

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2003 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 3  
 Bill Version: CSSB 85  
 (S) Publish Date: 5/8/03

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Administration  
 Title An Act relating to sentencing and goo BRU Legal and Advocacy Services  
for felony sexual offenses Component Public Defender Agency  
 Sponsor Senator French  
 Requester Senate State Affairs Component No. 1631

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Personal Services	*	*	*	*	*	*
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>						
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	*	*	*	*	*	*
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	*	*	*	*	*	*

Estimate of any current year (FY2003) cost: 0.0

Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time	*	*	*	*	*	*
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

See attached page for analysis.

Prepared by: Linda K. Wilson, Deputy Director Phone (907)-334-4416  
 Division: Public Defender Agency Date/Time 4/11/03 9:20 AM  
 Approved by: Mike Miller, Commissioner Date 4/11/2003  
 Agency: Department of Administration

**ANALYSIS CONTINUATION**

This bill has three distinct features. Sections 1-5 propose to increase the maximum sentences for all felony sexual offenses, and to increase the presumptive sentences for felony sexual offense convictions for first offenders and when the defendant has a prior sexual felony conviction. Section 6 eliminates the 10-year look back limitation for prior convictions for class B and C sexual offense felonies that the court considers when determining if presumptive sentencing applies and for general sentencing purposes in all sexual felony cases. Currently only prior felony convictions where less than 10 years from the date of the defendant's unconditional discharge on the immediately preceding offense and the commission of the present offense has elapsed may be considered by the court in class B and C felony sentencing proceedings. Lastly, Section 10 of the bill proposes to eliminate entirely the award of good time to prisoners convicted of a sexual felony who have a prior sexual felony conviction, no matter how old. Currently all prisoners convicted of a sentence that exceeds 3 days earn a one-third deduction for good behavior.

This bill will have a fiscal impact on the operations of the Public Defender Agency. There may be litigation on whether this bill violates equal protection of the laws under the Alaska or United States Constitution. In the past, Alaska courts have found that laws singling out particular offenses (rather than classes of offenses) for disparate treatment violate equal protection. Also, it is likely that more cases will be contested and go to jury trial because of the increased sentences, and the elimination of good time awarded for second offenders, as proposed in this bill. If conviction results at trial, it is equally likely that there will be more appeals from those convictions. The Agency represented indigent defendants in over 20,000 cases in FY02, over 3600 of which were felonies. It is expected that the Agency's caseload will increase by approximately 1,000 cases for FY03, from the half yearly figures for FY03, also increasing the number of felonies for FY03 by approximately 100 cases. A noticeable number of the felony sexual offense charges involve indigent native defendants with substance abuse issues surrounding the alleged offense. Felony sex offenses are costly cases to defend at trial. With the increase in maximum allowable sentences, it is also likely that any suspended portion of the sentence will also increase, which may result in more contested adjudications on petitions to revoke probation proceedings, because of the potential to have a larger sentence imposed upon revocation. This will also likely increase the workload of the Agency.

The Agency cannot predict with any accuracy what the fiscal impact will be on the Agency if this bill becomes law, but is sure there will be one. Therefore, an indeterminate fiscal note is submitted.