

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## Sponsor Statement HB 98

House Bill 98 adds two sub-sections to AS 44 Chapter 09.030 and two new sections, .032 and .034. This legislation will standardize procedures for the display, folding and an additional method for the retirement of our state flag. It is designed to ensure consistent, respectful and appropriate procedures for the handling of our state flag.

As part of Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) curriculum, "Service Learning Project", the cadets of the A. J. Dimond High School JROTC Program realized there were several issues concerning the handling of Alaska's state flag, including statutory omissions. Based on their research, the following three issues were identified and are recommended for inclusion in statute:

- 1) Proper display of the flag against a wall: Currently there is no specified proper method stipulated for displaying the flag against a wall. This has caused a great deal of confusion and non-uniformity in how institutions are displaying the flag. This lack of guidance has resulted in a random and inconsistent manner of display that shows no respect to our state flag. This legislation would address that by amending AS 44.09.030 with new subsections (d) and (e).
- 2) Proper folding of the state flag: Currently there is not a method stipulated for folding the flag, so Dimond JROTC opted to fold our state flag in a rectangle. Their motivation for establishing consistency is a passionate belief in the uniqueness of Alaska and a desire to reflect that distinctiveness in the manner we fold our flag. After much trial and error, they developed a technique that is neither complicated nor cumbersome and yet, when done properly, results with the North Star – the defining emblem of our state – being displayed on top of the flag when it is presented to another. The effect is both striking and symbolic. This legislation would address that by adding the new section 44.09.032.
- 3) Flag Retirement Ceremony: Dimond ROTC also recommended the manner of retirement also needed more ceremony when practicable. They recommended an additional statutory section that encourages that retirement of our state flag be a public ceremony under the direction of uniformed personnel representing a state or national military service or a patriotic society. However, the state flag may still be retired in a private ceremony. Under this legislation the current statute, AS 44.09.030 is amended with a new section .032.