

SB

25

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate Health, Education and
Social Services Committee

•
Senate Judiciary Committee

•
Department of Health and Social
Services Budget Subcommittee

•
Department of Law
Budget Subcommittee

While in Session:
State Capitol, Rm. 9
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-3704
fax: (907) 465-2529

•
While in Anchorage:
716 West 4th Ave., Ste. 440
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
(907) 258-8182
fax: (907) 258-5571

SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS

Sponsor Statement for Senate Bill 25

An Act relating to authorizing the Department of Corrections to provide an automated victim notification and prisoner information system.

Proper and timely notification to victims about the release or escape of their attacker is a serious problem, both nationally and in Alaska. In November 1996, Alaska's prisons and pre-trial facilities housed 2,990 inmates, 49% of whom are considered violent. Each day, over 600 concerned Alaskans call our state institutions seeking information on inmates.

In order to keep crime victims informed of inmate activity, a state-of-the-art computer system called Victim Information and Notification Everyday (V.I.N.E.) was developed. V.I.N.E. provides two important services which enhance the vital link of communication between the justice system and victims of crime.

First, the system provides automatic notification calls to crime victims when an inmate's status changes. If an inmate is released, transferred, posts bail or escapes, V.I.N.E. places automated telephone calls to all registered victims within 10 minutes of a change in the offender's status. V.I.N.E. continues to call the victims for 24 hours or until a successful notification is verified by the victim.

Second, V.I.N.E. provides critical inmate information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the automated telephone system. V.I.N.E. allows for a confidential exchange of information. Victims may access information on a prisoner through the use of a personal identification number, and they may easily enter new contact numbers.

In February 1996, the State of Kentucky became the first state to implement V.I.N.E. statewide. During the first 90 days of operation, over 20,000 phone calls were processed. Over 600 victims were notified by phone of impending inmate releases. Three months later, over 3,500 successful notifications had been made, with an average of 7 new registrations per day. Currently, the V.I.N.E. Company has contracts with over 150 counties in over 12 states including New Jersey, Texas, California, Michigan, Georgia and Florida.

Implementing V.I.N.E. will increase state compliance with the Victims' Bill of Rights, overwhelmingly passed by the people of Alaska in 1994. The V.I.N.E. computer system will enhance the Department of Corrections relationship with the families and victims of violent crimes.

I urge your support and prompt passage.



VINE™ System Facts

VINE™ is a fully automated service that alerts victims upon the release of an inmate and provides vital custody status information via the telephone.

How VINE™ works

A centralized computer system located in Louisville, Kentucky constantly monitors inmate activity at each jail or prison site.

When an inmate has a change in status, VINE™ reacts immediately to contact all registered victims. Telephone calls continue for 24 hours or until a successful notification is verified.

How Victims Register

Victims register with VINE™ by calling a local access telephone number and following the prompts given by the computer. Some communities may opt to have victims automatically registered by the arresting agency involved with the case.

A personal identification number (PIN) for each victim is requested by VINE™.

The PIN number, entered by a victim after a notification, confirms a successful contact.

Benefits of Implementing VINE™ for a Victim

Registered persons are automatically called by VINE™ within ten minutes of an inmate transfer or release.

Vital inmate information is continuously available through the VINE™ information hotline.

VINE™ allows for confidential information exchange. Victims do not have to reveal their identity when registering or accessing inmate status.

Victims can register alternate telephone numbers with VINE™ and can easily enter a new telephone number if there is a change of address.

For Prosecutors and Jail Administrators

VINE™ has letter generating capabilities and is available in multiple languages.

The centralized call center is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Notification is efficient and reliable.

All telephone calls and letters are documented.

A complete audit trail of VINE™ activity is readily available.

A VINE™ program can be customized to meet the needs of each community.



