

From: Lynden Grothe
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Fwd: Public testimony on SB 150
Date: Saturday, April 14, 2018 8:09:51 AM

> Hello,

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> I would like to request that my written testimony be included as part of the legislative record.

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> My name is Lynden Grothe. I was born and raised in Alaska. I have lived in Anchorage since 2002. I want to share my personal experiences with the plague of criminals who are running loose in our once relatively peaceful and safe community. I have owned homes and lived in West Anchorage and Midtown for a number of years. We recently moved to Rabbit Creek because the stress from neighborhood crime was beginning to take its toll on us as we were losing sleep over every noise and no longer felt safe letting our kids play in the yard.

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> While living in West Anchorage, our house was broken into during the night and our medicine cabinets were ransacked. We had our garage broken into a number of times. Multiple items stolen from our yard including gas tanks and parts from our boat. Our cars were ransacked more times than I can count. We've also had mail and packages stolen. My husband forgot his cell phone in the center console in his truck one night. The car was broken into and the cell phone was stolen that night. We lived in constant fear of making a mistake and forgetting to lock something.

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> It seems like the state is trying to save money on incarcerating criminals at the expense of law abiding citizens. The financial impact the criminals have had on our family was running in to thousands of dollars in broken windows and locks, missing mail/packages, and stolen personal items. However, besides the money I think that the most painful thing we lost was our sense of safety and trust in the state, police, and local community.

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> When an elderly neighbor told me that he was robbed at gun point during broad daylight on the sidewalk, that is when we decided to move. I asked him if he reported the incident to the police. He basically said "Why bother? What will they do? They can't lock these people up anymore."

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> Moving hasn't solved the problem though. Right before Christmas 2017, I stopped at the Connor's Bog Dog Park so that my children and I could walk the family dog. We were gone from the car for 45 minutes. When we returned my car window was smashed and my purse was stolen. Within minutes thousands of dollars were charged to my credit cards. I received no help from the police. I was told to report it online.

> After that I decided just to take my purse with me when I walked the dog. However, I started to think what if everyone starts carrying their purse with them and the thieves start robbing people at gun point like they did to my elderly neighbor. Suffice to say we no longer go to the dog park.

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> In February 2018, thieves attempted to steal my husband's truck during the middle of the day from his work parking lot in midtown. They did thousands of dollars of damage to my husband's vehicle. Even though the security guard confronted the thieves and called the police, they were back again in a few days to attempt to steal another car. It's as if they know they won't be arrested or punished for their crimes so they can prey on law abiding people with impunity.

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> I was followed to my car by junkies in the Providence Hospital parking lot while I was carrying my infant son. They attempted to get in my car. It was truly frightening. I stopped in a Wendy's parking lot in Spenard to send a text to my husband and a man attempted to get in my vehicle. I've had people sneak up behind me in parking lots while I'm securing my kids in their seats and attempt to grab my handbag. I've watched shoplifters walk out of Fred Myers with carts full of items. I took my children to the Polar Bear park and we had to leave because there were people shooting heroin (?) in the parking lot. This was right after school so it was still light out. At this point, I don't even waste my time calling the police anymore.

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> I've seen people walk down the middle of Northern Lights while cars swerved around them on icy roads. When

driving home on the Rabbit Creek over pass, a man jumped out at my car and attempted to hit the car with a board. I don't know if he was just crazy or trying to stop the car to rob me. I wonder every day: How bad will this get before someone does something about it?

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> My lifestyle has changed significantly in the last year. I don't go anywhere in Anchorage (besides dropping my kids off at school) by myself. I won't stop at local stores unless there is a parking spot right next to the shop entrance. We drive out of town to walk the dog or go to the park. I drop off and pick up my husband from work so his truck isn't sitting in the parking lot all day. We triple check to make sure our doors and windows are all locked before we go to bed at night. How much worse is it going to get?

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> Contrary to what Mayor Berkowitz says, Anchorage is not a safe place. We are not involved in drugs, and we rarely leave the house after 9pm because my husband works and we have a family oriented lifestyle. I think it is sickening that the state and local government are releasing dangerous criminals, drug dealers, drug users, petty thieves, etc back out into the community in attempt to save money while knowingly costing the law abiding citizens thousands of dollars in losses and putting the lives of women, children and the elderly at risk. What kind of people do this to their own community to save a buck? I personally think the top two priorities of government should be law enforcement/public safety and maintaining roads/infrastructure. Everything else comes way after those two items including education and welfare programs.

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> In my opinion, SB 91 has had a devastating impact on our community. Criminals needs to be locked up so they can not terrorize innocent people. Drug dealers and drug users should also be removed from the community because with drug use comes a number of other crimes like theft, assault, and murder. It isn't working to be soft on crime or to feel sorry for drug addicts. Even petty crime has a toll on the victims who are on the losing end of the transaction. The soft on crime approach is death by a thousand paper cuts. I don't know if SB 150 is going to solve the problem. I think we need stiffer penalties for crime. I hope that giving local judges more discretion will solve the problem. However, I'm writing to implore you as legislators to hear the call of your constituents and please take tough decisive action on crime now before more damage is done. Don't let the ACLU, and other pro-crime organizations hold the law abiding citizens of Alaska hostage any longer!

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> Thank you for your time in reading my testimony.

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> Respectfully,

> Lynden Grothe

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