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## Senator Rick Halford District M

**For Immediate Release: April 9, 2001**  
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### **Senate Passes Bill to Expand DNA Registry**

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska Senate passed legislation on Monday that will increase the chance of finding violent criminals through DNA registries.

Senate Bill 99, sponsored by Sen. Rick Halford (R-Chugiak) would expand the state’s convicted offender DNA registry to include samples from those convicted of burglary. DNA samples are now taken only from individuals convicted of a violent felony offense.

Law enforcement officers search the registry when they have DNA evidence from violent crimes, but no clear suspect. Twenty-five states and the federal government have expanded their registry to include burglary. Since many burglars go on to commit violent offenses, studies have shown that expanding the DNA registry would significantly increase the state’s chances of catching violent criminals.

Halford made it clear that the taking samples from convicted burglars is not an invasion of their private health history, and does not make the contents of their DNA public record. “The invasion of privacy these individuals face is significantly lower than the invasion of privacy and personal space that their victims experienced,” said Halford.

“Alaska Statutes clearly state that our DNA identification system is to be used for law enforcement purposes only,” said Halford. “The state only conducts the most basic testing on these samples, just enough to get the DNA ‘fingerprint.’ In addition, records in the national DNA database are protected from unauthorized access, and do not contain any personal information about the sample provider. If another law enforcement agency in the country gets a match, they must contact Alaska to find out who the person is.”

SB 99 passed with a vote of 14 – 6, and a notice of reconsideration was filed.

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**An excerpt from Sen. Donley’s floor speech in support of SB 99 is available on the Majority Actuality Line, 800-478-6540.**