

# ALASKA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL

### Sponsor Statement for HB 120 **National Crime Prevention and Privacy Act**

HB 120 is introduced to have Alaska be one of the signers of a compact between states and the federal government that facilitates the exchange of criminal history records information for non-criminal purposes.

Exchange of criminal information is not new but this compact establishes links between compact states that is more complete and clearly defined.

In recent years, the legislature has enacted statutes requiring a criminal background check for the protection of children in occupations such as schoolteachers, daycare workers, and school bus drivers. Background checks are also required for assisted living facilities in an effort to protect vulnerable adults. Title 12 Chapter 62 Criminal Justice Information System Security and Privacy is the primary statute governing state law regarding the release of criminal history record information,

This change is needed because the information provided at the national level currently lacks a significant amount of information at the state level. In his testimony last year about national criminal checks, Ken Bischoff, Director, Division of Administrative Services, Department of Public Safety in an example said that 40 percent of Oregon's criminal records are not indexed at the national level. Adopting the compact would give Alaska access to that forty percent now unavailable.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that one in five criminals has a record in more than one state. Alaska could have access to more than 55 million criminal records nationally by linking the criminal history repositories of the fifty states to the national repository.

The safeguard to abuse of this system is that in order to conduct a criminal background for the purposes of employment and/or licensing, the employer or licensor would have to obtain permission from the applicant by means of getting fingerprints.