

From: [James Back](#)
To: [Senate State Affairs](#)
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 270 – Restore Grand Jury Independence
Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2026 1:08:27 PM

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee,

My name is James Back, I live in Soldotna, Alaska.

I testify in strong support of SB 270 to restore our grand juries' full constitutional authority.

Article I, Section 8 of the Alaska Constitution is crystal clear: "The power of grand juries to investigate and make recommendations concerning the public welfare or safety **shall never be suspended.**" This is not suggestive language—it's an absolute prohibition against limiting the people's most direct tool for holding government accountable.

Past procedural barriers and court rules have effectively suspended this power, blocking citizen access, independent investigations, and oversight of public officials—violating the plain intent of our founders who distrusted centralized authority and empowered ordinary Alaskans as the ultimate check.

SB 270 enforces the Constitution by:

- Reaffirming grand juries' unrestricted right to initiate probes into public welfare and safety.
- Enabling citizen requests and juror proposals without executive gatekeeping.
- Granting subpoena power with reasonable safeguards.
- Mandating prosecutor assistance and conflict protections.

This is not expansion—**it's restoration.** Anything less mocks our Constitution and erodes the people's sovereignty.

Pass SB 270 now. Uphold the people's constitutional right to oversight.

Thank you for hearing public input on this vital reform.

Sincerely, James Back
169b E Beluga Ave
Soldotna, Alaska 99669