

SENATE BILL NO. 255

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

Introduced: 2/21/24

Referred: Transportation, Judiciary

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the obstruction of airports and runways; relating to the obstruction
2 of highways; establishing the crime of obstruction of free passage in public places;
3 relating to the obstruction of public places; relating to the crime of trespassing; relating
4 to the obstruction of navigable waters; and providing for an effective date."

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

6 * **Section 1.** AS 02.20.050(a) is amended to read:

7 (a) A person may not

8 (1) place an object on the surface of a public use airport that because of
9 its nature or location might cause injury or damage to an aircraft or person riding in
10 the aircraft; or

11 (2) otherwise obstruct a runway.

12 * **Sec. 2.** AS 02.20.050 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

13 (e) A person who violates (a)(1) of this section is guilty of a class C felony.

14 (f) A person who violates (a)(2) or (b) of this section is guilty of a class A

1 misdemeanor.

2 * **Sec. 3.** AS 02.20.060(b) is amended to read:

3 (b) A person who violates [THIS CHAPTER, OR] a regulation adopted under
4 this chapter [,] is punishable, upon conviction, for each offense by a fine of not more
5 than \$500, or by imprisonment for not more than six months, or by both.

6 * **Sec. 4.** AS 09.65 is amended by adding a new section to read:

7 **Sec. 09.65.360. Civil liability for obstruction of free passage in public**
8 **places.** (a) In addition to other civil damages and criminal penalties provided by law, a
9 person who obstructs access in violation of AS 02.20.050, AS 11.61.150, 11.61.155,
10 or AS 38.05.128 is strictly liable in a civil action to another person whose passage is
11 obstructed for no less than the following damages for each incident:

12 (1) \$10,000 to a person who suffers only nominal damages;

13 (2) \$50,000 to a person who suffers injury to property;

14 (3) \$100,000 to a person who suffers bodily injury; and

15 (4) \$500,000 to a person who suffers death.

16 (b) A person is jointly and severally liable for conduct under (a) of this section
17 if the person directly or indirectly, by words or action, aids, encourages, or authorizes
18 the conduct, including by

19 (1) participating in the conduct;

20 (2) directing, advising, encouraging, or soliciting another person to
21 engage in or participate in the conduct; or

22 (3) conspiring to engage in the conduct.

23 (c) The liability of a person for damages under this section is in addition to
24 liability for an award of full reasonable attorney fees and costs to a claimant who, as
25 plaintiff, counterclaimant, or cross claimant in the action, is the prevailing party.

26 (d) A plaintiff under this section may be entitled to temporary and permanent
27 injunctive relief.

28 (e) A court of this state has personal jurisdiction over a person outside the
29 state who is liable under (b) of this section if the person knew or had reason to know
30 that the person's acts or omissions were likely to lead to the obstruction of public
31 access in the state.

(f) In this section, "nominal damages" means the infraction of a legal right under the section that does not result in death, bodily injury, or injury to property.

* **Sec. 5.** AS 11.46.320(b) is amended to read:

(b) Criminal trespass in the first degree is

(1) a class C felony if the conduct

(A) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to another person; or

(B) interferes with a firefighting, medical, or other emergency response; or

(2) a class A misdemeanor.

* **Sec. 6.** AS 11.46.330(b) is amended to read:

(b) Criminal trespass in the second degree is

(1) a class A misdemeanor if the conduct

(A) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to another person; or

(B) interferes with a firefighting, medical, or other emergency response; or

(2) a class B misdemeanor.

* **Sec. 7.** AS 11.61.150(a) is amended to read:

(a) A person commits the **crime** [OFFENSE] of obstruction of highways if the person knowingly

(1) places, drops, or permits to drop on a highway any substance that creates a substantial risk of physical injury to others using the highway; or

(2) renders a highway impassable or passable only with unreasonable inconvenience or hazard.

* **Sec. 8.** AS 11.61.150(c) is amended to read:

(c) Obstruction of highways is

(1) a class C felony if the person

(A) violates (a)(1) of this section; or

(B) violates (a)(2) of this section and the conduct

(i) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to

another person; or

(ii) interferes with a firefighting, medical, or other emergency response; or

(2) a class A misdemeanor [A VIOLATION PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OF NOT MORE THAN \$1,000].

* **Sec. 9.** AS 11.61 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 11.61.155. Obstruction of free passage in public places. (a) A person commits the crime of obstruction of free passage in public places if, under circumstances not proscribed under AS 02.20.050, AS 11.61.150, or AS 38.05.128, the person knowingly renders a public place impassable or passable only with unreasonable inconvenience or hazard.

(b) This section does not apply to

(1) the obstruction of free passage in public places authorized by a permit issued by a state agency or municipality of the state; or

(2) conduct otherwise authorized by law or the person in charge of the premises.

(c) Obstruction of free passage in public places is

(1) a class A misdemeanor if the obstruction

(A) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to another person;

(B) substantially interferes with a person's access to a public place that renders governmental or judicial services; or

(C) interferes with a firefighting, medical, or other emergency response; or

(2) a class B misdemeanor.

* **Sec. 10.** AS 38.05.128(f) is amended to read:

(f) A violation [OF (a)] of this section is

(1) a class A misdemeanor if the obstruction or interference

(A) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to another person; or

(B) interferes with a firefighting, medical, or other

1 **emergency; or**

2 **(2)** a class B misdemeanor.

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

5 APPLICABILITY. This Act applies to offenses committed on or after the effective
6 date of this Act.

7 * **Sec. 12.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2024.