

**CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 53(HSS)**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Offered: 3/10/23

Referred: Judiciary

Sponsor(s): SENATORS CLAMAN, Gray-Jackson

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 "An Act relating to competency to stand trial; relating to involuntary civil  
2 commitments; relating to victims' rights during certain civil commitment proceedings;  
3 and amending Rule 42(a), Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure."

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 \* **Section 1.** AS 12.47.070(a) is amended to read:

6 (a) If a defendant has filed a notice of intention to rely on the affirmative  
7 defense of insanity under AS 12.47.010 or has filed notice under AS 12.47.020(a), or  
8 there is reason to doubt the defendant's fitness to proceed, or there is reason to believe  
9 that a mental disease or defect of the defendant will otherwise become an issue in the  
10 case, the court shall appoint **a qualified psychiatrist or forensic psychologist** [AT  
11 LEAST TWO QUALIFIED PSYCHIATRISTS OR TWO FORENSIC  
12 PSYCHOLOGISTS CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC  
13 PSYCHOLOGY] to examine and report **on** [UPON] the mental condition of the  
14 defendant. If the court appoints **a psychiatrist** [PSYCHIATRISTS], the **psychiatrist**

1 [PSYCHIATRISTS] may select psychologists to provide assistance. If the defendant  
2 has filed notice under AS 12.47.090(a), the report shall consider whether the defendant  
3 can still be committed under AS 12.47.090(c). The court may order the defendant to  
4 be committed to a secure facility for the purpose of the examination for not more than  
5 60 days or for a [SUCH] longer period as the court determines to be necessary for the  
6 purpose and may direct that a qualified psychiatrist retained by the defendant be  
7 permitted to witness and participate in the examination.

8 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 12.47.100(b) is amended to read:

9 (b) If, before imposition of sentence, the prosecuting attorney or the attorney  
10 for the defendant has reasonable cause to believe that the defendant is presently  
11 suffering from a mental disease or defect that causes the defendant to be unable to  
12 understand the proceedings or to assist in the person's own defense, the attorney may  
13 file a written motion for a judicial determination of the competency of the defendant.  
14 Upon that motion, or upon its own motion, the court shall have the defendant  
15 examined by at least one qualified psychiatrist or psychologist, who shall report to the  
16 court concerning the competency of the defendant. For the purpose of the  
17 examination, the court may order the defendant committed for a reasonable period to a  
18 suitable hospital or other facility designated by the court. If the report of the  
19 psychiatrist or psychologist indicates that the defendant is incompetent, the court shall  
20 hold a hearing, upon due notice, at which evidence as to the competency of the  
21 defendant may be submitted, including that of the reporting psychiatrist or  
22 psychologist, and make appropriate findings. Before the hearing, the court shall, upon  
23 a written request of the prosecuting attorney, order the defendant to submit to an  
24 additional evaluation by a psychiatrist or psychologist designated by the prosecuting  
25 attorney.

26 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 12.47.100 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

27 (i) As provided in AS 12.30, the court may release a defendant on bail to be  
28 examined under this section at an outpatient clinic or other facility. The court shall  
29 order participation in the examination as a condition of the defendant's bail.

30 (j) If the defendant is charged with a felony offense against a person under  
31 AS 11.41 or arson in any degree, a qualified psychiatrist or psychologist conducting an

1 examination under (b) of this section may, at the same time, evaluate the defendant to  
2 determine whether the defendant meets the standards for involuntary commitment  
3 under AS 47.30.700 - 47.30.915.

4 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 12.47.110(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) On or before the expiration of the initial 90-day period of commitment, the  
6 court shall conduct a hearing to determine whether or not the defendant remains  
7 incompetent. If the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant  
8 remains incompetent, the court may recommit the defendant for a second period of 90  
9 days. The court shall determine at the expiration of the second 90-day period whether  
10 the defendant has become competent. If, at the expiration of the second 90-day period,  
11 the court determines that the defendant continues to be incompetent to stand trial, the  
12 charges against the defendant shall be dismissed without prejudice, and continued  
13 commitment of the defendant shall be governed by the provisions relating to civil  
14 commitments under AS 47.30.700 - 47.30.915 unless the defendant is charged with a  
15 crime involving force against a person and the court finds that the defendant presents a  
16 substantial danger of physical injury to other persons and that there is a substantial  
17 probability that the defendant will regain competency within a reasonable period of  
18 time, in which case the court may extend the period of commitment for an additional  
19 **18** [SIX] months. If the defendant remains incompetent at the expiration of the  
20 additional **18-month** [SIX-MONTH] period, the charges shall be dismissed without  
21 prejudice, and continued commitment proceedings shall be governed by the provisions  
22 relating to civil commitment under AS 47.30.700 - 47.30.915. If the defendant remains  
23 incompetent for five years after the charges have been dismissed under this subsection,  
24 the defendant may not be charged again for an offense arising out of the facts alleged  
25 in the original charges, except if the original charge is a class A felony or unclassified  
26 felony.