VINE™ System Features

VINE™ is a ground breaking system for Victim Assistance and Notification Programs around the country. It's current design includes features such as:

- **Full integration** with the existing Jail or Prison Information System. This means no additional workload for data input personnel.
- **Automated Dial in Query of Inmate Status.** The system will support an incoming line which allows a victim to query the status of an inmate.
- **Automated Registration of Victims** via any telephone using a combination of advanced Voice Recognition technology. This method is far superior to those requiring alphanumeric data to be typed into the telephone handset.
- **Letter Generation** for notifying victims of upcoming parole board hearings and other emergency situations.
- **Advanced Voice Recognition Technology.** This feature increases the usability of the system by allowing access to *30% of the population which do not have a touch tone telephone.* All users will find this registration approach much simpler and quicker.
- **Automated Notification** to two different phone numbers per victim. This function will provide an automated voice message once contact is made.
- **Message Confirmation** ensures that the message was delivered to the proper person.
- **Complete Audit Reports** which display daily activity on a per day or per case basis. These audit reports will be quickly recalled to a printer or CRT to review the systems performance.
- **Foreign Language Capabilities** available upon request.



General VINE™ Information

Interactive Systems was formed in 1992 to develop automated systems utilizing computer technology and telephone equipment.

In January of 1994 Interactive Systems cooperated with Jefferson County officials to study automated technology and victim notification.

In January of 1995 due to the success of the VINE™ program, Interactive Systems reformatted to focus exclusively on the VINE™ system and automated notification. A dba (doing business as), The VINE™ Company, was selected as the new name.

VINE™ program cost includes a low start-up fee and a monthly service component. Several funding options, including state and federal grants, are available.

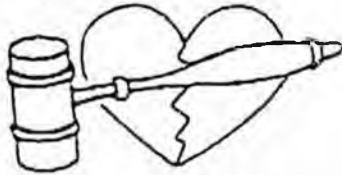
Cost is based on inmate population, notification needs and optional parameters. Each program is unique and developed specifically for each community.

All inmate information accessed through VINE™ is public information. VINE™ differs from other notification programs by providing an automated, rather than manual, method of victim notification.

Currently, the VINE™ Company has contracts with over 150 counties in over 12 states including Kentucky, New Jersey, Texas, California, Michigan, Georgia and Florida.

The VINE™ system received national recognition as the only automated program for victim information and notification.

VICTIMS



for Justice 619 East Fifth Avenue • Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 278-0977 - Fax: (907) 258-0740

March 11, 1997

The Honorable Senator Lyda Green, Chair
State Affairs Committee
State Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Green:

I am writing to you to urge you to support the swift passage of Senate Bill 25 and Senate Bill 26: *An Act relating to authorizing the Department of Corrections to provide an automated victims notification and prisoner information system.*

Alaskan families and victims of violent crime deserve to be recognized and assisted by Alaska's Department of Corrections. In fact, in 1994, the people of Alaska overwhelmingly passed at the state level, the Victims' Bill of Rights. This Constitutional amendment makes *explicit* the *right* to be *informed, present and heard* at the same proceedings where the accused or convicted offenders have such rights. As you are aware, the Alaska Department of Corrections has statutory duties relating to crime victims, ranging from the notification of parole hearings; transfers to other facilities; an escape or release from custody to supervising restitution compliance. The Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) computer system will enhance Alaska's Department of Corrections relationship with the families and victims of violent crimes and will significantly increase compliance with the intent of these laws.

Sincerely,

Janice Lienhart

Executive Director

cc: Senator Johnny Ellis

STATE OFFICE
ALASKA PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 240106 Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0106 Phone (907) 277-0515 Fax (907) 272-5355



January 17, 1997

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Anchorage

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Senator Johnny Ellis
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Ellis,

On behalf of the Alaska Peace Officers Association, I would like to thank you for introducing Senate Bills 25 and 26 relating to authorizing the Department of Corrections to provide an automated victim notification and prisoner information system and appropriations for the same. At a recent meeting of the APOA State Board, we decided to unanimously support this legislation. We believe that the better the communications are between Corrections, departments, municipalities and victims, the better the prevention of prisoner-related problems.

We encourage you to call on us when there are hearings on these bills, so that we may testify about the need for this legislation. If you need assistance as you shepherd these bills through the legislative process, please call me at 451-5316, or our business manager, Joseph Young at 277-0515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Corkill".

