



## SENATOR DENNIS EGAN

### Senate Bill 66 – Imitation Controlled Substances

#### Sponsor Statement

The drug commonly known as “spice” is sold over the counter in head shops and other retail outlets in Alaska. It’s a chemical sprayed onto herbs, or “synthetic marijuana.” Despite being sold as potpourri and incense, the substance is intended for human consumption to get users high. Spice is often cheaper and easier to get than marijuana.

In 2012, the Alaska Legislature passed a law making “synthetic cocaine” –often sold as bath salts—illegal by adding cathinone, methcathinone, and other substances commonly found in it to the Schedule IIA of illegal drugs.

The current definition of imitation controlled substances lists chemicals a substance must contain in order to be illegal. The problem is the makers of the drug are changing the chemical composition of the drug constantly in order to stay ahead of the law. State law is lagging behind, making it difficult for police to make arrests and prosecutors to enforce penalties for the sale and possession of spice.

Senate Bill 66 changes the definition of an imitation controlled substance to more generally make illegal any substance made to look like an already illegal drug. By omitting specific chemicals from the definition, the change makes illegal a substance “that, by dosage unit appearance (including color, shape, size, and markings) and by representations, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the substance is a controlled substance.”

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-----ALASKA SENATE-----

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