

Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy
3rd Floor, State Capitol
PO Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Sept 4, 2020

Re: Next Attorney General Appointee

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

We are writing to ask that you carefully consider Alaska's continued crisis with rape culture and missing and murdered indigenous women and girls as you select your next appointee for our state Attorney General. Former AG Clarkson's sexual harassment of a junior state employee was abhorrent and his actions meet the standard of termination. Clarkson should not have been allowed to resign. The undersigned organizations represent civil rights, consumer, poverty alleviation, sex worker, sex trafficking victim, health care, Alaska Native, youth, and veteran interests.

As you know, Alaska continues to hold the shameful title of "rape capital" of the United States, with nearly four times¹ the national average rate of sexual assault according to the most recent Uniform Crime Report. Sexual violence is normalized, taught, and permitted by rape culture. Rape culture has been evidenced, permitted, and propagated under Mr. Clarkson by cases like that of Justin Schneider, who was given a plea deal of no jail time after being charged with four felonies for kidnapping and strangling a woman. Or Winfred Hipp, who was charged with two unclassified felonies for kidnapping and sexually assaulting a minor, but was offered a plea deal for a Class C felony after alleging that his minor victim was a prostitute. These sorts of actions by the Department of Law send a message to rapists that they can continue to prey on Alaskans with little to no consequences.

Additionally under Mr. Clarkson, John Skidmore² was promoted from director of the criminal division to Deputy Attorney General after he fired former DA Florina Ashtiler³ for showing "bad judgment" in expressing concerns about inappropriate texts from Trooper Peronto, who was later charged with trying to sexually abuse a minor. Ms. Ashtiler's concerns about Trooper Peronto proved true, but instead of being praised and promoted, she was fired, and the man who fired her was promoted. Actions like these within the Department of Law send a message to those tasked with public safety that it is dangerous to try to address rape culture within the

¹<https://www.alaskapublic.org/2019/11/12/alaskas-rate-of-sexual-assault-is-four-times-national-average-according-to-latest-fbi-numbers/>

² <http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2019/040419-Henderson.html>

³<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.ktva.com/story/38089964/former-prosecutor-says-she-tried-to-warn-state-about-trooper-now-facing-charges-for-sexual-abuse-of-a-minor&sa=D&ust=1598424906373000&usq=AFQjCNGiUPiGVuJJJeop3EY49K6dULAQ>

law enforcement community and advantageous to cover it up. This is completely counter to public safety.

Considering the sexual assault crisis and high numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Alaska, it is critical that your next appointee for Attorney General be a person with a strong record of work against sexual assault and no history of violent charges or domestic violence restraining orders. Additionally, we recommend this position be a woman and/or person of color. Recent events have highlighted more than ever the value of representation and long standing calls for equity and justice.

Signed,

Alaska Poor People's Campaign
Alaska Public Interest Research Group
AlaskansTakeAStand
Bread Line, Inc.
Community United For Safety And Protection
Native Movement
The Alaska Center
Wellness Worthy