27 \* **Sec. 5.** AS 12.47.110 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

28 (f) As provided in AS 12.30, the court may release a defendant for further  
29 evaluation and treatment at an outpatient clinic or other facility under (a) or (b) of this  
30 section. The court shall order participation in the evaluation and treatment as a  
31 condition of the defendant's bail.

1 (g) If, under (b) of this section, the court finds that a defendant charged with a  
 2 felony offense against a person under AS 11.41 or arson in any degree remains  
 3 incompetent at the expiration of a second 90-day period and the court does not extend  
 4 the period of commitment for an additional 18 months, or if the court finds that the  
 5 defendant remains incompetent at the expiration of the additional 18-month period, the  
 6 prosecutor shall provide the court's findings to the division of the Department of Law  
 7 that has responsibility for civil cases within 24 hours of the court's ruling. The  
 8 Department of Law shall file a petition seeking involuntary commitment of the  
 9 defendant under AS 47.30.700 - 47.30.915 within 72 hours after dismissal of the  
 10 charges.

11 (h) If the court dismisses the charges against a defendant for a felony offense  
 12 against a person under AS 11.41 or arson in any degree, the defendant may not be  
 13 discharged from the custody of the commissioner of family and community services  
 14 until 72 hours after the court dismisses the charges.

15 \* **Sec. 6.** AS 47.30.725 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

16 (g) If a criminal charge of a felony offense against a person under AS 11.41 or  
 17 arson in any degree against a respondent has been dismissed under AS 12.47.110 and  
 18 the respondent is detained for evaluation or committed under AS 47.30.700 -  
 19 47.30.915, the commissioner shall notify a victim in the dismissed criminal case

20 (1) of the time and place of a hearing under AS 47.30.700 - 47.30.915;

21 (2) of the length of time for which the respondent is committed and  
 22 findings of fact made by the court; and

23 (3) when the respondent is discharged from commitment.

24 (h) Subsection (g) of this section may not be construed to give a victim in a  
 25 dismissed criminal case access to a record or information that is confidential under  
 26 AS 47.30.845.

27 \* **Sec. 7.** AS 47.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

28 **Sec. 47.30.771. Additional five-year commitment.** (a) The respondent shall  
 29 be released from involuntary treatment at the expiration of 180 days unless the  
 30 professional person in charge or the attorney general's office files a petition for a five-  
 31 year commitment conforming to the requirements of AS 47.30.740(a) except that all

1 references to "30-day commitment" shall be read as "the previous 180-day  
2 commitment" and all references to "90-day commitment" shall be read as "five-year  
3 commitment."

4 (b) The procedures for service of the petition, notification of rights, and  
5 judicial hearing shall be as set out in AS 47.30.740 - 47.30.750. Following a 180-day  
6 commitment of a respondent, the court may order the respondent committed for an  
7 additional treatment period not to exceed five years from the date on which the 180-  
8 day treatment period would have expired if the court or jury finds by clear and  
9 convincing evidence that

10 (1) the respondent is mentally ill and as a result is likely to cause harm  
11 to self or others;

12 (2) the respondent has a history of

13 (A) felony offenses against a person under AS 11.41 or arson in  
14 any degree, including offenses for which the respondent was found  
15 incompetent to stand trial under AS 12.47.100 and 12.47.110; or

16 (B) attempts of harm to self;

17 (3) the respondent has been found incompetent to stand trial under  
18 AS 12.47.100 and 12.47.110 for a felony offense against a person under AS 11.41 or  
19 arson in any degree; and

20 (4) commitment of the respondent for greater than 180 days but not  
21 greater than five years is necessary to protect the public.

