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**CS for House Bill 163 (RES) Version G
Sponsor Statement**

“An Act prohibiting a person from burning certain materials in a solid fuel burning device and relating to prohibitions on the burning of solid fuels”

Committee Substitute for House Bill 163 (RES) contains a list of unacceptable materials to be used in a solid fuel heating device. It only allows the Governor the authority to mandatorily shut down solid fuel burning devices during an air emergency. An air emergency for PM2.5 is defined as 351 micrograms per cubic meter (24-hour average). A sunset date of five years has been added.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough has been designated as a PM2.5 nonattainment area by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Wood-fired space heating devices, predominantly wood/pellet stoves and hydronic heaters, are used by a growing number of Fairbank residents to heat homes and businesses. The amount of wood burning has nearly doubled since 2006 which is a direct response to increases in the price of heating oil and the lack of low-cost, clean-burning alternative fuels. A governmental agency should not be allowed to shut down a resident’s right to utilize a certified appliance burning approved materials unless an emergency arises.

The Alaska Department of Conservation Peer Review states that weather is a primary problem in reaching attainment within Interior Alaska. The residents cannot change the geographic features of our area. This is an energy issue! Until we solve accessibility to affordable energy, those living in a cold environment with severe inversions will continue to utilize solid fuel burning devices.

HB163 will prevent burn bans except for an emergency while addressing our air quality issues with programs like the woodstove change-out, weatherization programs; advanced solid fuel burning device technology and the access to affordable gas will our air see a substantial improvement.