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SPONSOR STATEMENT HB 16

“An Act relating to the right of first refusal of a volunteer search and rescue group with respect to surplus state property.”

Search and rescue operations across the State of Alaska are largely done by volunteer organizations dispatched by the Alaska State Troopers. These groups provide lifesaving services to our state at minimal cost.

House Bill 16 provides assistance to the groups at no cost to the state. While search and rescue groups can be reimbursed for costs incurred during specific operations, the state does not generally provide them with equipment. This legislation allows a volunteer search and rescue organization to exercise the right of first refusal on items related to search and rescue before the property is sold, leased, licenses, or disposed of.

Right of first refusal means the organization can buy the equipment at a fair market value set by the department of administration. This bill enables these volunteer search and rescue groups to more easily obtain the equipment they need to fulfill their lifesaving mission