



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Education Committee Chair

EDUCATION
HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES
JUDICIARY
TRANSPORTATION

Senate Concurrent Resolution 17 – Regional Education Attendance Areas Sponsor Statement – Version A

In 1975, the Alaska State Legislature enacted landmark reforms establishing the Rural Education Attendance Areas (REAs). This unprecedented framework for providing public education in the unorganized borough was rooted in the simple yet powerful idea that communities should have a voice in how their children are educated. The landmark “Molly Hootch” litigation, also known as *Tobeluk v. Lind*, reinforced that commitment through a 1976 consent decree requiring the state to provide local secondary schools in rural communities, thereby affirming Alaska’s constitutional obligation to deliver equitable educational opportunities for children and young adults regardless of where they live.

For five decades, REAs have educated generations of Alaskans, sustained schools in remote and roadless communities, and upheld the principle that a child’s access to public education should not depend on whether they live in an urban center or a rural village. Elected regional school boards and community advisory school boards ensure that public education is directed and governed at the local level by people who live, work, and subsist in the community.

For fifty years, students and families have relied on REA schools, which in turn have relied on dedicated staff to keep the schools operating through decades of economic, technological, and social change, often under difficult conditions and across immense distances.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 17 celebrates the 50th anniversary of the creation of Alaska’s Regional Educational Attendance Areas. It reaffirms the Alaska State Legislature’s commitment to strong and vibrant public schools that serve students where they live.