

Sponsor Statement

SB 33 DNA from Persons Charged with Felonies

Currently our law enforcement officials may only collect DNA samples from persons convicted of a felon or crime against another person. Within these parameters, they are limited in their ability to solve crimes as expediently or as efficiently as they could. Often the suspects arrested are also related to other unsolved crimes, and collecting their DNA upon arrest could give law enforcement important leads. And on the flip side, DNA sampling can work for the innocent who are mistakenly incarcerated, only to reveal their DNA does not match the evidence initially provided.

SB 33 would allow law enforcement to take a blood or tissue DNA sample at the time of arrest for a felony or crime against a person. By doing so they would be able to use the sample to check against other pending or unsolved crimes. If it turns out the arrest is erroneous or the conviction is reversed or dismissed, the DNA sample, by law, will be required to be destroyed and expunged from their database.

Collection of the DNA is specifically for law enforcement purposes only. Federal law imposes a fine of \$250,000 or imprisonment for one year for intentional misuse or unauthorized disclosure of DNA data, providing protection for the innocent and the erroneously accused.

With Alaska's violent and felony crimes showing a marked increase, SB 33 would give our law enforcement another tool to expeditiously convict felons and protect the public.