Additionally, sobriety is identified as a youth protective factor that is strongly correlated with lower rates of future substance abuse and overall positive life outcomes. For more information, contact my aide, Jacob Tatum at 465-4930 or [Jacob.Tatum@akleg.gov](mailto:Jacob.Tatum@akleg.gov).

I look forward to your support of this legislation.