



# Senator Scott Jiu Wo Kawasaki

Alaska State Legislature

Senate District P

## **Senate Bill 118**

### **Sponsor Statement**

#### **“An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska.”**

The University of Alaska has a mission to inspire learning, advance and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, and emphasize the North and its diverse peoples. The University of Alaska Board of Regents is an eleven-member board responsible with crafting policy and fulfilling the University’s mission. House Bill 10 would add one tenured faculty member to the Board of Regents for a two-year term after a thorough selection process. The addition of a faculty member would help the Board of Regents advance its mission and provide representation to this key stakeholder group.

Currently, there are six states that require one or more faculty regents to be a voting member of their University Board of Regents. These states believe that the interests of the institution are best served when a faculty regent is granted voting representation. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities has stated that the University of Alaska system should “create a space for inclusive dialogue as the Board of Regents deliberates on the future of the University of Alaska System.” One way to ensure that this inclusive dialogue occurs through fiscal stressors and organizational challenges is through the addition of a seat for a qualified faculty regent.

Our University of Alaska has navigated the most challenging of fiscal and social challenges over the last decade. Through sweeping budget cuts, programmatic changes and challenges, and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of Regents has been in the driver’s seat making the tough decisions for the University’s future. Adding one faculty member would provide better representation to this important constituency, allow our University to provide faculty the same parity and respect currently granted to students as a critical stakeholder group, and create greater dialog on the Board when making decisions for years to come.

Please join me in supporting the SB 118 so the University of Alaska can make the most informed decisions possible and better fulfill their mission of inspiring learning and disseminating knowledge.