Michael Corkill
APOA State President

Municipality
of
Anchorage



P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
Telephone: (907) 343-4250

Rick Mystrom, Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF LAW
Office of the Prosecutor
420 L Street, Suite 100

March 19, 1997

Senator Lyda Green
State Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Lyda Green;

I am writing on behalf of the Municipal Prosecutors Office, the Municipality of Anchorage and its people, and all the victims of domestic violence. I urge your support for the passage of Senate Bill 25 and the attendant appropriations bill.

Since the passage of the Domestic Violence Protection/Victim Protection act of 1996, particularly the amendments to AS 12.30.027, Prosecutor and District Attorney offices around the state have been charged with a responsibility we simply cannot meet this in any meaningful manner.

AS 12.30.027(d)(1) provides:

When a person is released from custody under (a) of this section (bail), from a correctional facility, the correctional facility shall notify the prosecuting authority and the prosecuting authority shall make reasonable efforts to immediately notify the alleged victim of the release, and to furnish the alleged victim with a copy of the order setting any conditions of release.

As things stand now, there simply are no reasonable efforts we can make to immediately notify the victim if a defendant makes bail at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, which is when most of these arrests are made.

An automated and statewide victim notification system is the only meaningful method of complying with AS 12.30.027. If we are to protect the victim's of domestic violence and remain at the forefront of domestic violence prosecution, this system must be implemented.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Marston Richard". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

John Marston Richard
Chief Municipal Prosecutor

cc: Senator Johnny Ellis



Bethel Police Department

P.O. Box 500 : Bethel, Alaska 99559
543-3785

February 7, 1997

Senator Lyda Green, Chair
State Affairs Committee
Room 125
State Capitol
Juneau, AK. 99801-1182

RE: Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE)
Senate Bill Nos: 25

Dear Senator Green,

The Bethel Police Department is very much in support of the VINE legislation.

We feel it is critical that the rights of the victims of violent crime are defended. It is paramount to the well-being of every victim that they be notified of and have access to obtain information regarding the activities of the violent offender.

Most sincerely,

Gary K. Eilers
Chief of Police

cc: Senator Johnny Ellis
Room 9
State Capitol
Juneau, AK. 99801-1182



City and Borough of Sitka

POLICE DEPARTMENT

304 Lake Street, Room 102 • Sitka, Alaska 99835

Lynn F. Lamm
Chief of Police

Business 747-3245
Fax 747-1075

TO: Senator Lyda GREEN, Chair
State Affairs Committee

FROM: Chief Lynn LAMM, Sitka Police Department
Director Christina MCLEOD, Sitkans Against Family Violence

DATE: 2-06-97

SUBJECT: Support for Senate Bills 25 and 26
Support for House Bills 47 and 48
VINE

NH

Senator GREEN-

The Sitka Police Department and Sitkans Against Family Violence would like to jointly express our support for this legislation.

Automatic notification would be beneficial to the domestic violence victim and the police. Immediate notification would be very beneficial to the victim allowing sufficient time to prepare themselves and family members for release of an inmate. For the police it would mean timely notification to the victim and another method of notification besides the current methods outlined in the Domestic Violence Prevention and Victim Protection Act of 1996.

We urge passage of this legislation on behalf of victim's rights in domestic violence cases and as a continuation of legislative efforts toward prevention of domestic abuse.

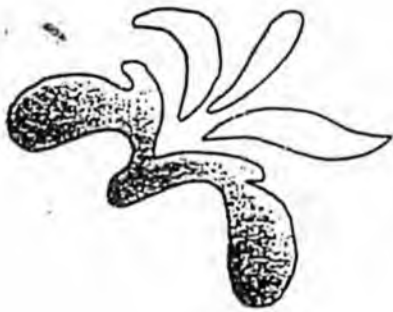
Lynn LAMM, Chief of Police
Sitka Police Department

Christina MCLEOD, Director
Sitkans Against Family Violence

Senator Ellis-

This is a courtesy copy for your information

Sgt. Allen
SPD



WOMEN IN CRISIS

Counseling and Assistance

717 Ninth Avenue • Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 452-2293 • Fax: 452-2613 • 1-800-478-7273

February 12, 1997

Senator Lyda Green, Chair
State Affairs Committee
State Capitol, Room 125
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Green:

I am writing in support of SB 25, "An Act relating to authorizing the Department of Corrections to provide an automated victim notification and prisoner information system" and SB 26, providing funding.

