



Return survey by October 9, 2026 to: andvsa@andvsa.org

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

Name

Kate Veh

Office/District Representation You Are Seeking

AK House of Representatives, House District 7

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

Primary concern

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

Yes

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

Other

If other, please specify

As needed, on a personal basis.

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 would like our culture to be able to see how we got to the point where DV & SA are so prevalent & use that knowledge to get us out of this situation.

DV & SA didn't come from nowhere. They flow through families & communities like a current, often passed down through generations. I see this issue in historical terms, especially through colonialism. When one nation dominates another (through genocide, displacement, sexual violence), that trauma doesn't disappear. It settles into family systems & becomes a pattern.

Healing takes intention. We must learn & relearn what's healthy. In practical terms, that means funding shelters, crisis lines, & advocacy programs. It means expanding legal assistance, strengthening judicial systems, & building trust with survivors. It means preventing DV & SA in the first place through education on healthy relationships & programs addressing childhood trauma. And helping people find their way out of substance abuse & addiction.

My own ancestors were kicked out of Europe by starvation, illegitimacy, & brutality. They came to America desperate, & turned that abuse on Indigenous people. That's not an excuse. It's a pattern, & patterns can be broken.

So, what would a different response look like?

It would mean seeing where violence comes from. Recognizing it in our society, tracing its patterns, & using the practical tools we have to build up our statewide DV & SA programs. And finally healing from it . . . not just punishing it after the fact, but understanding it well enough to stop it from taking root.

What steps would I take? If elected, I would seek out knowledge from DV & SA professionals, listen to survivors, & use my vote to make things better.



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

AK lawmakers are in a real position to make a difference on DV & SA. They're called on to learn about it, pass laws to address it, teach the public about it, & deal with it head-on. That means listening to mental health experts who've done the research, & passing laws that break the cycle & help people heal.

AK legislators can invest state dollars in safety shelters, emergency hotlines, counselors, police training, & court systems. They can also fund school health curriculums that teach kids about healthy relationships & respect, so kids can recognize warning signs early on, & fund public health initiatives that teach adults what healthy family systems look like. Once domestic violence programs are up & running, the state can track the data to see what's actually making a difference. That gives lawmakers a chance to review how well their DV & SA programs are working across the state, & adjust as they go.

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

I haven't personally made efforts at the local, state, or federal level on DV & SA. That's the honest answer. What I can commit to is listening to the advocates & survivors doing this work, supporting the existing DV & SA programs, & making this a priority if elected.

3. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for victims' services? **Yes**

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

prevention work?

Yes

5. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for legal services for victims? **Yes**

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

There's a question that went around a while back . . . if you're a woman alone in the woods, would you rather run into a man or a bear? Most women said the bear. That tells you something, not about bears, but about how many women feel safer with a wild animal than with a stranger.

We have a symbol for breast cancer (the pink ribbon). Everyone knows it. I'd like to see a symbol just as recognizable for DV & SA awareness. "The Bear" would be a symbol of protection.

Here's one way that symbol could become real . . . a small bear-shaped locket with a button inside. Press it, & it sends a signal to a website that collects numbers (how many presses came from a given area). One press is one dot. No single press triggers an investigation, but a pattern of dots at one location tells a story, & that story can lead to investigation.

The goal would be to hand these safety bears out at airports, libraries, schools, stores, bus stations, harbors, & hotels (anywhere a woman might need one). And because it's satellite-based, it could work in places cell service doesn't reach such as remote islands, ships at sea, underground bunkers, or even from airplanes.

This is an idea that would need research, refinement, scrutiny, & funding before it ever became real. But AK has more remote communities than almost anywhere, & women in those communities deserve a way to be heard. "The Bear" could be one way to give every woman her own protector.

7. Do you think the penalties for sexual violence crimes in Alaska are:
Just right

What are your reasons?

Our courts take each case seriously on its own merits. Is the system perfect? No . . . there is always room for improvement. But here's what we've got in the meantime:

- 1. Judges who look at the facts & decide accordingly.**
- 2. The worst crimes earn the longest sentences.**
- 3. The state keeps tweaking its laws to fix what's broken & make things better.**

But, yeah . . . the judicial system could always be better.

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

What are your reasons?

I'm going to refer you back to the answer in the above question. Family law gets messy. Here in AK, the courts are doing their best with what they've got.

Let me turn the tables on your questionnaire, though. I'd suggest asking a different question: **"What actually helps?"**. In DV situations, nearly half of survivors don't call the police. Why? Because they worry the courts might tear their family apart without fixing the underlying problem. And many people simply don't trust the system to keep them safe over the long haul.

So here's my two cents, for whatever it's worth . . . keep the legal system we have for DV cases. But invest real money in prevention programs & in genuine help for survivors.



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)? Do you think this is the responsibility of the government? Why or why not? What would be your ideas for providing services to people who choose to cause harm to their partners?

