

Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brent Johnson, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

FROM: Peter Micciche, Mayor *PM*
Cindy Ecklund, Assembly Member *CE*

DATE: October 26, 2023

SUBJECT: Resolution 2023-078 Supporting House Bill 68 and Senate Bill 66 Relating to Human and Sex Trafficking (Mayor, Ecklund)

According to available studies, law enforcement statistics, news articles and multiple state task forces or Governor's councils formed to look at the issue, human and sex trafficking is a growing and highly profitable illicit activity. Alaska is not immune from the problem. The Kenai Peninsula is not immune from the problem. In fact, the State of Alaska has one of the highest rates of trafficking per capita in the U.S.

Per the Kenai Peninsula Homeless Coalition's 5-year strategic plan, in 2019, there was an estimated 895 homeless individuals on the Kenai Peninsula with 261 of those being our youth. Within 48 hours on average, 1 out of 3 runaway children are solicited for sex, and the common age of recruitment is thirteen – fifteen years old and the average lifespan once recruited is seven years. Nearly 45% of trafficked youth were identified as Alaska Native, making them disproportionately affected by these heinous crimes as one people group

Governor Mike Dunleavy created the Governor's Council on Human and Sex Trafficking to combat the exploitation of all Alaskans from trafficking crimes, on December 14th, 2021, and the Council has been meeting since then and published a comprehensive report in 2022 outlining the most recent trafficking crime data in Alaska. On February 8th 2023, Governor Dunleavy filed and introduced House Bill 68 and Senate Bill 66, short title: Crime of Sex/Human Trafficking, which increases penalties for all forms of trafficking crimes and provides legal protections for trafficking victim.

This Resolution supports and urges the passage of HB 68 and/or SB 66.

Your consideration is appreciated.