Passage of and funding for SB 25 will allow for greater safety for victims of violent crimes. It would save victims from physical harm and save lives. It stands to reason that the sooner this bill becomes law, the sooner can this protection be provided. Therefore, I urge you to facilitate both bills' passage this session.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sandy Samaniego
Executive Director

cc: Senator Johnny Ellis

would ultimately provide more jobs and income evenly across the board. By the way, I am a conservative Republican.

— Dennis Adamson
Anchorage

Cuts to Film Office costly

I own and operate one of Alaska's major stock photography agencies which represents 58 photographers. For the past seven years we have provided numerous award-winning photos for the state Film Office's advertising campaigns (five billboards, several location handbooks, direct mail pieces and many ads in movie trade magazines). The Film Office has been a great client over the years.

If the proposed budget cuts go through, it will have a lasting and negative effect on many small businesses and one of Alaska's largest industries — tourism. Last year it cost the state of Alaska \$261,000 to operate the Film Office and it generated an income of nearly \$3 million. Can we afford not to take advantage of this free advertising that promotes Alaska?

The Film Office has a proven record that it is a prime investment, generating income for Alaskans and also for the state of Alaska. With the proposed budget cuts, we lose and the state of Alaska loses.

— Ken Graham, owner
Ken Graham Agency
Anchorage

Drug testing violates privacy

The willingness of people to permit themselves to be degraded through arbitrary employment drug testing is appalling. Indiscriminate drug testing violates people's privacy and requires them to prove their "innocence" even though there is no reason to believe that their job performance is being impaired by drug use or anything else. Admirably, the Anchorage police and firefighters have the self-respect to oppose such testing.

Drug testing is ostensibly done to promote job safety and performance. But drug tests do not measure job performance; they generally only test for metabolites, which are what is left over in the body after it uses up a drug. Except with respect to alcohol, drug tests generally don't even determine whether a

person presently has a particular drug in the body. A person could be under the influence of an intoxicating drug at the time of a drug test and yet have the test result be negative.

The only rational way to promote job performance and safety is through performance testing. Such tests are even used for astronauts in the space program. With them, an employer can determine whether an employee is functioning safely or impaired by sickness, fatigue, injury, emotional distress or intoxication.

Drug testing is too limited and unreliable to be used to promote job performance and public safety. The invasion of privacy involved such testing should be considered to be unacceptable. We should support all efforts to eliminate workplace drug testing and, if some kind of testing is desirable and necessary, replace it with performance tests.

— Alex Vasauskas
Palmer

Victims need notification

For the tens of thousands of victims of domestic violence in Alaska, there is no system in place to let them know when their perpetrator is released from jail. Often, the first time a victim knows that their assailant has been released is when he shows up at their door.

Perpetrators who were jailed for beating their spouse may use their children as pawns in order to "get back" at the victim. If the perpetrator is the biological father of a victim's child, he may take the child from school, or day care without the other parent's knowledge, threatening to harm or kidnap the child.

If victims knew that their perpetrator was being released from jail, they could get a restraining order and notify their child's school or day care about the potentially dangerous situation.

Every week, our agency hears stories about how victims, who are supposed to be protected by the law, are betrayed by a system that lacks follow-through.

Sen. Johnny Ellis and Rep. Allen Kempen have introduced a bill that could change all this. Senate Bill 25 and the companion bill, House Bill 47, would allow the Department of Corrections to set up a system to notify vic-

tims whenever a perpetrator's status changed. If an inmate is released, transferred, posts bail or escapes, registered victims would be notified through an automated system within minutes.