Yes, I would support funding batterers intervention programs (BIPs), & I do see it as the gov't's responsibility to provide them to people who qualify. However, I believe batterers should have to choose the program. If someone is caught, charged, & sentenced on battery charges, & a BIP is on the table, they should get to decide (jail or the program). That choice matters. Change doesn't stick when it's forced.

I've always been inspired by stories from matrilineal societies of women who would simply set all their partner's belongings outside the door when he acted up. When a woman reaches that point, she's reached the end. The relationship is over. That story stays with me, because it reminds me that the real work is making sure women have the power & resources to walk away & to be safe when they do.

So here's how I'd set priorities . . . I believe we should fund survivor empowerment programs for DV & SA at twice the level we fund BIPs. Survivors come first, but BIPs should be funded too. If we want to stop the cycle, we have to work on both sides.

10. Do you believe abortion access should be legally protected for survivors of rape or incest? **Yes**

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?

If you're looking for a way forward on safe, healing housing, I'd recommend you *team up with housing organizations & make some noise together* for DV & SA survivors. These folks are already trying to secure housing for teachers & nurses, so y'all could work together to include more people in the big "Housing Tent". AK needs 27K new housing units over the next decade just to keep up with current demand. Housing groups are pushing state agencies to get their funding & policies pointed in the same direction so everyone's working towards the same goal. You should be in on this.

When you get to the point where you're planning the actual building, I'd recommend the following:

1. Survey DV & SA survivors about what they need when it comes to housing (Affordable rent? Safety issues? A path to ownership? Space to work from home?).
2. Hire women in the trades. Women create different buildings because they naturally scan buildings for physical safety. They design spaces that prevent people from getting cornered or isolated, & add extra exits so folks can get out of bad situations.

3. Modernize the housing model for this new century. Most homes went up last century for a family system that doesn't look like America anymore. These days people are familying-up in a variety of ways (marriage equality, single parents, single folks, elders living with younger folks for safety & for economic reasons, etc.). The old 20th century model doesn't fit anymore.

4. Explore housing stories like Umoja Village in Kenya. It's run entirely by women who were so traumatized by sexual violence that they banned men from living there (with an exception for residents' sons under 18). The village offers counseling, food, shelter, & community. It's outside-the-box thinking, & it's working.

In any case, I think the best recommendation I have for you is to listen to DV & SA survivors. They know best because they have lived through it.



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?

It's hard enough to be a kid. But when a child grows up around DV & SA, it's a whole lot tougher. They're not just carrying the trauma of what they've seen & heard, they're also facing things no child should have to face (finding a safe place to sleep & getting pulled away from family). AK owes these kids as much safety & stability as we can provide.

The state already has pieces in place . . . restraining orders, CASA volunteers, counselors, support groups, foster care, & shelters. But those pieces are stretched thin. Social workers, lawyers, foster homes, & shelters are all running short. AK's budgets for child advocacy, DV, & SA are tight & getting tighter. Federal funding is drying up. Victims of Crime Act dollars have plummeted, & pandemic funds are expiring. The AK Legislature did approve funding increases with HB 268 in 2024, but with inflation, resources are still stretched. And AK has some of the highest rates of child abuse, DV & SA in the nation. That puts enormous strain on local resources & community programs.

What's my remedy? We live in the richest nation on the planet. We have the resources we need to help these kids. At the federal level, we could elect a Congressional delegation who will vote that the ultra-wealthy & large corporations pay their fair share of taxes (to combat extreme wealth inequality & fund essential social programs like the ones vulnerable children depend on). At the state level, we could close the S-Corp tax loophole so we have the funds to benefit the people of AK, particularly the kids. In short, the gov't can do a lot, & the state can step in financially. We can't pull the rug out from under these kids when they need it most.

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

What are your reasons?

Yes, I'd support extending the Council. DV & SA isn't going to disappear by 2028, & survivors will still need intervention services. That's the reality.



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

The best thing we can do to support survivors is to **believe them & stop blaming them**. That's step one & it costs nothing. Then help them get access to a **Sexual Assault Forensic Exam** so DNA can be collected, find a lawyer in their corner, & walk them through the court system so they're not going it alone. Help with money too, because survivors miss work & lose wages as a result of SA. And when PTSD kicks in, make sure they can get to counselors & hotlines that are ready to pick up the phone.

For offenders, the goal is accountability. They should pay back what the survivor lost, face the penalties, & get the treatment & supervision that actually reduces the chance they'll do it again.

Finally, I've been saying this to every organization that sends me a questionnaire, so I'll say it to you too . . . if you're passionate about something like DV & SA, consider running for office. As a candidate, you get a platform to teach the public where you stand. If you win, you get a vote, & a vote can move your cause further than any questionnaire ever will.

**We need good people in leadership.
Please think about it.**

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey.
To keep your answers, use File > Save As (or Download in your browser).

