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Page 1: 2018 Candidate Survey

Q1 What is your name? Which office are you running for and which district do you hope to represent?

Van Lawrence is my name. I am running for State Representative to represent House District 2.

Q2 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?

My vision for Alaska is that everyone should feel safe in their home.

Steps I will take to address domestic violence and sexual assault include:

- Acknowledge the problem and believe victims
 - Fund early prevention and intervention programs
 - Maintain or increase funding for essential services like advocacy and support, legal services, housing, and treatment
 - Support and build upon the Alaska Public Action Safety Plan
 - Sponsor legislation recommended forward by the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 - Enhance victim and offender treatment programs, especially those which integrate trauma treatment into the program
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Q3 Are you familiar with local programs that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services to victims across Alaska? Have you recently visited your local domestic violence/sexual assault shelter or victim services program? What is your plan to support these programs?

I am aware of the important work of the Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living, and WICCA before them. They are an essential safety net provider in our community. I have not visited the facility because it didn't seem appropriate for a guy to be there.

I will support victims and advocate for the continuation of victim and offender services by voting to fund these essential services.

Q4 What responsibilities do you believe the Legislature and our elected officials hold in advancing efforts to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault? Would you be willing to maintain or increase the current level of funding for prevention and victims services?

As an individual I will model appropriate behavior based on respect for others and I will believe victims if concerns are brought to my attention. As a legislator, I would have a responsibility to address social problems which negatively impact quality of life, public safety, and the rights and freedoms we should all enjoy.

The current budget situation is daunting, but with a shift from an oil-based economy to increase diversification and increasing the resource revenue from Alaska's resources, more funds will become available for essential services. I will seek to increase funding for prevention and victim services.

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA)

Q5 Alaska's 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey reports that 1 in 10 Alaskan students had experienced sexual violence (being forced by anyone to do sexual acts) during the past year. Do you feel that sexual assault, sexual abuse, and dating violence prevention education should take place in our schools and in what way would you suggest enhancing efforts to educate Alaska's youth on these important subjects? Who do you think shares this responsibility?

I absolutely believe that SA/DV dating violence prevention should be part of the public education curriculum, just as much as health and sex education. Early prevention education is vital to ensuring healthy attitudes are established at a young age. In many cases, this may be the balance that keeps a young victim from becoming an offender later in life.

Protection, education, empowerment, support and accountability are needed to help people change. We need to reach them no matter where they are in the cycle. I will advocate for policies to support no tolerance for bullying and those which hold parents accountable. If prevention doesn't start at home, early intervention efforts can stop the cycle of violence before it advances. We all share in the responsibility to have safe communities, safe families and safe kids. It will take parents, schools, community members, programs, legislators and public safety officials working together under shared values to reach this goal.
