



# Representative Maxine Dibert

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Alaska State Legislature, District 31

## Sponsor Statement

### **HB 147 An Act relating to teacher certificates for retired teachers.**

The first thing this bill seeks to do is honor teachers in the State of Alaska for their years of dedication to our youth by providing them with a lifetime teachers certificate at no cost. Under current law, retired teachers pay a one-time \$250 fee for this type of certificate. The current fee brings very little revenue to the state. Retired teachers normally only seek a life-time certificate if they plan on re-entering the classroom as substitutes.

The other thing this bill does is extend the number of consecutive days a retired teacher holding this type of certificate can long-term substitute from 120 days to 165 days. This allows a person holding this type of certificate to fill in as a long-term substitute for more than an entire semester in cases where absences continue for extended periods.

Alaska educators occasionally must take a leave of absence from their classroom for different reasons including medical procedures, caring for a child or elder, the birth of a child, as well as other emergencies. On rare occasions, teachers abruptly exit a position mid-year for personal reasons, leaving the school in a bind. When regular teachers must leave positions during the academic year, this bill will take some pressure off schools in finding skilled, qualified substitutes and allow them to fill longer vacancies than previously allowed. This bill also encourages retired teachers to share their expertise with students and young teachers and to remain living in Alaska as active members of communities and contributors to the economy.