

**Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization**  
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**Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now**  
**6537 S. Staples Drive, Ste 125**  
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**Submitted Testimony**  
**SB9**  
**Infant Safety Devices/Safe Haven Baby Box Authorization**  
**Alaska Senate Health and Social Services Committee**  
**February 22, 2025**

**OPPOSE**  
**Submitted Testimony**  
**by**  
**Marley E. Greiner, Executive Chair. Bastard Nation**

This is joint testimony submitted by Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization and Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now. I am the Executive Chair of BN and the owner of SSHBBN, the largest baby box information, educational and media resource website in the world.

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Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization is the largest adoptee civil rights organization in the United States. We support only full unrestricted access for all adopted persons to their original birth certificates (OBC) and related documents.

Since 2016 we have opposed “Safe Haven Baby Boxes” that allow parents to anonymously stick their infant in a box in a wall and walk away.

Alaska has been a pioneer in protecting the civil right of its adoptees to obtain their OBCs without restriction and conditions. Until 1998 it was only 1 of 2 states that acknowledged the right of its adoptees to obtain their own OBCs and refused to seal our records. Passage of SB9 will be a giant step backwards and a betrayal of the state's history of adoptee support, dignity, and respect.

We urge you: DO NOT PASS SB9

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This testimony has 2 parts (a general over-view of why baby abandonment boxes are bad and (2) our easy-to-follow Talking Points attached at the bottom of the testimony.

The promotion and use of Safe Haven Baby Boxes is anti-adoptee, anti-adoption, anti-family, and unethical. Boxes are a danger to the physical and mental/emotional health of mother and child. information. They promulgate the old secret system that adopted people have battled for over 70 years to abolish.

Baby abandonment box promoters subscribe, whether or not they realize it, to the long-discredited “blank slate” theory of adoption, reducing adoptees (whom they assume box babies will become) to familyless, historyless commodities—gifts given to strangers with no thought of the consequences to infant legal and psychological welfare or that of their biological parents.

Instead, advocates promote boxes as a consumerist “choice”—a simple solution for parents (usually mothers) so “desperate” that unless they can dump their newborns anonymously in a box-in-a-wall they will kill them or at least discard them dangerously. Proponents simultaneously claim these dangerous parents love their babies and want protect them from harm and not kill them. When asked to provide evidence of the efficacy of baby abandonment boxes, advocates can cite no studies or any other facts—only an intuitive “we just know.” The fact is that the number of reported dangerous discard cases throughout the US has remained steady for decades.

Recently the [Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics at Yale University's Infant Abandonment Working Group](#) published Legislative Report: US Policy Responses to Infant Abandonment and Infanticide ) download at [bioethics.yale.edu/infan\\_abandonment](http://bioethics.yale.edu/infan_abandonment))) Although report is not comprehensive, this is to my knowledge, the first study of the use and efficacy of “newborn safety devices.” The Center also sent an [open letter to HSS](#) supported by over 100 child welfare and maternal health scholars, clinicians, legislators and policymakers, educators, advocates, legal professionals, indigenous leaders, and concerned citizens from across the US to request increased HHS involvement in public health policy responses to crisis pregnancies and asking for oversight of a rapidly expanding network of unregulated baby abandonment boxes. (These documents and more are available at the general working group link above.)

Please don't think that these abandonment boxes are free as advertised by Safe Haven Baby Boxes Inc, the non-profit Christian ministry that controls the entire baby box industry from bill-writing and lobbying to manufacture to installation to hotline to promotion to media. They frequently use babies boxed through their program in public events and fundraisers.

The organization initially operated on voluntary donations from individuals, ministries, fraternal organizations, non-profits, and foundations, It still collects substantial funds from them, but in the last couple of years states and local jurisdictions have diverted taxpayer dollars to pay for them. This year, the Wyoming legislature rejected a bill, before it was even officially introduced, to allocate \$300,000 and possibly more to pay for boxes, even though no discards were reported for at least 8 years. In the past couple of years, Indiana allocated \$1,000,000. New Mexico, with no box law on the books, \$330,000. San Antonio, Texas allocated nearly \$450,000 for 12 boxes. They have not been installed because the City Attorney doesn't like the company's contract demands on the city. Some locations have taken money from COVID and Homeland Security accounts. In Union Township, Ohio, outside of Cincinnati, township trustees decided it would be OK to bypass Ohio law requiring 24/7 staffing at box locations. When a local man discovered, upon visiting the fire station, that it was unstaffed with a working box, the trustees decided to hire an extra firefighter to babysit the facility; thus, taxpayers were dunned not only the cost of the box but paying an extra full-time firefighter at union scale with benefits. Ohio has had 1 box cases years.

