



ANDVSA

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence
& Sexual Assault

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To: Representative Claman, Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

CC: Representative Josephson
Representative Hopkins
Representative Knopp
Representative Kreiss-Tomkins
Representative Sponholz
Representative Tuck
Representative Fields

ANDVSA Member Agencies

Date: 23 February 2020

Re: Support for HB0198A: An Act relating to aggravating factors considered at sentencing.

ANDVSA offers its full support of HB198 and urges the House Judiciary Committee to review and consider this bill as it adds additional protective language for victims targeted due to their “sexual orientation or identity.”

Survivors and victims of sexual violence experience elevated risk of victimization when they are targeted for their sexuality and/or gender presentationⁱ; this targeting negatively affects health and well-being, and can be lethal.ⁱⁱ About one fifth of “bias motivated” or “identity abuse” crimes are based on sexual orientation or gender identity bias.ⁱⁱⁱ In a national survey, youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender were **120% more likely to experience homelessness** compared to heterosexual and non-transgendered youth.^{iv} In turn, homelessness leaves youth more vulnerable to labor and sex trafficking^v, as well as sexual assault, and early death^{vi}.

In Alaska, local organizations support youth who experience multiple forms of elevated violence and homelessness when they are targeted and excluded based on sexual orientation and gender identity.^{vii viii ix} Recently, a woman was threatened repeatedly, including having a rock thrown into her windshield, and was then attacked with a knife in her home, due to her LGBTQ identity and work. Without adding sexual orientation and gender identity to our statute, these crimes cannot be prosecuted accurately, nor can youth be effectively protected.

Member Programs

Anchorage AWAIC, STAR | Bethel TWC | Cordova CFRC | Craig HOPE | Dillingham SAFE | Fairbanks IAC
Haines Becky's Place | Homer SPHH | Juneau AWARE | Kenai LeeShore Center | Ketchikan WISH
Kodiak KWRCC | Kotzebue MFCC | Nome BSWG | Petersburg WAVE | Seward SeaView Community Services
Sitka SAFV | Unalaska USAFV | Utqiagvik AWIC | Valdez AVV



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We thank you for supporting all Alaskans from violence, and particularly for keeping all our youth safer.


Carmen Lowry, Executive Director, ANDVSA

References

ⁱ McKay, T., Lindquist CH., Misra, S. (2019). Understanding (and Acting On) 20 Years of Research on Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, 20(5). [https://doi:10.1177/1524838017728708](https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838017728708).

ⁱⁱ Blondeel, K., de Vasconcelos, S., García-Moreno, C., Stephenson, R., Temmerman, M., & Toskin, I. (2018). Violence motivated by perception of sexual orientation and gender identity: a systematic review. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 96(1), 29–41L. <https://doi.org/10.2471/BLT.17.197251>

ⁱⁱⁱ Romero, A. P., Shaw, A. M., & Conron, K. J. (2019). Gun Violence Involving Sexual and Gender Minorities in the United States: A Review of Research Findings and Needs. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gun-Violence-SGM-April-2019.pdf>

^{iv} Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). *Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. <https://voicesofyouthcount.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/VoYC-National-Estimates-Brief-Chapin-Hall-2017.pdf>

^v Office on Trafficking in Persons – Office of the Administration for Children and Families. “What is Human Trafficking?”. As retrieved on February 13, 2020 from: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/about/what-is-human-trafficking>.

^{vi} Covenant House, “LGBTQ Youth and Homelessness”, as retrieved on February 13, 2020 from: <https://www.covenanthouse.org/homeless-issues/lgbtq-homeless-youth>.

^{vii} COR Choosing Our Roots: Safely Housing Queer Youth. <http://www.choosingourroots.org/#about>

^{viii} SEAGLA Southeast Alaska LGBTQ+ Alliance. <https://www.seagla.org/>

^{ix} Aurora Pride. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1674690402821937/>

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