



## Department of Public Safety

COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE &  
SEXUAL ASSAULT  
Executive Director, Lauree Morton

450 Whittier Street  
PO Box 111200  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-1200  
Main: 907.465.4356  
Fax: 907.465.3627

### My Turn

By Lauree Morton, Executive Director,  
Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

#### **What does the \$1.5 million taken from our budget mean to Alaska's Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Prevention Work?**

When Governor Walker called the Alaska Legislature back into session, the \$1.5 million taken out of the Council on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault's budget for prevention efforts statewide was put back on the table.

The critical question for the Legislature to consider is "What does the \$1.5 million pay for today and what does it mean for domestic violence and sexual assault prevention efforts in 2016?"

**Here is the answer.**

**Dating violence/healthy relationships curricula, materials and projects** - This \$1.5 million is the funding available to develop and implement programs with young people so that they know how to recognize the danger signs, how to get help, what healthy relationships look like and how to conduct themselves in ways that honors who they are as individuals and as partners.

**Information for parents**—This \$1.5 million provides information to help parents talk to their teenagers about dating violence and sexual assault and helps support our Talk Now, Talk Often program.

**Stand Up Speak Up, Coaching Boys into Men and Girls on the Run** – This \$1.5 million supports each of these programs devoted to helping youth understand and practice how they can create a world without violence.

**Evaluation of program effectiveness** - This \$1.5 million evaluates programs we bring into the state to find out whether or not they work in Alaska/whether or not the programs are worth further investment. This funding provided a three-year evaluation of the

**Fourth R** and the evaluation showed that it does work in Alaska; it does affect how teens identify and respond to violent behaviors in relationships.

**Structured activities for men to mentor young boys in their communities**— This \$1.5 million supports **COMPASS**, the newest addition to the complement of comprehensive primary prevention efforts in Alaska. It is a program developed in Alaska by and for Alaskan men and young boys. This funding lets us not only help Alaskan men and boys, but will also help determine whether or not focused male engagement projects are effective and should be replicated across the nation.

**Communities sharing local wisdom**— This \$1.5 million gives communities across Alaska the chance to come together and share local wisdom and statewide resources to identify and develop adequate strategies to grow up a generation who will not tolerate these crimes.

**Awareness to Action** - This \$1.5 million supports **Green Dot Alaska** creating opportunities for everyday people, each one of us, to move from awareness of these crimes to action—to doing something to stop them.

### **What does having the \$1.5 million mean for Prevention Work in FY2016?**

This \$1.5 million

- Keeps this good, necessary work going
- Spreads it into more communities
- Prepares more communities to engage in prevention
- Supports evidence-based community informed actions to help people who suffer now
- Prevents future harm
- Saves lives.

Alaska is being recognized nationally and internationally for the work we are doing to interweave prevention efforts into the fabric of community life across the state. When I moved to Bethel in 1989, joining the struggle to keep Alaskan women and children safe, elders told me about a saying “healing will come from the north” and now elders are saying “people are waking up-rising.” I believe it.

Men, women, youth and children are rising up across the state saying No More. These funds support them in their efforts at the local community level, encouraging others to join with them, to reject the notion that it is inevitable that young girls will be raped in small communities as some kind of horrific rite of passage, to ignite hope from the small remaining sparks to say it can be different, and we can be safe.

Sheltering victims and working with communities to ensure there is no need to shelter victims are two different things. Sheltering victims saves lives now today—working with communities to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault saves lives tomorrow and into the future. Neither should be at the expense of the other.

**Maybe what will be done with the \$1.5 is not the question the Legislature should be asking after all. Maybe the question is why is it only \$1.5 million.**