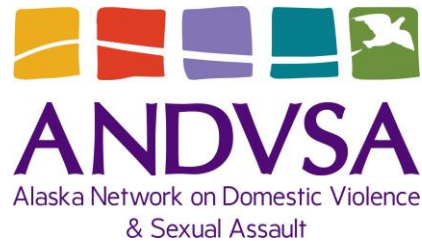


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Good morning. For the record, I am Carmen Lowry, the Executive Director of the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Thank you for this opportunity to testify, and for the committee's hard work. The Network is a coalition of 23 agencies working to prevent and respond to domestic violence and sexual assault across this great state. The Network organizes and consolidates the concerns and conviction of member agencies – and by extension the concerns and desires of victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Our goal is to end sexual and domestic violence, and create an Alaska where all individuals are able to attain their highest potential and live free from violence.

Regarding Senate Bill 130 – a bill that adds the Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to the membership of the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:

We agree that a person with an understanding of the challenges those in the military face would assist the council's work. We appreciate the perspective that the newly appointed position would bring, but also request that, in the spirit of ensure that State actors and Public actors work together, an additional public and rural member who would represent the experiences and victims and their families, also be added to the Council.

One of the founding principles of the CDVSA was the necessity of robust public input into the process of addressing these crimes. The way in which this principle was assured was to seat members of the Public on the Council. Of particular concern was to have experts in the field provide advice to the State as the Executive Branch departments were coordinating their efforts to respond to domestic violence and sexual assault. To address this concern, the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was given the responsibility of providing nominations for the Governor's consideration in placing Public members onto the Council. A guiding principal was to have the strong voice of victims – a victim perspective – to influence and inform decisions being made by the Council to address domestic violence and sexual assault response/intervention/prevention.

The value of public member representation was affirmed in 2009. When the Department of Corrections was added to the council, a Public member was also added to retain the ration of Public to State members. We respectfully request that the Committee consider upholding this same spirit and ensure that there is equity among the State and Public members of the Council by adding an additional public/rural member with the addition of the Commissioner of Military and Veteran Affairs.

Thank you.

Member Programs

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Juneau AWARE Kenai LeeShore Center Ketchikan WISH Kodiak KWRCC Kotzebue MFCC Nome BSWG
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