The system, called Victim Information and Notification Everyday, gives victims time to take life-saving steps. VINE is being used in Kentucky, New Jersey, Texas, California, Michigan, Georgia and Florida — helping victims and their children stay out of harm's way. Please call your legislator or write a letter in support for SB 25 and HB 47. The successful passage of this bill may mean the difference between life and death for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

— Angelica Rosales
domestic violence supervising counselor
Alaska Women's Resource Center

HMOs ripping off Medicare

Medicare rip-off! I recently received a newspaper clipping from a Southern California newspaper concerning a merger of two HMOs. I am a little familiar with the FHP HMO since my foster mother was enrolled until a few weeks ago. The clipping is too long to quote entirely, but here are a few highlights that bother me:

"Top bosses would qualify for huge payouts after HMO merger. A handful of senior executives at FHP International Corp. stands to get huge going-away paydays ... At the top of the list is FHP chief executive Wescott W. Price III who will receive a \$1.5 million golden handshake if he walks away, as expected. Price's contract calls for him to get three times his annual \$500,000 base salary if he loses his job because of a 'change in control' ... Price also owns nearly 400,000 shares of FHP's common stock. He'll receive \$7 million in cash for those shares and an equal amount of Pacificare stock.

"FHP Chairman Jack R. Anderson will get the biggest payday, turning in his common and preferred FHP stock for \$53.7 million in cash and an equal amount of Pacificare stock. And Richard M. Burdge, an FHP director, retired Cigna Corp. executive and former president of the American Stock Exchange, will get \$15.3 million in cash and an equal amount of Pacificare shares for his FHP stock."

alive, i.e., the state of Alaska vs. Venetie.

We Natives don't read in the newspapers nor do we see on television anything about what is really happening to us, though I know, and the "nouveau riche PFD Alaskans" are in denial about their role in all of this, while we "breathlessly" await an Alaska vs. Venetie decision for the next 20 years or so — at the rate we've been dying, please, Natives want to live! We are in constant peril from the state. We are not "merely" caretakers of the land. We Natives have kept our Alaska under our intrinsic watch for three ice ages or so — wasn't it always beautiful and clean here?

My advice to you, to whom this may apply — everyone — make sure those lands you left in disgust are cleaned up and go home. On your way out clean up Alaska.

— Evelyn Hash
Gakona

This alternative school works

With the March 28 lottery date for Anchorage School District's alternative school programs approaching, I would like to publicize a program that is a success in every sense of the word — the Government Hill Spanish Immersion Program. Alternative schools are often criticized for being elitist, unfair or divisive. I think it's important to recognize that they can work and be inclusive — even in school-within-a-school settings such as our own.

The recent Government Hill World's Fair is an example. With the help and support of our sponsors — First National Bank of Anchorage, Tastee Freez, Tesoro 7-Eleven and National Bank of Alaska, to name a few — we transformed the school into an international festival. Our many minority families participated. Korean women wore flowing han bok dresses, an Alaska Native puppet theater group entertained, and Latino parents cooked tostados and fried plantains. We shared and explored each other's cultures throughout the day.

By celebrating and understanding our differences, we discover that we are not so different after all.

Government Hill is proof that alternative programs work. Not only do they promote educational excellence, but when done right, they bring people together.

— Kathryn Gerlek,
Anchorage

Victims for Justice

March 1997

Page 8

Victims for Justice

"Safe Neighborhood" Crime Initiatives

By Pearlene Hernandez-Villa
UAA Social Work Practicum Student
doing her internship with VFJ

BILL TRACKING STATUS

As of March 12, 1997

HB 5

"An Act relating to prosecution of minors for criminal violations; and amending Rule 3(a), Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure."

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE(S)
KELLY, Ogan

Current Status: (House) Judiciary Status
Date: 1/13/97 then Finance.

As of January 13, 1997, House Bill 5 has not had its first committee hearing. HB 5 is not expected to move during this session. Sponsors are putting their focus on HB 6 AND HB 16 in the juvenile crime area. Both HB 6 and HB 16 opens up confidentiality of juvenile crime offenders, a key component for victims of crime.

HB 6

"An Act amending laws relating to the disclosure of information relating to certain minors."

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE(S)
KELLY, Theriault, Vezzey, Ogan, Dyson,
Phillips, Ryan

Current Status: (House) Finance Status
Date: 2/21/97

As of February 21, 1997, House Finance has heard House Bill 6 three times. HB 6 will be heard by House for the fourth time on March 20, 1997. HB 6 has been in Health Education and Social Service (HES) and Judiciary committee and passed out of committee.

