

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 209(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/5/16

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to an Alaska Water and Sewer Advisory Committee; and providing for**
2 **an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
5 to read:

6 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that over 6,000 families in the state
7 do not have safe potable water or safe sanitation systems in their homes. Of the over
8 \$100,000,000,000 earned by the state in oil revenue since 1977, less than one-half of one
9 percent was expended on rural water and sewer projects. In an effort to protect the public
10 health and welfare of the state's citizens and promote healthy communities, the legislature
11 finds that it is the responsibility of the legislature to ensure that safe and sustainable water and
12 sewer systems are provided for all communities of the state.

13 * **Sec. 2.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
14 read:

1 ALASKA WATER AND SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) The Alaska Water
2 and Sewer Advisory Committee is created in the legislative branch.

3 (b) The advisory committee consists of 10 members, as follows:

4 (1) one member of the senate appointed by the members of the bush caucus;

5 (2) one member of the house of representatives appointed by the members of
6 the bush caucus;

7 (3) one member of the senate appointed by the president of the senate;

8 (4) one member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of
9 the house of representatives;

10 (5) one member of the public who is a civil engineer appointed by the
11 members of the bush caucus;

12 (6) one member who represents an appropriate federal agency appointed by
13 the members of the bush caucus;

14 (7) one member who represents an appropriate state agency appointed by the
15 members of the bush caucus;

16 (8) a senior employee with expertise in environmental health and engineering
17 from a large nonprofit tribal health organization operating in the state appointed by the
18 members of the bush caucus; and

19 (9) two members of the public who reside in rural communities in the state
20 that are not connected by road or the Alaska marine highway to the main road system of the
21 state appointed by the members of the bush caucus.

22 (c) The members of the advisory committee shall select co-chairs from the advisory
23 committee's legislative membership. One co-chair shall be from the senate, and one co-chair
24 shall be from the house of representatives.

25 (d) Members serve without compensation and may not receive travel and per diem
26 expenses.

27 (e) The advisory committee shall meet during and between legislative sessions to
28 accomplish its duties. Meetings of the advisory committee may be conducted by
29 telecommunication or electronic communication.

30 (f) Vacancies on the advisory committee shall be filled in the same manner as the
31 original appointments.

1 (g) The advisory committee shall develop and submit findings and proposed
2 legislation addressing the provision of safe and sustainable water and sewer systems to all
3 rural areas of the state. The advisory committee shall prepare a report with the advisory
4 committee's findings and proposed legislation by December 1, 2017, deliver the report to the
5 senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives, and notify the legislature
6 that the report is available on or before the first day of the Second Regular Session of the
7 Thirtieth Alaska State Legislature. In developing its findings and legislation, the advisory
8 committee shall, to the extent possible,

9 (1) establish an accurate estimate of the number of homes without safe water
10 and sewer systems;

11 (2) determine the state's needs in providing safe water and sewer systems to
12 rural residents and establish a methodology for determining which projects should be
13 prioritized among those needs;

14 (3) explore which water and sewer system technologies are most appropriate
15 for use in rural communities in the state;

16 (4) research water and sewer systems used in other Arctic nations;

17 (5) determine means by which state and federal resources, funds, and agencies
18 might be better coordinated to construct, maintain, and service water and sewer systems;

19 (6) investigate and recommend strategies to protect public investments in rural
20 water and sewer systems and promote the long-term operational life of rural water and sewer
21 systems by ensuring, to the greatest extent practicable, that the systems can be maintained by
22 local personnel and with local resources;

23 (7) investigate and evaluate previous state and federal efforts to provide water
24 and sewer systems in rural areas of the state;

25 (8) consult with representatives of appropriate state and federal agencies
26 regarding how safe water and sewer systems might be more quickly provided to the rural
27 areas of the state; and

28 (9) hold public hearings and employ other means the advisory committee
29 determines will best solicit useful information on rural water and sewer needs from the
30 residents of the state.

31 (h) In the preparation of the report described in (g) of this section, the advisory

1 committee may use only existing legislative resources and staff.

2 (i) In this section, "bush caucus" means a group of legislators that represents the
3 following communities: Akiachak, Alatna, Allakaket, Arctic Village, Atmautluak, Birch
4 Creek, Chalkyitsik, Chefornak, Circle, Crooked Creek, Diomedes, Eagle, Eek, Kipnuk,
5 Kivalina, Kongiganak, Koyukuk, Kwigillingok, Lime Village, Newtok, Oscarville, Shageluk,
6 Shishmaref, Stebbins, Stevens Village, Stony River, Takotna, Teller, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak,
7 Tununak, Venetie, and Wales.

8 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
9 read:

10 TRANSITION. The advisory committee shall begin work as soon as a majority of its
11 membership has been appointed.

12 * **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 and 2 of this Act are repealed July 1, 2018.

13 * **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).