



# Alaska State Legislature

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## Senator Anna Fairclough – Senate District M

### Sponsor Statement

### Senate Bill 37

"An Act extending the termination date of the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council; and providing for an effective date."

In 2001 the Alaska State Legislature created the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council. The Council is made up of 17 members: two appointed by the president of the senate, two appointed by the speaker of the house, and 13 members appointed by the governor.

The duties of the Council are outlined in statute 44.29.350:

- Improve health and wellness throughout the state by reducing suicide and its effects on individuals, families and communities;
- Broaden Alaskans' awareness of suicide and the role of risk and protective factors in suicide;
- Enhance Alaska's suicide prevention services and programs;
- Develop healthy communities through comprehensive, collaborative, community-based and faith-based approaches implemented at the community level and supported by regional, state, and federal resources;
- Develop and implement a statewide suicide prevention plan; and
- Strengthen existing and build new partnerships between public and private entities that will advance suicide prevention efforts in the state.

Alaska has the highest rate of suicide per capita in the country. The Council has designed a state plan of action for preventing suicide. This plan, *Castling the Net Upstream*, promotes wellness to prevent suicide in Alaska.

I appreciate your support and consideration of this legislation.