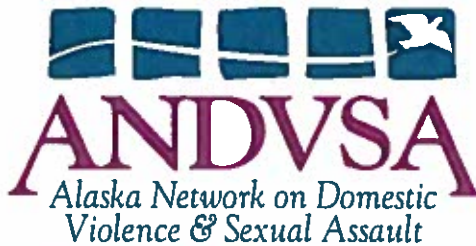


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April 4, 2013

Honorable Anna Fairclough
State Capitol, Room 514
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Letter of Support – SB 91 – Hazing

Dear Senator Fairclough:

On behalf of our 18 member programs that comprise the Alaska Network of Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, thank you for introducing SB 91 – an act relating to hazing.

Hazing, quite simply, is a form of premeditated abuse that is emotionally traumatic, physically dangerous and can be life threatening in certain circumstances. Hazing consists of behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members and existing members of a group or team. Some hazing coined “subtle hazing” is often taken-for-granted or accepted as “harmless” or “meaningless”. However, even subtle hazing involves activities or attitudes that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect and place new members on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, or humiliation tactics.

More severe, and not infrequent forms of hazing, include sexual violations, such as sodomy with objects, physical beatings, and drug and alcohol abuse to the point of overdose. The common thread to all forms of hazing is to instill fear and wrongly teaches that deception, coercion, intimidation and abuse are suitable means for gaining acceptance into a peer group.

Alaska is one of only six states that have yet to criminalize this behavior. In a state that has the dishonorable distinction of leading the nation in domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse, it is imperative that we send a clear message that hazing is a form of abuse and is not acceptable.

Thank you for your vision in leading the way to address this issue by introducing SB 91.

Sincerely,

Peggy Brown, Executive Director

cc: Lisa Mariotti, Policy Director

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR Barrow AWIC Bethel TWC Cordova CFRC Dillingham SAFE
Fairbanks IAC Homer SPHH Juneau AWARE Kenai LeeShore Center Ketchikan WISH Kodiak KWRCC
Kotzebue MFCC Nome BSWG Seward SCS Sitka SAFV Unalaska USAFV Valdez AVV