

Alaska State Legislature



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House Passes Sexual Assault Resolution **Agreement Struck on HCR 7, Seeking to Raise Public Awareness**

(JUNEAU) – The Legislature today gave final approval to a resolution aimed at raising public awareness of sexual abuse and sexual assault in Alaska, when the House concurred with Senate changes to House Concurrent Resolution 7.

HCR 7, sponsored by Rep. Kevin Meyer (R-Anchorage), designates April 2001 as “Sexual Assault Awareness Month.” The resolution is designed to raise public consciousness about sexual assault and its impacts on women, children and men. It is also intended as a way to acknowledge the efforts of counselors and advocates engaged in the struggle against such crimes.

“Sexual assault is one of the most devastating crimes in our society,” said Meyer. “Alaska has the highest per-capita occurrence of sexual assault in the nation. While Alaskans work to provide quality services, assistance, support and advocacy for victims of sexual assault, there is a profound need for greater awareness, prevention and educational measures.”

Meyer said the month would provide an occasion for schools, community organizations and individuals to work to increase public awareness of the prevalence of this problem in Alaska, and to consider ways they can mobilize individually and collectively to fight it.

Because some members of the Senate expressed concern over having people other than parents teaching their elementary school-age children about sexual assault, the Senate amended the resolution to focus in-school outreach efforts on secondary school students.

“The House approved this amended version of the resolution to balance the need for raising awareness of sexual assault with parents’ rights to present age-appropriate material to their children,” Meyer said.

By voting to agree to the Senate’s change, the House gave final approval to the resolution and sent it to the governor for his signature.

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