

For the record, my name is Keeley Olson. I am the Executive Director of Standing Together Against Rape, or STAR, in Anchorage, and am representing that agency, as well as the survivors of sexual assault and abuse it serves. Thank you very much for inviting me to provide testimony on these bills. And thank you for advancing these crucial bills which address loopholes in state statutes.

Each of the loopholes addressed by these bills were to be policy priorities set by STAR. It was excellent to see these bills pre-filed, either by Senator Micciche or the Governor, which I think illustrates the dire need felt across the state to hold sexual predators accountable.

Upon review of the bills, I understand them to enact the following:

- Includes strangulation as an Assault in the First degree (SB12)
- Requires sex offenders from other states to register in Alaska (SB35)
- Includes masturbation and ejaculation on a person without consent as a Sexual Assault in the 3rd degree and requires a person to register as a sex offender (SB12)
- Makes Sexual Abuse of a Minor in the 3rd degree a Felony (SB35)
- Updates statutes concerning the use of technology for sexual solicitation of minors or for the purpose of harassment (SB35)
- Removes the marriage defense from Sexual Assault in the 2nd degree (SB35)
- Removes jail time credit for offenders who have electronic monitoring and/or time spent in a private residence during pretrial (SB12)

I could not agree more strongly with these proposed bills, and would like to add a few examples for you of the importance of updating these statutes.

Unfortunately, you are all familiar with the tragic murder of young Ashley Johnson Barr in Kotzebue, and the unfortunate sentencing of Justin Schneider in Anchorage. I imagine SB12 was drafted with these cases in mind. Strangulation is a hideously common form of violence used in conjunction with sexual assault. Traumatic brain injuries we see in survivors are generally attributable to their being strangled, sometimes repeatedly, to unconsciousness. I personally worked with a young woman in Anchorage who was strangled during a sexual assault. She was immediately evaluated at a hospital, as is standard procedure in a vast number of SART responses. She came to the STAR office for ongoing assistance immediately after her release. She was provided emergency shelter, and transportation to get there, but collapsed as soon as she arrived at her room. Emergency responders were called without delay. She never regained consciousness and died two days later. Her offender was not held accountable.

Richard Dale Abrahamson, 36, is a sex offender from Iowa, who told police he moved to Alaska for a "fresh start" in 2016. He was under the impression he would not have to register in Alaska. He is accused of sexually abusing a 13-year-old boy

within days of his arrival here, and faced seven felony charges. Even though he made admissions of guilt, and there was film evidence on his camera of the abuse, the case just went to trial at the end of January, nearly three years later. He is awaiting sentencing and appears to have been acquitted on some of the charges.

The Justin Schneider case certainly illustrated the need to include masturbation without consent as a sex offense. The only question or concern I have about the current wording in the bill is whether it requires the offender climax to be considered a sex offense? Current wording is:

"engages in masturbation and ejaculates on a person without the consent of that person".

If we were to look at the Schneider case, if he had not climaxed, would the victim be any less sexually assaulted? I wonder about the terminology "masturbation without consent for the purpose of sexual gratification" rather than requiring ejaculation as a factor in the law.

Removing the marriage defense is a critical need. There have been several cases of Sexual Assault in the 2nd degree in Anchorage that fall under this fact pattern. As an example, STAR provided services to a woman who was raped by her spouse after gynecological surgery. She was on prescribed medications to help her sleep, ordered to get ample bed rest, and ordered not to engage in sexual intercourse for at least four weeks. Her spouse raped her within days of her surgery, while she was on sleep medication and unable to consent. She required emergency medical treatment as a result, and he was never charged with a sexual assault.

The marriage defense for SA2 is problematic for couples who are estranged, but due to finances, elect to remain married and living together. This is becoming more and more common as the cost of housing increases while the economy faces setbacks. It is more of a burden for low income individuals and victims of domestic and economic abuse, whose spouses refuse a divorce, and who cannot afford legal representation.

For all of these reasons, and more, I urge you to advance these bills and pass them swiftly. Thank you again for your time and attention to these matters of critical urgency.