

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001
907-465-3500



550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1700
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-269-7450

Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

February 7, 2023

The Honorable Cathy Tilton
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Tilton:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to penalties for drug distribution and using controlled substances.

Drugs and drug overdoses have had a devastating effect on our state. According to the Department of Health's 2021 Drug Overdose Mortality Update, between 2020 and 2021, Alaska experienced the largest percent increase of drug overdose deaths of any state. In 2021, Alaska recorded over 100 deaths more than the previous year. Unfortunately, fentanyl, a highly potent opioid, makes up a large percentage of these drug related deaths. Increasingly, those who distribute drugs are mixing fentanyl with other types of drugs in order to cultivate addiction and attract buyers. These buyers may not necessarily know that fentanyl is mixed in with their drug of choice, increasing the risks associated with drug use.

This legislation attacks the problem at the point of distribution, making it second degree murder when a person distributes or manufactures a controlled substance and a person dies as a direct result of ingesting that substance. This legislation further serves to protect our communities by ensuring offenders convicted of distributing or manufacturing drugs will not be subject to early release due to a "good time" deduction from their sentence. Those who choose to manufacture or distribute drugs illegally should be put on notice that there are significant consequences for the harm they cause.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Enclosure