

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Senator David Wilson

Sponsor Statement

Senate Bill 246 v. S

"An Act relating to a legal fund to pay attorney fees and costs in an election contest; and providing for an effective date."

Currently, there is no clear mechanism for legislators to cover legal expenses incurred by an election contest, which can be substantial and burdensome. SB 246 outlines how legislators may use a legal fund to pay attorney fees and costs incurred if their election is challenged. The fund will be regulated by the Alaska Public Offices Commission. This bill provides a way for legislators to receive donations from supporters to defend their election in court.

SB 246 is intended to protect the integrity of the electoral process and ensure legislators are not deterred from seeking or holding office by the threat of costly litigation. To promote transparency and accountability, the bill sets limits and disclosure requirements for the contributions and expenditures of the fund. The Alaska Public Offices Commission will adopt regulations covering how to establish a legal fund, what expenses are allowed from a legal fund, what to do with surplus money from a legal fund, and how to disclose contributions and expenditures from a legal fund. I urge your support for SB 246.

Please contact Julia Fonov in my office at (907) 465-4711 or Julia.Fonov@akleg.gov for any questions.