

Blaine Amendment - A provision in a state constitution for stricter separation of church and state than is required by the Establishment Clause. In 1875, at the request of President Ulysses S. Grant, Senator James G. Blaine proposed an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, applying the Free Exercise and Establishment Clause to the states, and specifically prohibiting the use of any state funds to support any religious institutions, including private church-run schools (esp. Roman Catholic). The House of Representatives passed the amendment, but the Senate narrowly voted against it. Many states, however, amended their constitutions to include a "Blaine Amendment" strictly prohibiting the use of public money for the support of religious institutions [Cases: Constitutional Law 1334.]

Source: Black's Law Dictionary, Ninth Edition

Alaska's "Blaine Amendment" language was part of our original constitution Article VII, § 1, and reads:

"The legislature shall by general law establish and maintain a system of public schools open to all children of the State, and may provide for other public educational institutions. Schools and institutions so established shall be free from sectarian control. No money shall be paid from public funds for the direct benefit of any religious or other private educational institution."

Provided by Senator Mike Dunleavy