



Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police

PO Box 3734

Seward, Alaska 99664

Letter of Support

January 22, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

The Board of Directors for the Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police would like to lend their voice of support for the effort to develop a more comprehensive and affective statute to help deal with the abuses we are seeing to our 9-1-1 telecommunication systems. Each agency represented on the board, and those we represent statewide, have seen the problems that arise when the public abuse this vital and important lifesaving communication system.

Adding these important layers of protection for our dispatchers and call takers is critical and will help them be more effective and will help stop the repeated abuse of our staff. Adding more substantive language to the criminal code will bring it inline with other areas of the country. The proposed changes are long overdue, and we want to support this statewide initiative to fix the current statute.

We support SB38 in order to help maintain safe and efficient communications.

If there is anything we can do to further our support, please feel free to contact me at (907)488-6902 or email us at AACOP@AACOP.ORG.

Thank you for your time.

Chief Steve Dutra

President, Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police



January 20, 2023

SB38 "An Act establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications."

The Alaska Joint Chapter of APCO and NENA support this legislation. Too often, communications centers are plagued with disruptions that this legislation formally addresses. Currently, law enforcement only has the ability to use other statutes such as harassment, false reporting, vandalism, and disorderly conduct, in an attempt to stop the interference when it occurs. In the past, these charges were usually dismissed by prosecuting attorneys because of the ambiguity of these statutes. This act clarifies these types of acts as related to the disruption of emergency communications.

This legislation provides a clear legal statute to arrest individuals for interference of emergency communications when a person disrupts emergency communications through repeated phone calls, intimidation, reporting emergencies that do not exist, and the destruction of communications equipment.

It is essential that the type of acts cited in SB38 be clearly codified in Alaska Statute to protect Alaska's emergency communications system, which includes 911 centers, communication centers, phone networks, and public safety radio communication networks.

The Alaska Joint Chapter of APCO and NENA represents over 150 emergency communications professionals working in approximately 40 communications centers throughout the State of Alaska.

Joel Butcher, President

Alaska Joint Chapter of NENA and APCO

National Emergency Number Association (NENA)

Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO)



MAYOR
Dave Bronson

ANCHORAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Headquarters
716 W. 4th Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
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CHIEF
Michael Kerle

January 17, 2023

Senator David Wilson
Senator Mike Shower
State Capitol
Juneau AK, 99801-1185
Via E-mail: Senator.David.Wilson@akleg.gov, Senator.Mike.Shower@akleg.gov

RE: Support for SB38 Interference with Emergency Communications

Dear Senators,

As Chief of the Anchorage Police Department (APD), Alaska's largest law enforcement agency, I am writing in strong support of proposed legislation, SB38 Interference with Emergency Communications, which is being submitted to the State of Alaska for consideration. This legislation will help curtail blatant abuse of our 911 system and help dispatch emergency resources to those in need in the quickest manner possible.

I am very concerned by the misuse of our 911 system by repeat offenders. APD dispatchers deal with callers who knowingly abuse the system by calling repeatedly for the same non-emergencies and harass the call takers with vulgar words. When our dispatchers are occupied dealing with these types of callers, there is a potential for delay in the ability to answer calls for true emergencies, which can lead to a delay in emergency resource response. For these reasons, I fully support and encourage the legislation to prohibit interference with emergency communications, SB38, be written into law.

Respectfully,

Michael Kerle

Michael Kerle
Chief of Police

Cc: Amy Foraker, APD Emergency Communications Center Manager



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January 17, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Sergeant Darrell Evans. I am the President of the Anchorage Police Department Employees Association (APDEA). In my capacity as President, I represent over 500 members of the Anchorage Police Department.

Interference with Emergency Communications, also described as the misuse, abuse, and disruption of 911 dispatch centers, is a problem that severely impacts public safety and emergency response. Delaying the response of our police officers, firefighters, and EMS personnel when it matters most is a public safety risk to all Alaskans.

The APDEA strongly supports the proposal to add Alaska Statute 11.56.785 into law in order to allow 911 dispatchers to focus on doing their best to assist with legitimate emergencies and ensure that our first responders arrive as quickly as possible when they are needed most.

Respectfully,

Darrell Evans

Sergeant Darrell Evans



Bristol Bay Borough Police Department

PO Box 655 King Salmon, AK 99613 (907)246-4222 PH (907) 246-4451 FAX

To Whom It May Concern,

1-19-2023

This letter is directed to show support towards SB38 introduced by Senator David Wilson on Sec. 11.56.785 Interference with Emergency Communications.

Currently our Alaska State Statute deals with these types of situations under the Statute Codes of Harassment in the 2nd degree. However as stated in these codes these are crimes against other individuals. Nothing in the Statute implies this can be a crime if someone chooses to Interfere with Emergency Communications.

I support this bill for the efforts it brings forth to reduce the amount of unneeded or unnecessary communications when emergency services are dealing with serious matters and time is a much valued and greatly needed commodity.

I have personally witnessed in my career individuals who deliberately would call emergency services nonstop causing a major inconvenience towards much needed time and attention that emergency agency's need to devote to urgent matters.