Of special note to Alaskan legislators: SB9 possibly ignores portions of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (Act) and state legal protections for Alaska natives, which could lead to litigation.

Not one adoptee rights or adoption reform organization in the United States supports the legalization and installation of baby abandonment boxes. Although, the current Safe Haven Baby Box initiative is a natural outgrowth of the Safe Haven movement, traditional Safe Haven organizations—the very people who developed Safe Haven laws—oppose baby boxes. [Here is a link](#) to organizations throughout the US that oppose boxes. ([stopbbnow.org](http://stopbbnow.org), our-friends)

The adoptee voice has been silenced in baby box discourse by design. We trust you will listen to us. Advocates and SHBB Inc in particular, refuse to respond to adoptee objections in any serious manner. The company's hotline operator and counselor publicly called adoptees who object to boxes “mentally unstable.” The founder of the company said on TikTok, “So take your little trauma narrative [*headbutt*] and go somewhere else.” The overall response, when given is “you hate adoption.”

What we hate are deceptive relinquishment practices, rooted in shame and secrecy that lead to drastic permanent solutions to temporary problems and deny the babies who are adopted under this system, when they grow-up, their birth and adoption records, histories, and context.

What we demand is ethics and accountability in adoption and related childcare practices, not a band-aid solution to social, political, and mental health problems that cause newborn discard to happen.

Please vote DO NOT PASS. It's the right thing to do.

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## Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now!

### Why We Oppose Safe Haven Baby Boxes

Adoptee rights and adoption reform organizations throughout the United States oppose deceptive relinquishment practices that are rooted in shame and secrecy, lead to drastic permanent solutions to temporary problems, and create a population of adopted people who have no birth records, identity, or history.

We seek ethics, transparency, and accountability in adoption and in related child welfare practices, not band-aid and gimmick solutions to social, political, and mental health problems that cause newborn discards. Contrary to long-standing and established child welfare policies, the use of baby boxes (sometimes called “newborn safety devices”):

- Creates a secretive and shadow child welfare system that eliminates informed consent, a child’s identifying information, and any record of the social and medical histories of newborns. Baby boxes operate to eliminate a child’s right to identity by eliminating accurate birth registrations and records.
- Commodifies infants and normalizes “legal” baby abandonment as a consumer choice, without acknowledging the lifetime psychological consequences for the baby and the mother, including, but not limited to, abandonment issues, shame, guilt, substance abuse, depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideation. Boxes represent state-promoted throwaway culture; some critics call them instruments of child abuse.
- Replaces professional best practice standards with unprofessional and unethical “relinquishment” procedures. Baby boxes instead give vulnerable parents a right to abandon an infant out of convenience or ignorance, with no counseling, documentation, or discussion of established alternatives, such as adequate medical care, financial and material family preservation assistance, or crisis nurseries.
- Deprives the non-surrendering parent of the right to rear her or his own child. Baby boxes eliminate any protections to prove that a person using the box has a legal right to surrender the baby. Embarrassed, frightened, or abusive partners, spouses or family members, and even sex traffickers, will use (and undoubtedly have used) baby boxes without the consent or knowledge of the (other) parent, with no repercussions. Baby box proponents dismiss the real, dangerous, and violent situations experienced by women, simply advocating that “if your baby is taken, just call the police.”
- Disenfranchises natural parents—particularly the non-surrendering parent (usually the father)—of their right to due process by eliminating their ability to locate the child, thus denying them knowledge of (among other things) the dependency proceeding to which they are a party. State-based Putative Father Registries, touted as a safeguard, are rendered useless since records are filed by the name of the mother who remains anonymous by law.
- Creates at-risk adoptions due to possible litigation from the non-surrendering parent or biological family members who may learn of the abandonment and seek custody.
- Contravenes family reunification guidelines of the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (AFSA) and

dispenses with tribal rights embedded in the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which can also lead to federal litigation.

- Encourages women to keep problematic pregnancies a secret. The promotion of baby boxes discourages family and professional communication and eliminates assistance for sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, substance abuse, and social isolation—factors that cause nearly every newborn discard. Studies indicate that once a pregnancy is acknowledged and discussed the chance of discard almost always disappears.
- Hides crimes such as rape, incest, spousal and partner abuse, and human trafficking.
- Promotes and supports the non-profit ministry Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc., a million-dollar corporation that controls the manufacture, promotion, sales, installation, and referral of women to baby boxes in the United States. It has created the baby box market and lobbies legislatures, produces boxes at its own factory, installs the devices, operates a hotline that refers pregnant women to box locations near them, and holds press conferences when a newborn is left in a box. Rather than protect legitimate privacy interests of the infant, it uses boxed children as fundraising tools for its ministry.
- Discourages women from seeking pre-and post-natal care, instead encouraging dangerous and unsafe unattended births in the community, outside of a hospital.

