

HB 239 - Vehicle Hit and Run Fatalities & Failure-to-Render-Aid

House Judiciary Committee – February 13, 2026

Office of Representative Chuck Kopp

Alaskans expect that when a driver's criminal negligence takes a life—and the driver flees instead of helping—that there is accountability, aiming to ensure that the loss of a loved one results in significant legal consequences for the perpetrators.

Recent cases show that it isn't always happening.

Police seek hit-and-run pickup driver in Anchorage collision that killed motorcyclist

By Anchorage Daily News Published: July 22, 2025



'You killed someone': Driver in East Anchorage pedestrian hit-and-run sentenced to 4 months

By Zaz Hollander
Published: 17 hours ago

Driver charged with hit-and-run and DUI after pedestrian fatally struck on sidewalk

By Zaz Hollander
Published: September 20, 2025

Anchorage hit-and-run leaves woman fighting for life, police looking for driver

By Lars Hanson
Published: Feb. 3, 2026 at 5:20 PM AKST Updated: 16 hours ago

In 2021, 26-year-old **Chase Bowerson** was killed along the Glenn Highway.



The defendant pled guilty to **criminally negligent homicide** and **leaving the scene**, receiving **4.5 years with 2 years suspended**, leaving **2½ years to serve**.

Ultimately, the defendant **actually served eight months** because of “Good Time” and was eligible for parole after serving 1/3 of the sentence.

A sentence that does not reflect the gravity of causing a death and abandoning the victim.

Alaska Statistics

2024 CRASHES BY INJURY TYPE

YEAR	TOTAL CRASHES	NON-INJURY		SUSPECTED MINOR		SUSPECTED MAJOR		FATAL	
		TOTAL	PERCENT	TOTAL	PERCENT	TOTAL	PERCENT	TOTAL	PERCENT
2015	4448	2822	63.44%	1498	33.68%	103	2.32%	25	0.56%
2016	4585	2911	63.49%	1521	33.17%	133	2.90%	20	0.44%
2017	4413	2869	65.01%	1408	31.91%	116	2.63%	20	0.45%
2018	4163	2671	64.16%	1352	32.48%	116	2.79%	24	0.58%
2019	3656	2351	64.31%	1184	32.39%	98	2.68%	23	0.63%
2020	3455	2255	65.27%	1097	31.75%	83	2.40%	20	0.58%
2021	3432	2225	64.83%	1106	32.23%	79	2.30%	22	0.64%
2022	3528	2297	65.11%	1106	31.35%	103	2.92%	22	0.62%
2023	3443	2277	66.13%	1071	31.11%	79	2.29%	16	0.46%
2024	3446	2214	64.25%	1127	32.70%	76	2.21%	29	0.84%

Crashes categorized by highest recorded injury

55 Deaths
Municipality of Anchorage Hit & Run
Fatalities
Last Ten Years

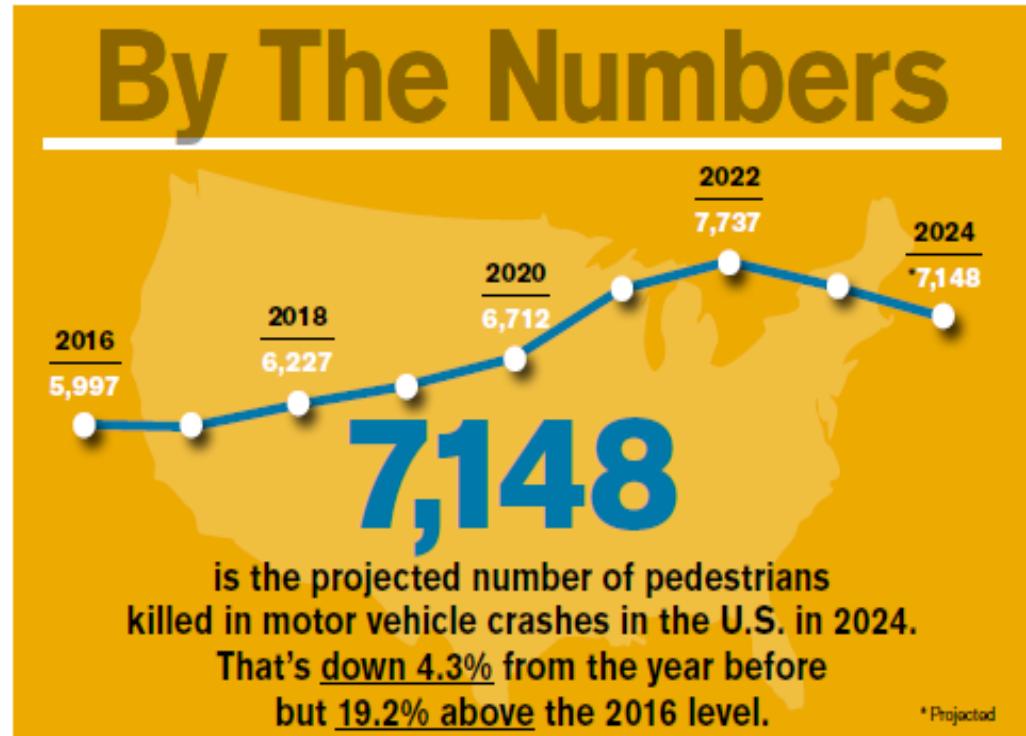
Approximately 25% of all pedestrian deaths
occur in hit-and-run crashes:
HTSA/FARS Data

