



February 23, 2017

The Honorable Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Chair
The Honorable Gabrielle LeDoux, Vice-Chair
House State Affairs Committee
Alaska State House of Representatives
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

by email: Representative.Jonathan.Kreiss-Tomkins@akleg.gov
Representative.Gabrielle.LeDoux@akleg.gov

**Re: HB 112 – Sexual Assault by Peace Officers
ACLU Letter of Support**

Chair Kreiss-Tomkins and Vice-Chair LeDoux:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support for HB 112, relating to sexual assault by a peace officer against a person who is a victim, witness, or perpetrator of a crime.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska represents thousands of members and activists throughout the State of Alaska who seek to preserve and expand individual freedoms and civil liberties guaranteed under the United States and Alaska Constitutions.

To the extent that officers would abuse the imbalance of power between themselves and targets of investigations, HB 112 clarifies the uncontroversial and important protections from that abuse. Law enforcement has no reason to use sexual penetration or to engage in sex activities during prostitution or sex-trafficking investigations. The state's law enforcement entities should be sowing trust among these most vulnerable members of our communities and HB 112 supports that goal.

Passage of HB 112 would clarify that police misconduct and sexual assault is not permissible and would prevent breaking down relationships between police and victims and demeaning public trust in the authorities. Alaska is not alone in redressing this issue; Hawaii passed a similar law closing an express loophole in 2014.¹

¹ Haw. Rev. Stat. § 351-32.

We hope that the House State Affairs Committee will note our support for HB 112. Please feel free to contact me should you require any additional information. Thank you again for the opportunity to share our thoughts.

Sincerely,



Tara A. Rich
Legal & Policy Director

cc: Representative Chris Tuck, Representative.Chris.Tuck@akleg.gov
Representative Adam Wool, Representative.Adam.Wool@akleg.gov
Representative Chris Birch, Representative.Chris.Birch@akleg.gov
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