

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 7

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Introduced: 4/26/18

Referred: Education

A RESOLUTION

1 **Recognizing the importance of safe school environments for students, staff, and their**
2 **families; and supporting improvement of school safety measures.**

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:**

4 **WHEREAS** students and staff have the right to attend schools that are safe and free
5 from violence and harassment, and their families deserve to send them to school without fear
6 they will be harmed; and

7 **WHEREAS** a safe school environment that ensures the physical and emotional safety
8 of students and staff creates the conditions necessary to foster academic achievement; and

9 **WHEREAS** a school environment that is free from bullying, harassment,
10 discrimination, and violence is most conducive to learning and academic success; and

11 **WHEREAS** Alaska is a diverse state with different financial, cultural, emotional, and
12 safety needs in each school district; and

13 **WHEREAS** the responsibility of keeping students and staff safe is a shared
14 responsibility that cannot be borne by public schools alone; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in fiscal year 2014, the legislature appropriated \$21,000,000 for school
16 safety upgrades for school districts; and

1 **WHEREAS** the Department of Education and Early Development plans to conduct an
 2 analysis of school safety efforts and gaps in school safety to create a statewide profile of
 3 current school safety and emergency response preparedness that will be instrumental in
 4 informing future expansion of school safety efforts; and

5 **WHEREAS** the Department of Education and Early Development is in the initial
 6 stages of planning a statewide school safety convention in the fall of 2018 for key
 7 stakeholders, with representatives of all 54 school districts planning to attend; and

8 **WHEREAS** the most effective approach to creating a safe school environment will
 9 involve a comprehensive, coordinated effort that incorporates school-wide, district-wide,
 10 community-wide, and statewide strategies; and

11 **WHEREAS** a support network of educators and support staff, students and their
 12 families, public health care providers, public safety officers, and tribal and community leaders
 13 is required to develop, implement, and monitor policies and programs that foster and support
 14 a positive school climate that is free from harassment and violence;

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives recognizes the importance of a
 16 safe school environment for students, staff, and their families; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives supports local schools,
 18 districts, students, teachers, support staff, and communities working together to implement
 19 culturally appropriate measures that prioritize student safety and school environments where
 20 students have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive; and be it

21 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House of Representatives supports

22 (1) increased training for school employees and enhanced coordination with
 23 law enforcement agencies and first responders to ensure appropriate responses to incidents of
 24 violence in schools;

25 (2) enhanced mental health and support services, including nurses, counselors,
 26 school psychologists, and public safety officers, to help create the positive and nurturing
 27 social and emotional school environment that is key to keeping our schools as safe as
 28 possible; and

29 (3) increased access to school safety measures, including school safety
 30 infrastructure, public safety officers, emergency planning, and other security measures
 31 designed to protect students and staff at school and allow students to focus on learning.