

February 15, 2022

The Honorable Senator David Wilson
State Capitol, Rm 121
Alaska Senate
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Subject: SB 182 "An Act establishing the crime of interference with emergency communications."

Dear Senator Wilson,

I have been an Emergency Dispatcher for the last 14 years and I want you to know that myself and my coworkers are strongly in support of Senate Bill 182.

Over the past few years, we have seen an increase in the number of incidents where unhappy callers have taken out their frustration on our Dispatch Center causing undue duress to an already stressful environment. There are very few days that we go through in Dispatch where people are not already upset with us because of either the outcome of a call or the time it takes law enforcement to respond to a call. People want an immediate response 24 hours a day and with the understaffed Police and Trooper Departments that is not always possible.

This last July 4th we endured more than 85 phone calls over an 8 hr period of time from an extremely hostile male expressing his anger with Dispatch and the State Troopers, many of those calls coming in during a 2-hour period of time every 8 to 25 seconds. The male was screaming and yelling profanities and threatening Dispatch and anyone who would respond to his residence. These 911 calls just added to the already overloaded Dispatchers from the almost 500 calls that we experienced that Holiday. Our Center averages about 300 calls per day on any normal summer day.

Where this was an extreme instance there are many other instances where we encounter highly volatile people who take out their frustrations on Dispatch and make it their mission to continue to harass our department by repeatedly calling 911 just to prove a point or disrupt the center. Not only does this add preventable stress to the Dispatchers but it creates a Public Safety issue by tying up multiple 911 lines where Dispatch must continuously place people on hold to answer unnecessary incoming 911 lines. Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated by myself and my coworkers. Our job is highly stressful and adding these experiences on top of our daily stress can be overwhelming to say the least.

Enacting this bill will be the first step in curtailing this type of behavior and adding another layer of protection for not only the public whom you represent but also your Dispatchers and First Responders who take care of them.

The Honorable Senator David Wilson

February 15, 2002

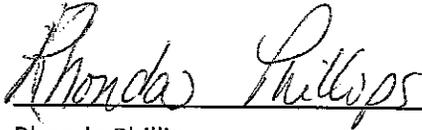
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Thank you for taking the initiative to put together this bill and bring it to the attention of the Legislature. We greatly appreciate your support in this area.

Sincerely,



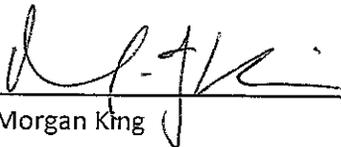
Michele Lecours
Emergency Dispatcher/Terminal Agency Coordinator
Matcom Public Safety Dispatch



Rhonda Phillips
Shift Supervisor
Matcom Public Safety Dispatch



Millie Avoleta
Shift Supervisor
Matcom Public Safety Dispatch



Morgan King
Emergency Dispatcher
Matcom Public Safety Dispatch