

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY WILSON HOUSE DISTRICT 2

SPONSOR STATEMENT House Bill 216

“An Act relating to fiscal notes for bills directing or resulting in the adoption, amendment, or repeal of regulations, and to the notice required for the proposed adoption, amendment, or repeal of a regulation; and providing for an effective date.”

HB 216 will accomplish two goals relating to changes to state regulations; increasing the speed with which regulations are written, and describing in plain, easy-to-understand language all regulations that are adopted, amended or repealed.

Legislators and the public have often been frustrated by the fact that months, or even years, sometimes pass between the time that a bill is passed by the legislature and the time the regulation is implemented. The result is; Alaska residents, businesses and legislators are confused about what the change means. As an example: as we were looking at the governor's House Bill 110, on oil taxes, we didn't have proof of what regulations were currently being enforced because the ACES regulations hadn't even been written – three years after we passed the legislation. The same confusion can impact individuals who are unclear about when, or if, new regulations concerning their business or recreational activities take effect. HB 216 states that any bill requiring creation or modification of any regulation must include a regulation completion deadline.

The other problem addressed by this bill is the confusion and lack of understanding of many proposed regulation changes or new additions. This confusion is caused by the legalese used to describe proposed regulations. This language, while accurately and legally describing proposed regulations, is difficult to understand by the average individual. HB 216 will require that all proposed regulation changes include descriptions, in plain English, of what the original regulation does and what the proposed change will do.

Passage of this legislation will encourage public participation in the regulation review process, as people find it easier to understand what the regulations mean to them. It will also help speed passed legislation to implementation when regulations are completed in a set, scheduled timeframe.

Based on input from committee members and the Department of Law, several amendments were passed in the State Affairs and Judiciary committees that help to clarify the language used in the bill. No substantive changes have been made to the original intent of the bill.