

# REPRESENTATIVE SARA HANNAN

## ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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House District 4  
Downtown Juneau  
Thane, Lemon Creek  
Douglas Island, Airport, and  
the Mendenhall Valley to  
Stephen Richards Drive

### Sponsor Statement

#### HB 300—State Employees: Meals/Travel Expenses

State employees travel on behalf of all of us—inspecting infrastructure, supporting public safety, delivering health and social services, maintaining transportation systems, and ensuring that state government functions in communities large and small. When we ask employees to travel for work, we have a responsibility to ensure they are not forced to subsidize state operations out of their own pockets.

The in-state meals & incidentals per diem rates currently paid to state employees are \$60 per day for short-term travel and \$33 per day for long-term travel extending past 30 days. These rates were set in 2010 and have not been updated since. They no longer align with reality for the cost of meals and incidental expenses in Alaska.

House Bill 300 establishes a short-term per diem rate of \$82 per day and a long-term rate of \$45 per day. These rates are updated to reflect inflation and current, reasonable costs while recognizing the reduced daily expenses typically associated with extended stays.

The bill also includes a mechanism to prevent these rates from becoming insufficient again. Beginning July 1, 2029, and every three years thereafter, the rates will be adjusted for inflation using the Alaska urban consumer price index compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics at the United States Department of Labor. Tying per diem to a clear, Alaska-specific inflation measure provides transparency, predictability for budgeting, and fairness for employees, while eliminating the need for the Legislature to revisit this issue repeatedly.

This legislation is about good governance and basic fairness. It supports the recruitment and retention of a professional workforce, promotes consistent travel policy across agencies, and ensures that state employees are treated responsibly when carrying out the work Alaskans depend on.

I urge your support for this bill.