HB 7

CSHB 7 Judiciary

"An Act authorizing establishment of community dispute resolution centers to foster the resolution of disputes between juvenile offenders and their victims, and providing immunity from civil suits for youth courts and for members of the boards of directors, employees, volunteers, and members of youth courts."

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE(S)
PORTER, Green, Croft, Rokeberg, James,
Kubina, Bunde, Kemplen, Berkowitz, Or-
gan
SENATOR(S) Wilken

Current Status: (Senate) Judiciary Status
Date: 2/17/97 then Finance

House Bill 7 is in Senate Judiciary, it has

passed out of the House and is in Senate Judiciary Committee at this time.

House votes:

YEAS: 34 NAYS: 0 EXCUSED: 6 ABSENT:
0

HB 9

CSHB 9 (Finance) AM

"Victims Right to be Present at Trial."

"An Act relating to the rights of crime victims and victims of juvenile offenses; relating to the collection by victims of restitution from prisoners; relating to the definition of incapacitated for sexual offenses; creating the crime of interfering with a report of a crime involving domestic violence; relating to mental examinations of victims in criminal prosecutions; relating to the safety of victims, other persons, and the community in setting bail or conditions of release; relating to access to certain records of the Violent Crimes Compensation Board; amending Rule 6, Alaska Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rules 404 and 615, Alaska Rules of Evidence, and Rule 3, Alaska Delinquency Rules; and providing for an effective date."

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE(S)
PORTER, Green, Croft, Kubina, Kemplen

Current Status: (S) Judiciary Status
Date: 3/10/97 then Finance.

House Bill 9 has passed out of House and is in Senate Judiciary since March 10, 1997.

House votes

Passed on reconsideration YES 31 NAYS 6
EXCUSED 2 ABSENT 1

URGENT UPDATE - We have just received word Senator Robin Taylor is holding up HB 9. PLEASE CALL the legislative office at 258-8111 and send a public opinion message to Senator Taylor urging him to support HB 9. Crime victims' constitutional rights are in jeopardy!

HCR 4

Relating to records generated and maintained by the Department of Health and Social Services.

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE(S) KELLY,
Phillips, Dyson, Ryan, Barnes

Current Status: (House) Finance Status Date:
2/21/97

House Concurrent Resolution 4 is in House Finance since February 21, 1997. House Finance is going to hear in committee on March

20, 1997.

SB 25 HB 47

"An Act relating to authorizing the Department of Corrections to provide an automated victim notification and prisoner information system."

VINE™, provides critical inmate information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the automated telephone system. VINE allows for a confidential exchange of information. Victims may access information on a prisoner through the use of a personal identification number, and they may easily enter new contact numbers.

Senate Bill 25 is still waiting to be heard in Senate State Affairs Committee since January 13, 1997, and it has not had a hearing committee as of yet.

House Bill 47 has been in House State Affairs since January 13, 1997, and it has not had a committee hearing as of yet.

SB 25 Sponsor(s): SENATOR ELLIS, Donley
HB 47 Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE
KEMPLEN

SB 26 and HB 48

"An Act making a special appropriation for an automated victim notification system; and providing for an effective date."

The sum of \$250,000 shall be appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Corrections for an automated victim notification system for fiscal years 1997 and 1998.

Senate Bill 26 has been in Senate State Affairs since January 13, 1997. It has not had a committee hearing as of yet.

House Bill 48 has been in House State Affairs since January 13, 1997, and it has not had a committee hearing as of yet.

Sponsor(s): SENATOR ELLIS, Donley

Both SB 25 and HB 47 need victims who would be willing to testify or submit written testimony regarding their experience with not being notified when their attacker was released. If you are interested in testifying or providing written testimony please contact:

Senator Lyda Green, Senate State Affairs,
State Capitol, Rm 105, Juneau, AK 99801-
1182 (800)565-3743

Representative Jeannette James, House State
Affairs, Rm 102, Juneau, AK 99801-1182.