

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Interim:
P.O. Box 109
Wrangell, AK 99929
Phone: (907) 874-3088
Fax: (907) 874-3055



Session:
State Capitol, Room 406
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
Phone: (907) 465-3824
1-800-686-3824
Fax: (907) 465-3175

**REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY WILSON
HOUSE DISTRICT 2**

SPONSOR STATEMENT House Joint Resolution 42

“Proposing amendments to the constitution of the State of Alaska creating a transportation infrastructure fund”

HJR 42 will put a constitutional amendment before voters to change the Alaska constitution to allow a dedicated fund for Capital Transportation Projects.

In FY10 87% of our transportation budget came from the federal government. The current federal reauthorization legislation has already expired and is being extended month to month until new legislation can be passed. The new federal reauthorization bill is unfavorable for states with small populations by emphasizing mass transit and green transportation. It favors toll roads, bridges, and other transportation that are self-funding. Alaska’s small population makes these self pay options prohibitive. There aren’t enough cars on the road, people on the ferries or residents landing at our airports to generate the economy of scale that is needed.

The roads, bridges, airports, ferries and transit systems that make up our state’s transportation system are essential to mobility, commerce and economic development. This system enhances economic competitiveness, increases safety and enhances quality of life. There is a growing imbalance between system use and capacity as well as the need for new infrastructure to access our valuable resources. To insure Alaska has the infrastructure necessary to develop our resources as well as providing a quality of life for our citizens we must commit to funding transportation. Having a guaranteed amount that can be counted on from year to year will allow Alaska to tackle today’s congestion and maintenance projects as well as developing the needed access to resources and energy.

The crafters of the constitution grandfathered in dedicated funds. They realized that some funds would be needed no matter the economic or political climate. Transportation was one of the funds that predated the constitution. It lasted for several years until it was eliminated.