Baby boxes do not address the causes of infant discard. Anonymously dropping a baby into a box and walking away does not obviate or solve the root causes of newborn discard/neo-naticide, which are:

- poverty
- inability to secure affordable medical treatment and reproductive health care
- denial or ignorance of pregnancy
- draconian immigration policies and practices
- substance abuse and physical and sexual abuse
- shame, crime, mental illness, dysfunctional families, social isolation, and poor communication skills.

**More Information: Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now**  
**Marley Greiner (614) 795-6819**  
**[stopshbbnow.org](http://stopshbbnow.org)**

**2023 Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now!**  
**6537 S. Staples Street, Suite 125, Corpus Christi, Texas 78413-5423**  
**[614-795-6819](http://614-795-6819) \* [stopshbbnow.org](http://stopshbbnow.org)**

February 20, 2025

Senator Robert Myers  
State Capitol Room 7  
Juneau, AK 99801  
[Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Robert.Myers@akleg.gov)

**RE: AHHA Supports Senate Bill 9 – Infant Safety Devices**

Dear Senator Myers,

For over 70 years, the Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) has served as a non-profit trade association representing Alaska's hospitals, nursing homes, and a growing number of healthcare partners across the continuum of care. AHHA members play an invaluable role, both as community providers and essential employers, in cities, towns, and villages across Alaska.

AHHA supports Senate Bill 9, which amends Alaska's safe surrender laws to allow for the use of infant safety devices at designated surrender locations. Hospitals represent a place of safety, especially during times of crisis, and we have long been recognized as designated sites for safe surrender of an infant.

We appreciate your legislation because it represents a practical approach to providing opportunities for safe surrender. Eliminating barriers, increasing safety, and allowing for anonymity align with and improve our safe surrender laws, and we believe it is important that Alaska follow the twenty-two other states that authorize infant safety devices.

In closing, thank you for bringing this important legislation forward and your efforts in prioritizing access to quality, sustainable healthcare for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Jared C. Kosin, JD, MBA  
President & CEO



Mayor  
Suzanne LaFrance

# Anchorage Fire Department



Fire Chief  
Douglas Schrage

The Honorable Senator Robert Myers  
State Capitol Room 7  
Juneau, AK 99801

The Honorable Representative Frank Tomaszewski  
State Capitol Room 405  
Juneau, AK 99801

January 31, 2025

Dear Senator Myers and Representative Tomaszewski,

I am writing to lend my support for legislation that expands Alaska's "Safe Haven Law," AS 47.10.013, to provide immunity from prosecution for abandonment to a parent who safely surrenders a newborn infant to an infant safety device designed for that purpose. We are fortunate to have a Safe Haven law that provides immunity to a parent who surrenders a newborn to a firefighter, law enforcement officer or certain health care workers under conditions specified in the Statute. Experience shows that such face-to-face interaction can be a deterrent to a new parent who might be unable to hand over their child directly to one of these professionals.

There have been recent incidents where parents of newborns abandoned their infants even though the Safe Haven Law would have allowed surrender to a firefighter or police officer without fear of prosecution. As recently as November 2024, a newborn infant was found abandoned just one block away from Anchorage Fire Station 1 downtown. In January 2022, a baby was left in a bassinet at a well-travelled intersection in Fairbanks.

Fire departments around the country are equipping their fire stations with safe-surrender baby boxes which are secure, monitored, and environmentally protected vaults in which a parent can safely surrender their newborn infant. These boxes are an alternative for those that might not be up to directly giving up their child to a live person. Once the infant is placed in the box, the fire personnel inside the station and their 911 center are notified with a special alarm after allowing the parent a short amount of time to get away undetected.



Mayor  
Suzanne LaFrance

# Anchorage Fire Department



Fire Chief  
Douglas Schrage

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The current Statutes do not provide immunity from prosecution for abandonment in the case of a safe surrender box being used. Thank you for sponsoring legislation to provide the same immunity as if the baby were surrendered to an on-duty firefighter.

I will make myself and my colleagues available for invited testimony if it would be of service to you and the public process. Please let me know if I can provide any addition information.

Respectfully,

Douglas Schrage