

February 11, 2016

Senator Cathy Giessel
Alaska State Senate
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Senator Giessel,

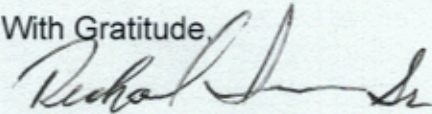
Thank you for the leadership and the great effort on behalf of all Alaskan families.

I serve as the Chairman for the Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA). This letter to you is a personal letter and is not written representing CDVSA. However, in my role as a council member and serving Alaska's people for over four decades as a pastor, I have been very involved with the issues facing our state regarding healthy families and the safety of children.

Statistics clearly indicate that Alaska has a crisis regarding the number of children being referred to the Office of Children's Services. I commend OCS for the very difficult responsibility of providing oversight of children being neglected and / or in harms way. It is also clear to me, in light of this reality, Alaska must have evidence-based programs to work alongside of OCS. Alaska is very fortunate to have the "Safe Families For Children" program, sponsored by Beacon Hill.

I appreciate your sponsorship of SB 180. I stand in full support of providing families in need with temporary assistance and caring intervention. Families should be able to pursue support without the fear of the termination of parental rights because they are addressing needful matters. If I can be of assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be in Juneau the 23rd through the 29th. My cell number is 907-227-2737.

With Gratitude,



Richard Irwin Sr.