

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

News from the House Majority

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Chenault Sponsors Bill to Help Combat Elder Abuse

(ANCHORAGE) – Representative Mike Chenault (R-Nikiski) has introduced legislation in the House of Representatives to create a division within the Office of Public Advocacy to examine cases of elder abuse.

HB 399 would give the division the authority to investigate and turn over for prosecution, cases which fall under existing fraud statutes.

“In recent years the Kenai Peninsula has seen several cases of senior citizens being ‘fleeced,’ defrauded or otherwise taken advantage of financially by individuals, sometimes even relatives. Creating an office to look at these issues is a step that the Legislature can take to protect senior citizens in Alaska,” said Representative Chenault.

Chenault went on to say, “Often times our senior citizens are embarrassed or too ashamed to ask for help when preyed upon by people they trust. This office will remove the stigma, which goes along with asking for help. It also insures our seniors can live safe happy lives without suffering financial hardship at the hands of those they may have trusted. After a lifetime of hard work and savings seniors should be able to experience the ‘Golden Years’ while healthy and able. House Bill 399 sends a clear signal that Alaskan Senior Citizens will be protected from dishonorable individuals.”

The most egregious case of senior abuse on the Peninsula is recent and is gratefully now in the hands of the Office of Public Advocacy.

HB 399 has been referred to the House State Affairs Committee.

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