

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins

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rep.jonathan.kreiss-tomkins@akleg.gov

Committees:
State Affairs, Co-Chair
Arctic Policy, Economic Development, and Tourism
Fisheries
Community and Regional Affairs



Juneau, Alaska 99801 (Jan. – April)
State Capitol, Room 411
907.465.3732

Sitka, Alaska 99835 (May – Dec.)
201 Katlian Street, Ste. 103
907.747.4665

Sponsor Statement | HB 142 – Eligibility of Alaska Native organizations to operate Village Public Safety Officer programs and Alaska Native family assistance programs

House Bill 142 addresses ambiguity in law by clarifying which Alaska Native organizations are eligible to administer Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) programs and Alaska Native family assistance programs.

The Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of America (Tlingit & Haida) has operated Southeast Alaska's VPSO and Alaska Native family assistance programs for nearly 20 years. However, Tlingit & Haida has a different legal identity than the regional nonprofit corporations around Alaska (e.g., AVCP, Kawerak, TCC) that administer VPSO and/or family assistance programs, owing to Tlingit & Haida's status as a federally recognized tribe. Tlingit & Haida is not a regional nonprofit corporation, despite regularly being mistakenly referred to as one.

House Bill 142 amends current statute to resolve this ambiguity and make fully explicit and unambiguous that Tlingit & Haida can administer VPSO and/or family assistance programs in partnership with the State of Alaska.