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National Statistics

Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State

2024 PRELIMINARY DATA



Approximately 25% of all pedestrian deaths occurred in hit-and-run crashes:
NHTSA/FARS Data

One plane crash grips the nation.

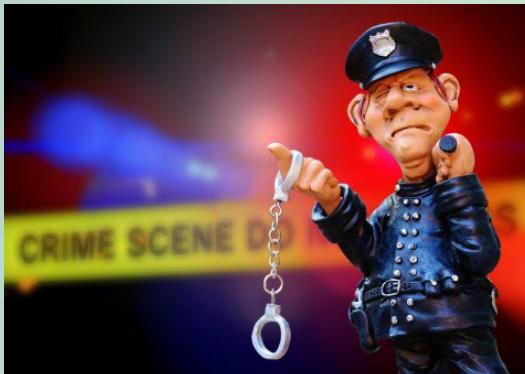
Imagine 11 Boeing 737 plane crashes in a year.

1,787 pedestrians are expected to be killed in motor vehicle hit-and-run crashes in 2024.

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What does HB 239 do?

- Create a new category of **Aggravated Criminally Negligent Homicide** when a death is caused by criminal negligence with a motor vehicle and **failure to render aid**.
- Elevate the offense from a Class B felony to a **Class A felony** and sets a **7–11 year** presumptive prison sentence range for first time offenders.
- Require **consecutive time** when both the death and the failure-to-aid are convicted in the same act.
- Keep Alaska within constitutional sentencing principals while aligning penalties with community expectations.



HB 239 Comparison Summary

Current Law: B felony

(Two Separate Offenses)

1. Criminally Negligent Homicide

1st offense = 1-3 years

Maximum of 10 Years

2. Failure to render assistance

1st offense = 0-10 years

Sentences **may** run consecutively
or concurrent

HB 239: A felony

(Combines into One Offense)

1. Criminally Negligent Homicide &

2. Failure-to-Render-Assistance

1st offense = 7-11 years

(presumptive prison sentence range)

*Failure to render assistance

1st offense = 0-10 years

Offenses **must** run consecutively

*If combined with Criminally Negligent Homicide
it would add up to 10 years to the sentence

Why now?

Courts and prosecutors have repeatedly confronted fatal pedestrian hit-and-run crashes where plea constraints, low presumptive sentence ranges, and concurrent sentencing for a Class B criminally negligent homicide pull sentences down—even when a driver flees and/or conceals evidence. The result is a perceived mismatch between culpability and consequence, eroding public trust.



HB 239 Stop. Help. Stay.

Strengthening penalties for failing to stop and render aid after a crash.



- **HB 239** addresses failures to stop and render aid after serious vehicle crashes.
- The bill **strengthens penalties** when a driver leaves the scene of an accident involving serious injury or death.
- The goal is simple: **discourage hit-and-run behavior and protect lives.**

**What happens after
a crash matters.**

