

S. 2364, Bree's Law
A Bill to Reduce and Prevent the Incidence of Teen Dating Violence

Background: Teen dating violence is a type of intimate partner violence that can include physical violence, sexual violence, and stalking. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 1 in 11 female and 1 in 14 male high school students have reported experiencing physical dating violence in the last year.¹ Many teens do not seek help from parents or teachers. Alaska is the most dangerous state in the United States for women, with over 50 percent of all Alaskan women having either been sexually or physically assaulted.² Alaska has one of the highest rates of femicide committed by men in the country.³ On June 26, 2014, the life of Breanna (Bree) Moore, a 20-year old young woman with a bright future, was cut short with an act of violence. Bree was fatally shot by her boyfriend in a fit of dating violence in Anchorage. The murder of Bree Moore was more than an isolated tragedy. It was yet another sad moment for Alaska, in an ongoing domestic violence epidemic that permeates Alaskan culture and tears away at the fibers that bind families and communities.

Bree's story focused attention on the epidemic of teen dating violence in Alaska. Bree's parents, Butch and Cindy Moore, strongly advocated and passed *The Alaska Safe Children's Act*, aka *Bree's Law*, signed into law, July 2015. In 2018, Butch and Cindy passed a second law: *Bree's Law*, providing funding and creating Alaska's Teen Dating Violence Awareness Prevention curricula known as *Bree's Law Education*. Because of Bree's Law, within three years of Bree's murder, teen dating violence was significantly reduced, nearly in half. Bree's parents hope to reduce dating violence nationwide with this federal companion Bree's Law Bill.

9-year-old Amber Hagerman was abducted while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas and was later found murdered. When we hear the words *Amber Alert*, we know to search for a missing child. Bree's story is powerful, one to which the majority of youth can relate while they are learning about healthy relationships that teaches practicing supportive communication skills, recognize the warning signs of an abusive relationship, and where to go for help. We can do this by just using two simple words, 'Bree's Law'.

Bree's Law

This federal legislation would:

- Authorize a grant program for the purpose of improving adolescent health, including grants to train health care providers to reduce the incidence of teen dating violence and projects that increase awareness of abuse and prevention.
- Develop education and programs relating to teen dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention, which will be made available free-of-charge to high school and middle school students throughout the United States.
- Create an interagency working group to address teen dating violence composed of various Department of Health and Human Services agencies, the Department of Education, and the Department of Justice, and would include parents of teen dating violence victims and survivors of teen dating violence
- Require an annual report to the Secretary of Health and Human Service detailing recommendation to reduce and prevent teen dating violence.

Questions? Please contact Anna Dietderich at Anna.Dietderich@murkowski.senate.gov

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/teendatingviolence/fastfact.html>

² <https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/nation/2019/06/25/deadliest-state-women-alaska-rape-and-murder-too-common-domestic-violence-rape-murder-me-too-men/1500893001/>

³ <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/departments/justice-center/alaska-justice-information-center/publications.cshtml>