

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE JUDICIARY STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 3, 2025

1:01 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Andrew Gray, Chair  
Representative Chuck Kopp, Vice Chair  
Representative Ted Eischeid  
Representative Genevieve Mina  
Representative Sarah Vance  
Representative Mia Costello  
Representative Jubilee Underwood

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

PRESENTATION(S): THE IMPACT OF DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS ON  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS

- HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 74

"An Act establishing the crime of airbag fraud."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

BRENDA STANFILL, Executive Director  
Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-offered the Impact of Direct Service  
Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors  
presentation.

KEELEY OLSON, Executive Director  
Standing Together Against Rape  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-offered the Impact of Direct Service Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors presentation.

REBECCA SHIELDS, Executive Director  
Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-offered the Impact of Direct Service Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors presentation.

EILEEN ARNOLD, Executive Director  
Tunda Women's Coalition  
Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Co-offered the Impact of Direct Service Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors presentation.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[1:01:00 PM](#)

**CHAIR ANDREW GRAY** called the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Representatives Underwood, Costello, Mina, Vance, Kopp, and Gray were present at the call to order. Representative Eischeid arrived as the meeting was in progress.

#### **PRESENTATION(S): The Impact of Direct Service Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors**

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CHAIR GRAY announced that the only order of business would be the Impact of Direct Service Providers on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors presentation.

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BRENDA STANFILL, Executive Director, Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA), gave a PowerPoint presentation, titled "Alaska's Support for those Experiencing Sexual and Domestic Violence" [hard copy included in the committee packet]. She began on slide 3 by outlining the history of the movement that brought services to victims of domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) in Alaska. Slide 4 illustrated the impact of safe shelter and support. Slide 5

displayed a graphic on power and control. Slide 6 reflected on the low reporting rates among adult women who experience intimate partner violence (IPV) or SA in their lifetime. Slide 7 featured a Venn diagram and slide 8 featured data from the Alaska Victimization Survey from 2010 to 2020. In response to a question from Representative Vance, she explained that loss of money and economic stress were indicators of an increase in DV. Slide 9 showed a map of ANDVSA's service providers across Alaska.

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KEELEY OLSON, Executive Director, Standing Together Against Rape (STAR), continued the PowerPoint presentation with an overview of STAR's services on slide 11, highlighting the crisis line and the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). She explained that the crisis line receives 5,754 calls per year and that no call goes unanswered with help from trained volunteers in the community working 5-hour shifts. In addition, STAR provide individual advocacy services; on scene crisis response via SART, anonymous victim reports (AVR), and emergency room (ER) callouts; and one-on-one appointments. In response to a question about accessibility for English language learners and people with disabilities, she stated that STAR has a contract with two American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and works with the Alaska Institute for Justice's (AIJ) language interpreter program. The organization also has a language contract for the crisis line and brochures available in six languages. She conveyed that there is no time limit on the provision of services and that a person can work with star at any point in their lifetime.

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REBECCA SHIELDS, Executive Director, Kodiak Women's Resource and Crisis Center, continued the PowerPoint presentation with a discussion on legal advocacy in rural Alaska. She said there are two types of legal advocacy: civil legal advocacy and criminal justice legal advocacy. She detailed the steps involved in civil legal advocacy: emergency or long-term restraining orders, safety planning, systems advocacy, referrals to legal assistance, and accompanying to civil procedures. Criminal justice legal advocacy includes SART and the Coordinated Community Response (CCR) Team, both of which consist of law enforcement, medical, and advocacy members. She emphasized that the response is victim centered and the role of a victim's advocate is to provide constant safety planning and

support throughout the entirety of their case. This includes support for ongoing needs like housing, food, and appointments. In response to a question from the chair, she reported that on average, the Kodiak Women's Center fills 15 beds each month. When a criminal case ends, all court ordered conditions of release are dismantled but victims' services and advocates remain as long as they are needed.

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MS. SHIELDS, in response to a question about quantifying successful casework, she said it's not black and white because no two cases are alike. Especially with IPV or cases where children are involved, the threat can reemerge at any time, and the need to monitor and remain accessible is important for service providers. She spoke about the transition from victim to survivor and the positive outcomes she's seen.

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EILEEN ARNOLD, Executive Director, Tunda Women's Coalition (TWC), continued the PowerPoint presentation with a short history of the TWC, its services, and the SART Multidisciplinary Team (MDT). The classic services offered by TWC are the emergency shelter, transitional housing, the MDT, and legal advocacy. The SART MDT has expanded through Telesafe into three of five sub regional villages to ensure that people can remain in their home communities while seeing help. Advocates have also been trained on strangulation response and two clinical exam rooms were created for the Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and people in shelters. She noted that the exam rooms are income producing for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) because medical forensics lack national funding for SART. The TWC also provides both Western and traditional healing activities, many revolving around subsistence activities like hunting, fishing, food preparation, and sewing traditional garments. Permanent supportive housing was recently completed in Bethel with 24 units, 20 of which are filled, called Atsaq Place, in addition to the Tundra Youth Home. She commended the stabilization vouchers that were issued during the COVID-19 Pandemic, which offer rental assistance for people with jobs and help keep the shelters open for people with complex cases. She explained that the vouchers are distributed by Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) through what she suspected to be American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. She shared her understanding that the stabilization vouchers would be

terminated by September 30, 2025, and was unsure whether more would be issued.

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MS. ARNOLD shared a snapshot from April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to illustrate what a day at TWC looks like:

- Emergency shelter for 17 women and 24 children
- Transitional housing for three women and six children,
- Three non-resident adults with three children were helped with housing vouchers
- One survivor of sexual assault got updates on the legal case from staff
- Eight youth attended TAAV
- 28 Cases were reviewed by MDT members at the CAC case review.
- A SART call out happened at 5
- Local Law enforcement dropped off a mom with a baby at the shelter around 11:00 pm
- And 12 full-time staff came to work, eight of whom are survivors of interpersonal violence.

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MS. ARNOLD, in response to committee questions, explained that medical providers are experiencing burnout on a national level and that YKHC can't get providers to the subregional clinics. As a solution, itinerants are being trained on evidence collection. She agreed that the word "women's" in Tundra Women's Coalition is a misnomer, as the organization provides services for victims of all genders. She spoke to the issue of strangulation, and explained that similar to DV, it's about power and control. She said the state has done a good job educating and training its response teams, law enforcement, and the Department of Law (DOL) on this issue. She shared a personal anecdote and suggested that her community is very desensitized to strangulation, so more could be done.

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MS. STANFILL offered wrap up comments emphasizing the integral role that ANDVSA plays in the system.

[2:04:34 PM](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Judiciary Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.