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Alaska State Legislature

Senate Bill 43 Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 43 will add a second verse to the Alaska Flag Song, finally giving recognition to the history of the state flag and the contributions of the wonderful Native community.

Written by the late Carol Beery Davis, the second verse of Alaska's Flag Song adds 12 lines and pays tribute to not only the aforementioned subjects but, indirectly, to the young lad who designed the flag: Benny Benson. Benson, of course, came up with the eventual design of Alaska's flag, the Big Dipper and North Star against a dark blue background.

After Davis wrote the second verse she gifted the words to the University of Alaska Foundation in 1987. The foundation has graciously said they have no objection to the state recognizing the second verse officially in statute.

Already, Fran Ulmer, the chancellor of the University of Alaska, has endorsed Senate Bill 43. Ulmer, who introduced a similar bill when she was in the Legislature, summed up a major intent of my legislation: the first verse of the song did not recognize the contributions Alaska Native people have made to the state. The bill sailed through the House of Representatives, but stalled in the Senate.

The Senate had the chance to hear the Flag Song performed with both versus as we gaveled in on the first day of session this year. I think we can all agree the second verse not only added a special touch, but highlighted music teachers' desire to have a second verse to teach their choirs.

Please join me in supporting a long overdue addition of a second verse to Alaska's Flag Song.