



**Public Safety Employees Association, Inc.**  
***"Representing Alaska's Finest"***  
**Local 803**



**Public Safety Employees Association Position Paper**  
**Supporting SB 32**

The Public Safety Employees Association is pleased to support SB 32. This bill modifies classification and sentencing. This bill addresses drug offenses, returns felony sentences to where they were prior to July, 2016, returns discretion to judges on A Misdemeanor sentencing, increases probation lengths, addresses terroristic threats, electronic monitoring, failure to appear, DNA collection, information of involuntary commitments, rap sheet use during grand jury and failure to appear for court hearings.

Currently the State of Alaska has experienced a significant increase in crime. In 2018 Alaska was named as the "Most Dangerous State in America" based on the FBI's Uniform Crime Report. Law enforcement officers have expressed frustration as they see their efforts having limited success on reducing the crime rate and their ability to provide a safe place for Alaskans to live and work is compromised by the "catch and release" system currently in place. SB 32 addresses these issues in the following areas:

**Drug crimes** – SB 32 makes it a felony to possess the most dangerous controlled substances (i.e., heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, PCP, etc.). Returns distribution of the most dangerous drugs to Class B and A felonies from the current C and B levels and removes quantity as an element. Re-enacts the statutes combatting methamphetamine manufacturing and distribution.

**Sentencing and probation** – SB 32 adjusts misdemeanor sentences and returns discretion to judges. Returns felony sentences to where they were prior to July, 2016, and increases probation lengths. Removes the 30 day grace period for defendants who fail to appear in court. Eliminates electronic monitoring being mandatory for 1<sup>st</sup> DUI and returns discretion back to the commissioner of the department of corrections.

**Threats** – SB 32 creates a generalized terroristic threatening statute to address threats of harm when not a false threat such as school shootings.

SB 32 allows the use of a rap sheet to be used at grand jury when an element of the offense requires proof of prior convictions. SB 32 makes it a class A misdemeanor to refuse to provide a DNA sample upon arrest and requires the Alaska Court System to transmit information on involuntary commitments that have occurred since October 1, 1981 to the Department of Public Safety.

The Public Safety Employees Association believes that SB 32 takes substantial steps toward reducing the rate of crime in Alaska, will help curb the flow of illegal drugs into Alaska and will provide for the public safety for all Alaskans.

PSEA encourages the passage of SB 32.