Respectfully,

John Rhyshek
Police Chief
(907)469-1626 cell
JohnRhyshek@BristolBayBoroughAK.US



CITY OF WASILLA

MAYOR GLENDA D. LEDFORD

290 E. Herning Avenue
Wasilla, AK 99654-7091

Phone: (907) 373-9055

Fax: (907) 373-9096

January 16, 2023

RE: City of Wasilla Letter of Support - Senate Bill 38 - An Act Establishing The Crime Of Interference With Emergency Communications

To Whom it May Concern,

The City of Wasilla is in full support of proposed Senate Bill 38 "*An Act Establishing The Crime Of Interference With Emergency Communications.*" This legislation will restrain abuse of our 9-1-1 system and further assist in dispatching emergency resources in the most efficient fashion possible.

Repeat offenders who misuse our 9-1-1 system place an unnecessary burden upon operators and can lead to crucial delays in emergency resources and responses for actual emergencies. By instating regulations for interference with emergency communications it will aid in protecting our dispatchers and call takers while allowing them to be more effective.

Senate Bill 38 clearly outlines the violation of interference with emergency communications. The repeated misuse will be recognized as a criminal act of interference as well as identify offenders who: knowingly and repeatedly place 9-1-1 calls to report an issue which has already been reported; place repetitive calls to 9-1-1 when a true emergency does not exist; harasses and/or threatens a 9-1-1 dispatcher; and/or recognizes an individual who disrupts communications between 9-1-1 dispatchers and first responders.

Therefore, I am in full support of proposed Senate Bill 38 to prohibit interference with emergency communications and to aid in preventing abuse of our 9-1-1 system operations and efficiency.

Sincerely,

Mayor Glenda D. Ledford
City of Wasilla

Cc: file



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Mayor

350 East Dahlia Avenue • Palmer, AK 99645

Phone (907) 861-8682 / Cell (907) 795-8133 / Fax (907) 861-8669

Edna.DeVries@matsugov.us

January 17, 2023

The Honorable David Wilson
State of Alaska, Senate District D
State Capitol Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801

Via email: Sen.David.Wilson@akleg.gov

Re: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 38

Dear Senator Wilson:

In response to a request for comment from Matcom Dispatch, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough supports Senate Bill 38 establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications in support of emergency dispatch centers. Consequences for limiting disruptions or delays caused by repeated 911 calls will improve, or at least ensure, we are prioritizing precious, limited resources to necessary emergencies.

Sincerely,

Edna DeVries
Mayor

Michael Brown
Borough Manager



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH


Department of Emergency Services

Office of Emergency Management

1800 East Parks Highway • Wasilla, AK 99654

Phone (907) 861-8004 • Fax (907) 861-8014

www.matsugov.us

To: State of Alaska Legislative Committee
From: Casey Cook, Emergency Manager 
Re: Support for SB 38 Interference with Emergency Communications
January 16, 2023

Dear Senators,

As the Emergency Manager for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Department of Emergency Services, I would like to take this opportunity to relay our support for the above-mentioned SB 38 Interference with Emergency Communications. This legislation will help curtail blatant abuse of our 911 system and help dispatch emergency resources to those in need in the quickest manner possible. Working in close partnership with the MatCom dispatch center, we see abuse and misuse of the emergency communications system regularly, and we would like to support a mechanism for combating this abuse and misuse.

When misuse and abuse occur on the emergency communications system, this affects not only call takers and dispatchers, but also affects other emergency callers trying to report actual emergencies, as well as affecting our 1st responder agencies. This can be seen in increased call answering times, call processing times, dispatch and response times, all of which are unacceptable when seconds counts. For these reasons, I fully support and encourage the legislation to prohibit interference with emergency communications, SB 38, be written into law.

Please consider supporting and passing SB 38, to be written into law as to codify the seriousness of this abuse and allow for action to be taken to combat this serious issue.



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Member of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties

The Honorable David Wilson
Alaska State Legislature
120 4th St., State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: In support of SB38

Dear Senator Wilson,

Thank you for your sponsorship of SB38, establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications. AML appreciates your support for Alaska's public safety system.

The majority of public safety positions in the state are held by staff employed by municipal governments. Whether it is at the dispatch center, police or fire department, or EMS and other emergency services, it is often local government employees who are managing an effective response to public safety. That response is less effective and inefficient when repeated communications about a single incident have the potential to cause delay, confusion, and reduced capacity. It is important that the public understand the commitment of public safety officials and comply with communications as directed by response staff.

AML supports this legislation as drafted. Please let us know if there is additional information that would be helpful in support of moving this forward, or if there are resources we can mobilize on your behalf.

Thank you again for your commitment to an effective and efficient response to public safety, and your consideration of local and state response.

Respectfully,

Nils Andreassen
Executive Director

WPDEA

Wasilla Police Department Employee Association

February 11th 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the proposal of SB38 Interference with Emergency Communications being submitted to the State of Alaska for consideration.

As an Emergency Dispatcher at Matcom, and the current Vice President of the WPDEA, I can attest firsthand having been on duty during more than one instance of 911 being misused. Words cannot convey the frustration of 911 emergency resources being directed or delayed in a non-emergent situation due to the misuse of 911 while someone else is in a real emergency elsewhere.

In conclusion, the WPDEA fully supports the efforts of Mr. Butcher, and everyone else involved, as they seek to have SB38 approved and written into law.

Respectfully,



Justin Shoemake – Emergency Dispatcher

Vice President WPDEA



Ryan Hellman – Patrol Officer

President WPDEA