

# Representative Ashley Carrick

*Alaska State Legislature*

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## **House Bill 141 Version A Sponsor Statement**

*“An Act relating to universal changing facilities in public buildings.”*

House Bill 141 would require the instillation of at least one universal changing facility in all public buildings during any new construction or remodel costing over \$30,000. A universal changing facility is a table or device suitable for the changing of a diaper of a child and providing personal care for an adult. The addition of these universal changing facilities would foster inclusion of all people, regardless of age, medical conditions, or disability status, and ensure all people are treated with dignity and respect.

Currently, there are 11 states which have introduced bills relating to the instillation of universal changing tables, and 7 additional states that have passed bills into law. These bills ensure that all people, including those living with physical and/or intellectual disabilities, are provided access to private, safe, and hygienic changing facilities. There are no current laws in Alaska requiring accessible changing facilities in public buildings, further disadvantaging these vulnerable groups.

Individuals who rely on changing facilities, as well as their families and/or caretakers, often experience isolation as they are unable to spend significant time in areas that lack facilities suitable for changing. These limitations restrict community engagement and participation between all groups, something that is essential in ensuring a well rounded and vibrant society where all people are valued and included. According to the Alaska Constitution, the state must protect individuals' equal rights and opportunities under the law. House Bill 141 would ensure that all people, regardless of age, medical conditions, or disability are provided the space necessary to go to the restroom with dignity.

Please join me in supporting HB 141 so all individuals have access to accommodating restrooms.