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Major Internet Protection Bill Passes Legislature

SB 140 Protects Computer Users, Children From Internet's "Dark Side."

(Juneau) – Comprehensive Internet crime legislation passed the Alaska Legislature today. SB 140 tackles Internet related crime and privacy issues on several new fronts. Sen. Gene Therriault (R – North Pole) introduced the original bill.

SB 140 protects both children and computer users:

- Creates a felony for distributing pornography to children via the Internet.
- Mandates a felony for anyone who entices children via the Internet.
- Bans the placement of unsolicited computer pop-up ads that are placed using invasive Spyware.

“The portion of this legislation banning for the first time in Alaska certain types of malicious Spyware is the most comprehensive model in the nation. We used a nationally recognized expert, Mr. Ben Edelman, to help draft and explain the workings of the legislation. We also studied other anti-Spyware bills introduced in other states that are grappling with this issue. We wanted the best in the nation,” said Sen. Therriault.

As SB 140 picked up momentum in the legislature, Sen. Therriault saw the bill had some additional possibilities. He worked with Sen. Hollis French and Rep. Woodie Salmon to incorporate language from bills dealing with Internet pornography and solicitation of minors and mixed those elements into SB 140.

“The Internet has a very dark side. The infusion of pornography and the use of chat rooms to lure minors into unhealthy, and many times unsafe places is a very serious concern. With the addition of the new provisions, distribution of pornography to minors via the Internet will be a felony as will enticement of minors via the Internet. These additions make a much more comprehensive package,” said Sen. Therriault.

SB 140 now goes to Governor Frank Murkowski for his signature.

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