



## House Education Committee Bill

### House Bill 137 "State Council on the Arts"

House Bill 137 quasi-privatizes the Alaska State Council on the Arts (ASCA) by restructuring it as a public corporation in order to help the ASCA to continue its work with self-employed Alaskan artists and art businesses during these challenging fiscal times. This new status will allow the ASCA to increase its ability to leverage funds from non-governmental contributors and better adapt to the shifting economic climate. This effort responds to the widespread interest in governmental entities, as much as they are able, to at least partially privatize their operations and increase their operating efficiency.

Under HB137, ASCA will remain within the Department of Education & Early Development. Changes to the ASCA include exemption from the State Procurement Code, while still providing for formal, appropriate procurement protocols for ASCA. Restructuring will keep ASCA's operating budget under the Executive Budget Act for openness and transparency. Transition language in SB 66 will allow ASCA's advisory committees, public processes, and public participation to remain in place as ASCA administers grants, programs, and services.

As the State of Alaska evolves and grows in response to fiscal challenges, ASCA wants to ensure that it is in a position to expand its important work to serve all Alaskans. Private funders across the nation are increasingly approaching ASCA to offer support for the work of the Council, and carefully considered restructuring efforts have the potential to allow the Council to advance the opportunity to grow the development base of ASCA, as well as reduce its reliance on State funds, including in its work with students in Alaska's schools.

HB137 will improve the ability of ASCA to leverage non-state funding and represents a real opportunity to realign ASCA to better perform in the environment which exists in Alaska today.