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HB 75 Amending Pick.Click.Give Audit Requirement

HB 75 allows greater participation in the Pick.Click.Give program by small non-profits that meet all of the eligibility requirements for the program, but do not participate due to the cost prohibitive audit requirement.

The creation of the popular Pick.Click.Give program by the 25th Alaska State Legislature gave Alaskans a simple and convenient option to donate to charities and non-profits of their choice. These organizations, which provide important services to our communities, rely on donations to function.

One criterion that must be met by organizations wishing to participate often stops smaller Alaskan charities and non-profits from applying. This is the required financial audit for organizations with a total budget of \$250,000 or greater. The cost of the required financial audit for smaller groups is much greater than the donations received by these groups through the Pick.Click.Give program, which makes participation in the program impractical. Not only does this mean that these smaller groups will not receive donations through the program, some groups have found that exclusion from the program gives their supporters the mistaken impression that they are no longer certified non-profits.

This bill eases the financial burden on these organizations and allows Alaskans a more complete choice of organizations by eliminating the financial audit requirement for organizations that do not file a federal audit. This does not remove financial accountability. All Pick.Click.Give donation recipients must be 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations, which are required to file the form 990 annually with the IRS. The IRS form 990 was overhauled in 2008, is a public record and accessible online to donors. The annual filing now requires disclosure of not only detailed financial information, but governance practices, policies, program services, and other compliance measures. This rigorous test of accountability is already required and provides a complete picture of finance and management of a nonprofit. Additionally, an audit is required of organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in federal awards. These organizations will be required to submit a copy of this audit to the state. Entities that expend less than \$500,000 in federal funds still must still make their records available for review by the federal government.

This bill further requires each campus of University of Alaska to pay the \$250 application fee to participate in the program, just as all other eligible organizations do.

The Pick.Click.Give program encourages Alaskans to give back to their community by bringing the many worthy state programs right to their doorstep. Smaller non-profits nourish Alaskan communities on a personal level, open pathways for budding artistic talents and provide educational opportunities that fit just right with community needs. These organizations deserve the chance to connect through Pick.Click.Give to the Alaskans they serve.

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