

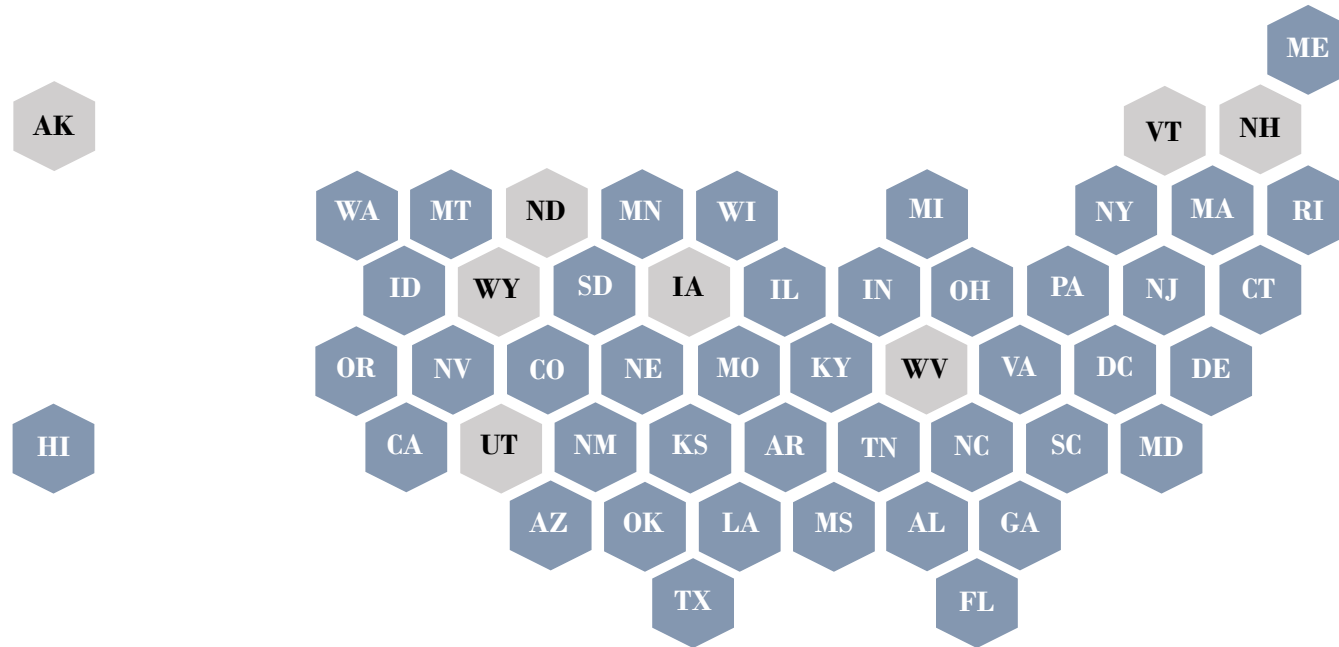
HB 238:  
Criminal Mischief  
in the Third Degree

Office of Rep Josephson

# Institutional Vandalism

- Defacement, damage, or desecration of a building of worship.
- 42 states and D.C. make this a distinct crime from property damage.
- US Department of Justice and FBI report an increase in recent years of crimes to property motivated by religious bias.

## States with Institutional Vandalism Laws / Statutes\*



\* From footnote 10 in report titled "Hate Crime Laws: The ADL Approach."

# Why Do We Need This Bill?

- Vandalism to a place of worship is currently treated as a typical property crime.
- National and global events have a lead to an increase in these types of crimes, both nationally and locally.
- In 2022 (most recent data), crimes against property and religion as a bias motivating factor accounted for 80% of all hate crimes.\*

# Hate Crime Incidents in 2022 (Alaska)

Bias Motivation Categories	2020	2021	2022	Percentage in 2022
Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry	5	5	0	0.0%
Religion	0	0	4	80.0%
Sexual Orientation	1	4	1	20.0%
Disability	0	0	0	0.0%
Gender	2	2	0	0.0%
Gender Identity	1	1	0	0.0%



*The Alaska Watchman.* "Eagle River church vandalized again with phallic symbols." November 25, 2022.

*The Alaska Shepherd.* "A New Church for Chefnak." A Publication of the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska. December 2022



*Must Read Alaska.* "Vandals burn chemical swastika into lawn of Mountain City Church." June 14, 2023.

# What Does HB 238 Do?

1. Elevates any intentional vandalism to a religious institution to a C Felony.
2. Exempts authorized “damage” by an employee of the institution.
3. Provides for an immediate effective date.

This ensures that no matter the value of property damaged, vandalism of a place of worship is treated the same:

- There is no dollar value that can be placed on psychological and/or spiritual harm.
- The bill’s language will house places of worship and places of burial in Criminal Mischief in the Third Degree.

Alexander Schroeder

HB 238 Staff Contact

(907) 465-4939

[alexander.schroeder@akleg.gov](mailto:alexander.schroeder@akleg.gov)

Thank you