

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

REPRESENTATIVE STANLEY WRIGHT

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Juneau, Alaska 99801 (Jan. -April)
State Capitol, Room 412
907.465.2095

House Bill 179

"An Act relating to employee rights; and providing for an effective date."

Sectional Analysis

Section 1: Short Title

- This section establishes the formal name of the legislation: "The Employee Free Speech Act."

Section 2: Amendment to AS 23.10

- **Sec. 23.10.450. Employee Right to Avoid Speech**
 - **Subsection (a): Prohibition of Forced Attendance or Listening**
 - This subsection specifies that employers cannot take adverse employment actions (like termination, demotion, etc.) against employees who refuse to:
 1. Attend meetings primarily aimed at communicating the employer's views on religious or political matters.
 2. Listen to communications primarily aimed at conveying the employer's views on religious or political matters.
 - **Subsection (b): Liability for Violation**
 - This part states that employers who violate the stipulations in Subsection (a) are liable for the employee's lost wages.
 - **Subsection (c): Exceptions and Clarifications**
 - This subsection outlines exceptions where the provisions of Subsection (a) do not apply. These include:
 1. Communication by an employer or representative that is legally required or necessary for an employee's job duties.
 2. Higher education institutions communicating about coursework, symposia, or academic programs.
 3. Employer's executive personnel being required to listen to communications about the business.
 4. Religious organizations requiring attendance in meetings or participation in communications regarding the organization's religious beliefs, practices, or tenets.

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Section 2: Amendment to AS 23.10 (continued)

- **Subsection (d):**

1. "Political matters" are defined broadly, encompassing elections, political parties, legislation, regulations, and political organization involvement.
2. "Religious matters" are defined as issues related to religious affiliation, practice, and organization involvement.

- These definitions are crucial for interpreting and applying the law, ensuring that it is accurately and fairly enforced.

Section 3: Effective Date

- This final section states that the Act will take effect immediately under the specified Alaskan statute (AS 01.10.070(c)).