

Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives



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House District 20

Anchorage (Mountain View, Russian Jack, East Anchorage)

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UPDATED SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB 14 - EXECUTIVE ETHICS: LEGAL FEES/FAMILY TRAVEL

House Bill 14 sets forth in statute the substance of the Attorney General's recently-enacted regulations establishing standards for (1) reimbursement of legal fees and costs for any executive branch employees accused of ethical violations, and (2) payment of travel expenses for the families of only the governor and lieutenant governor.

HB 14 differs from the regulations in two important ways. First, although both the regulations and HB 14 authorize the use of state funds to pay the travel costs of children of the governor and lieutenant governor to certain events, HB 14 would authorize this payment not just for minor children, but also for mentally and physically disabled children who are dependent on the governor or lieutenant governor for care.¹ Second, the regulations authorize the state to pay, *in advance of exoneration*, the ongoing legal fees and costs of an employee accused of an ethics violation. If the employee is not exonerated of the ethics charges, the state must then attempt to recoup the funds it advanced to defend the guilty employee. HB 14, on the other hand, would require that an employee *be exonerated* before the state could reimburse the employee for his or her fees and costs.² HB 14 cures both problems.

If you have any questions, please contact my legislative aide, Gretchen Staft, at 465-4940.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 14.

¹ See page 3, lines 5-10 of the bill.

² See page 4, lines 6-11 of the bill.