

LEGAL SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

March 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Transmittal of bills and resolutions to the governor
(HB 290; Work Order No. 34-LS1308\A)

TO: Representative Steven St. Clair

FROM: Megan A. Wallace
Chief Counsel



You asked about the transmittal of bills and resolutions to the governor and about the deadline for transmitting legislation.

The chief clerk transmits house bills to the governor at the direction of the speaker of the house and the senate secretary transmits senate bills to the governor at the direction of the senate president. Uniform Rule 4 (Duties of Presiding Officer) by incorporation of *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure*, sec. 575(1)(i) (2020 ed.), and Uniform Rule 43 (Enrollment), provide the authority and direction for the speaker to sign and transmit a bill to the governor.

While the Alaska Supreme Court has not specifically ruled that a presiding officer has a duty to transmit a bill that has passed the legislature to the governor, there is precedent in other jurisdictions supporting a duty to transmit.¹ There is no authority for the governor to request transmission of a bill; a bill can be sent regardless of the governor's wishes. There have been years when numerous bills were transmitted all at once. In more recent years, the house and senate leadership at times have coordinated with the governor for signing ceremonies and other schedule-related reasons. The governor occasionally coordinates his signing ceremony to include a bill sponsor's attendance, providing a mutually beneficial event for the governor and the legislative member that sponsored or otherwise carried the bill.

¹ See, e.g., *Colorado General Assembly v. Lamm* 700 P.2d 508 (Colo. 1985); see also *Sutherland Statutory Construction*, Volume 1, sec. 16.1 (2010 edition).

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Ultimately, however, there are no deadlines set by statute or Uniform Rule governing when the presiding officer must transmit a bill or resolution to the governor.²

Let me know if you have any additional questions.

MAW:lei

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² There are deadlines for the governor to act once the bill has been transmitted to him. Article II, sec. 17 states:

A bill becomes law if, while the legislature is in session, the governor neither signs nor vetoes it within fifteen days, Sundays excepted, after its delivery to him. If the legislature is not in session and the governor neither signs nor vetoes a bill within twenty days, Sundays excepted, after its delivery to him, the bill becomes law.