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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

January 25, 2018

The Honorable Bryce Edgmon
Speaker of the House
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Speaker Edgmon,

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to confidentiality of animal and crop records.

The bill would make confidential certain records of animal or crop importation and lab testing. Farmers in Alaska must provide certain practices and information in order to comply with federal and state regulations. Commonly, farmers disclose animal importation records, farm locations, test results, and animal identification to the State. Farmers may be reluctant to participate in voluntary testing of animals in order to protect their information and competitive advantage, which increases the risk of animal disease outbreaks. Providing confidentiality for these records will promote farmer participation in voluntary testing. Confidentiality would also limit a competitor's unfair advantage in the market by not making available information regarding trade secrets and proprietary business information. Confidential records may still be disclosed if there is a threat to the health or safety of an animal, crop, or to the public. This bill also provides a definition for 'varietal'.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bill Walker".

Bill Walker
Governor

Enclosure