



Return survey by October 9, 2026 to: [andvsa@andvsa.org](mailto:andvsa@andvsa.org)

Complete each answer box and select one response where choices are provided.

Name **Pepper McFarland**

Office/District Representation You Are Seeking **House District 33**

Please indicate whether you view domestic violence and sexual assault as an area of primary concern for you.

**Primary concern** Secondary concern Not on my radar

Are you familiar with local programs that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services to victims across Alaska?

Yes **Somewhat** No

If yes, how often do you interact with the domestic violence/sexual assault shelter or victim services program in your area?

Quarterly Annually **Other**

If other, please specify - **Less than quarterly**

1. The Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS) found 57.7% of Alaskan women have experienced intimate partner violence (domestic violence), sexual violence, or both. What is your vision for Alaska when it comes to reducing sexual assault and domestic violence? What steps are you prepared to take to get there?

**I believe education is the key to everything. If we can help children learn respect and boundaries, we can help minimize the damage to lives later. Examples of this would be curriculum on teen healthy dating and understanding consent. Poverty is also a major concern - people who are not prospering have trouble changing their behaviors. People struggling with alcohol and drugs also contribute to this issue and there is a need for more support services to help them get out of this cycle.**

**We need to focus on helping people help themselves, not only out of bad situations, but with being ready to learn new/better behaviors. There are a variety of public health frameworks that could be implemented to help with education, and a focus on programs and legislation that works towards bringing Alaskans out of poverty and address alcohol/drug abuse would be some ways to approach this complex issue.**

**Making sure crimes are prosecuted is also important. I'd like to dig into options for reforming our criminal justice system and I would advocate for trauma-informed training and services.**

2. What responsibilities do you believe the Legislature and other elected officials hold in advancing efforts to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault?

**The legislature can pass laws that fund education, reduce poverty, address drug/alcohol abuse, and fund and reform criminal justice programs to make sure crimes are being prosecuted fully and appropriately. The legislature made good strides with passing House Bill 239 last May.**

3. What efforts have you made at the local, state, and federal level to address domestic violence and sexual assault?

**As a teacher, I have fully supported Social, Emotional Learning at the middle and high school levels. Those programs help students learn about setting and respecting boundaries and knowing when a situation is unhealthy.**

4. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for victims' services? **Yes**  
No Maybe

4. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for domestic violence/sexual assault prevention work?

**Yes** No Maybe

5. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for legal services for victims? **Yes**  
No Maybe

6. Currently, the domestic violence response is largely a criminal justice response. Do you have ideas for other types of responses? What are they?

Education: the state should fund SEL programs at all levels of education through grants or direct state funding sources. Strengthen social supports to address poverty, alcohol, and drug abuse/addiction.

7. Do you think the penalties for sexual violence crimes in Alaska are:  
Too harsh Too soft Just right **I don't know**

What are your reasons?

I am not familiar enough with the penalties to have an educated opinion. But as a legislator, I would spend time and energy learning about it.

8. Do you think the penalties for domestic violence crimes in Alaska are:

Too harsh Too soft Just right **IDK**

What are your reasons?

I am not familiar enough with the penalties to have an educated opinion. But as a legislator, I would spend time and energy learning about it.

9. Would you support funding through the Department of Corrections to engage individuals who choose to harm their partners/families through batterers intervention programming (BIPs)? **Yes**

Do you think this is the responsibility of the government? **Yes**

Why or why not?

The purpose of government is to serve the people - our job is to protect the public - education/rehabilitation is critical to help protect people, and keep people out of jail.

What would be your ideas for providing services to people who choose to cause harm to their partners?

Part of their sentence should be to attend SEL classes created specifically for DV offenders. It should be funded by health insurance.

10. Do you believe abortion access should be legally protected for survivors of rape or incest? **Yes**  
No

11. The state of Alaska is experiencing a housing shortage statewide. This is impacting domestic and sexual violence survivors' ability to move forward with their lives. What would be your ideas to address this?

I'd like to look into grants and other funding sources to help survivors find housing, jobs, and other resources so they can live quality lives.

The state needs to provide affordable incentives for builders to build homes. One need is to move suitable state-owned land near communities into private ownership for residential development so builders can put up homes without all the permitting and surveying that slows the process. Working with those communities to make sure this is a good fit for the area is important as well.

Housing is expensive. How can we help home owners upgrade to more energy efficient systems to bring down the costs? I'd love to see the legislature focus on initiatives to help both first time home buyers and existing home owners afford upgrades that focus on energy efficiency.

12. Children are a particularly vulnerable population and may be traumatized by living with an abusive person and witnessing violence perpetrated against a parent or caretaker. What remedies might you suggest to provide protection for these children?

With my years as a teacher, I am far too aware of this and how challenging it is for children in these situations. Giving educators like myself training in ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) is one way that schools can help, as well as using trauma-informed practices.

Outside of school it is important to connect children and families to additional resources to support them long-term. We need to strengthen the systems we currently have and look at the current barriers of support. Helping children and families is the main reason I decided to run for office.

13. A sunset review is a mandatory, periodic evaluation of an executive board or commission to determine if its public benefit justifies its continued existence, funding, and legal authority. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) in the Department of Public Safety is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2028, and will be reviewed during the next Legislature. Would you support a bill to extend the Council?

Yes No Maybe

What are your reasons?

It's important that we continue to focus on domestic violence and sexual assault. Reviews are important and necessary. From what I understand, the CDVSA is working towards helping the lives of people in Alaska and I would want to see that continue.

14. Please explain any solutions you would propose to support victims and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

This is a complex issue that must be addressed from multiple angles: A focus on trauma-informed responsiveness and care, supporting domestic violence coalitions and helplines, improving housing options (both emergency and long-term) as well as social/emotional supports for victims and their families. Strengthening our legal and court system, protection orders and providing legal aid to victims, being two examples. And at a wider level - putting systems in place to support all families through better access to health care, housing, food security, and education.

Offenders must be held accountable. Victims must be protected. If elected, I want to become more informed and help improve the system. The focus of our government should be in supporting its citizens.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey.  
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