

HB 348

Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to the rights of certain victims of crime to receive information about the office of victims’ rights.”

When a person is the victim of a crime, it is often difficult to know who to talk to for help. It is instances where the victim didn't know there were advocates to assist them through the process that prompted the drafting of [House Bill 348](#). The legislation requires police and prosecutors to notify victims about the Alaska Office Of Victims' Rights.

The Alaska Office Of Victims' Rights (OVR) was created by the legislature in 2002 to protect and advance the rights of crime victims and to investigate complaints that their rights under the constitution and laws of the state have been denied to them in their dealings with criminal justice adult and juvenile agencies of the state.

Experience has taught us that too often victims learn about the OVR only after a case has worked its way through the system rather than at the beginning of that process when OVR lawyers and support staff can be more vigilant and effective advocates of victims' rights as a case unfolds. HB 348 requires police and prosecutors to provide a printed brochure about the OVR to victims of felony and other serious crimes up front -- upon first contact and without request by the victim. OVR will absorb the cost of the brochures.