

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Rules Committee

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Labor & Commerce Committee

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Health & Social Services Committee



*While in Session*  
State Capitol, Rm. 7  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 465-3704  
Fax: (907) 465-2529

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*While in Anchorage*  
716 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Ste. 500  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 269-0169  
Fax: (907) 269-0172

## SENATOR JOHNNY ELLIS MINORITY LEADER

### **Senate Bill 40 – An Act making special appropriations for new engineering buildings for the University of Alaska in Anchorage and Fairbanks.**

Senate Bill 40 completes work begun last legislative session by appropriating the final \$47.3 million to complete construction of engineering facilities in Fairbanks and \$59.6 million to finish the sorely needed engineering facilities in Anchorage.

Alaska faces a shortage of qualified engineers and some companies are resorting to sending Alaska's engineering work outside. Shortages are especially apparent for electrical, mechanical, mining and petroleum engineers.

Alaska, more than most other states, will require a steady stream of highly skilled engineering professionals to advance critical energy, infrastructure and transportation projects. By investing in an Alaskan engineering workforce, we can assure that our best and brightest students can pursue in-state education and work in here in these well-paying, family-wage jobs.

The effort to invest in Alaska grown engineers enjoys enthusiastic support from a broad coalition of Alaska's engineering businesses and professional organizations, from the fields of construction to resource development. Industry advisory boards for both the University of Alaska-Anchorage and University of Alaska-Fairbanks engineering programs have urged the legislature to appropriate the funding necessary to address growing enrollment and inadequate facilities.

A few of the many engineering professional organizations urging support for upgrading University of Alaska engineering facilities include:

- American Council of Engineering Companies - Alaska Chapter
- Alaska Professional Design Council
- Alaska Society of Professional Engineers
- Institute of Transportation Engineers – Alaska Section
- The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

For Alaska to move forward and keep our promise to develop our resources, we will need "Alaska Grown" engineers. Investing in UA engineering facilities promotes a strong business climate and ensures that young Alaskans have an opportunity to stay in Alaska and enjoy stable, family-wage job opportunities. I respectfully request your support for Senate Bill 40.