

Alaska State Legislature



Interim:
716 West 4th Ave., Suite 350
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2133
(907) 269-0117

Session:
State Capitol Building, Room 118
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-4968

Representative Norman Rokeberg

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 3, 2001

CONTACT: Rep. Norman Rokeberg, (907) 269-0117

Alcohol Abuse Prevention Bills Become Law Legislation Signed on Drunk Driving Victims Remembrance Day

(JUNEAU) – Several major elements of the Republican-Led Legislative Majority’s program to fight alcohol abuse and drunken driving became law today.

“By passing these bills into law, the Legislature acted on behalf of Alaskans who rose up to say that enough is enough – people need to think before they drink, and not drink and drive,” said Rep. Norman Rokeberg (R-Anchorage), a leading advocate for the new laws. “Alaskans should be held responsible, and not abuse alcohol.”

Rokeberg attended the ceremony where the governor signed four bills introduced and passed by Republicans:

- **House Bill 200** establishes July 3 as Drunk Driving Victims Remembrance Day in Alaska, to preserve the memories of Alaskans killed or otherwise victimized by drunken drivers, and to remind all drivers of the terrible risks of drinking and driving.
- **House Bill 132** lowers to 0.08 percent blood alcohol content the level at which a driver is presumed to be impaired, effective Sept. 1; and lowers the amount of alcohol a person may possess before police may presume the owner is a bootlegger.
- **House Bill 172** establishes pilot “therapeutic courts” offering Alaskans convicted of substance abuse crimes medication to dull the craving for alcohol, intensive outpatient alcoholism treatment, and frequent monitoring by the court to ensure they follow a detailed treatment plan and stay dry, in exchange for reduced sentences or parole under electronic monitoring.
- **House Bill 179** redirects state law to make sure courts can prosecute minors who consume alcohol, imposing escalating fines and community service requirements ranging from up to \$600 and 24 hours service for a first offense, to a maximum of \$1,000 in fines, 90 days in jail, suspension of the offender’s drivers license and mandatory treatment for a third offense.

House Bills 132, 179, and 200 were sponsored by Rokeberg as chair of the House Judiciary Committee, while House Bill 172 was sponsored by House Speaker Brian Porter (R-Anchorage).

“This is the strongest effort to fight substance abuse Alaska has seen in more than a decade, and it’s only fitting that it become law on a day we have set aside to remember victims of drunken driving,” Rokeberg said.

###

Broadcasters note: Comments are available on the Majority Actuality Line 1-800-478-6540