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Senate Bill 208 Agricultural Land Leases
Explanation of Changes Version G to O to L
May 7, 2026

Version O to L

Sections 6 and 8, replaces language that lease terms are for “up to” 20 years with “not to exceed” 20 years.

Version G to O

Adds new Sections 1 – 3, creating an optional merit-based process for sales of state land for agricultural uses in AS 38.05.059 and makes conforming changes to affected statutes. This new process allows the Department of Natural Resources to select the land available for sale and requires the creation of a regionally based schedule of per-acre prices for agricultural land that may be below the fair market rate.

Adds new Sections 4 – 5, conforming language for the new leasing program established in Section 8.

Renumbers Sections 1 – 4 of Version A to Sections 6 – 9 of Version O

Amends Sections 6 – 9, making changes to the new leasing program that reflect stakeholder feedback. This includes clarifying the information required from applicants, allowing the Department of Natural resources to reject any application that isn’t in the best interest of the state, simply allowing building housing for farmers and laborers rather than designating this as “agricultural use,” and requiring regular inspections of leased land. It also allows lease terms and renewals of 20 years, an increase from the maximum ten years allowed in Version A. The changes in Version O include a requirement that the Director of the Division of Mineral, Land, and Water consult with the Director of Agriculture when scoring applications, and conforming changes to Section 9 regarding giving a lessee first preference to purchase land they have been working.

Adds new Sections 10 – 11, establishing civil penalty authority for the Department of Natural Resources to enforce agricultural covenants in AS 38.05.32(k) and makes conforming changes to affected statutes.

Adds new Sections 12 and 13, to create an immediate effective date for the Department to draft regulations implementing HB 296.

Renumbers Section 14 (Section 5 in Ver A), making the provisions in the bill effective on January 1, 2027.