22 (c) Findings of fact relating to the respondent's behavior made at a 30-day  
23 commitment hearing under AS 47.30.735, a 90-day commitment hearing under  
24 AS 47.30.750, or a 180-day commitment hearing under AS 47.30.770 shall be  
25 admitted as evidence and may not be rebutted except that newly discovered evidence  
26 may be used for the purpose of rebutting the findings.

27 (d) The department shall, by January 30 of each year, submit to the attorney  
28 general, public defender, public advocate, Alaska Court System, and the attorney of  
29 record for the respondent, if any, a report that details how many respondents are  
30 committed under this section and how much time remains on each order of  
31 commitment.

1 \* **Sec. 8.** AS 47.30.780(a) is amended to read:

2 (a) Except as provided in (b) **and (c)** of this section, the professional person in  
3 charge shall at any time discharge a respondent on the ground that the respondent is no  
4 longer gravely disabled or likely to cause serious harm as a result of mental illness. A  
5 certificate to this effect shall be sent to the court, which shall enter an order officially  
6 terminating the involuntary commitment.

7 \* **Sec. 9.** AS 47.30.780 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

8 (c) If a respondent committed under AS 47.30.770 or 47.30.771 has a history  
9 of felony offenses against a person under AS 11.41 or arson in any degree, including  
10 offenses for which the respondent was found incompetent to stand trial under  
11 AS 12.47.100 and 12.47.110, the professional person in charge may not discharge the  
12 respondent under (a) of this section unless the court enters an order officially  
13 terminating the involuntary commitment after a hearing. The respondent, the  
14 professional person in charge, the prosecuting authority, and the respondent's attorney,  
15 if applicable, shall appear at the hearing. If the prosecuting authority opposes  
16 discharge, the court shall treat the matter as a petition for early discharge under (d) of  
17 this section, notwithstanding a limitation imposed by (e) of this section.

18 (d) Except as provided in (e) of this section, a respondent committed under  
19 AS 47.30.771 may petition the court for early discharge at any time during the  
20 commitment. The court shall grant early discharge if the court finds by clear and  
21 convincing evidence that, based on the respondent's ongoing medication or other  
22 treatment, there is a factual and medical basis to believe the respondent is no longer  
23 likely to cause harm to self or others.

24 (e) A respondent may not file a petition for early discharge within one year  
25 after the date the court enters an initial commitment order or a final order ruling on a  
26 previous petition for early discharge.

27 \* **Sec. 10.** AS 47.30.805(a) is amended to read:

28 (a) Except as provided in (b) of this section,

29 (1) computations of a 72-hour evaluation period under AS 47.30.708  
30 or 47.30.715 or a 48-hour detention period under AS 47.30.685 do not include  
31 Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, or any period of time necessary to transport the

1 respondent to the treatment facility, except that if the exclusion of Saturdays, Sundays,  
 2 and legal holidays from the computation of a 72-hour evaluation period or 48-hour  
 3 detention period would result in the respondent being held for longer than 72 hours or  
 4 48 hours, as applicable, the period ends at 5:00 p.m. on the next day that is not a  
 5 Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday;

6 (2) a seven-day detention at a crisis residential center expires at the end  
 7 of the seventh day following the respondent's arrival at the crisis stabilization center or  
 8 the crisis residential center, whichever is earlier;

9 (3) a 30-day commitment period expires at the end of the 30th day  
 10 after the 72 hours following initial acceptance;

11 (4) a 90-day commitment period expires at the end of the 90th day  
 12 after the expiration of a 30-day period of treatment;

13 (5) a 180-day commitment period expires at the end of the 180th day,  
 14 after the expiration of a 90-day period of treatment or previous 180-day period,  
 15 whichever is applicable;

16 **(6) a five-year commitment period expires at the end of five years**  
 17 **after the expiration of a 180-day period of treatment.**

18 \* **Sec. 11.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 19 read:

20 INDIRECT COURT RULE AMENDMENTS. AS 12.47.100(b), as amended by sec. 2  
 21 of this Act, has the effect of changing Rule 42(a), Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure, by  
 22 requiring a motion for a judicial determination of competence to be filed in writing.

23 \* **Sec. 12.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 24 read:

25 CONDITIONAL EFFECT. AS 12.47.100(b), as amended by sec. 2 of this Act, takes  
 26 effect only if sec. 11 of this Act receives the two-thirds majority vote of each house required  
 27 by art. IV, sec. 15, Constitution of the State of Alaska.