

Alaska State Legislature

Legislative Affairs Agency

Office of the Executive Director


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MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Sara Hannan, Chair
Legislative Council

FROM: Jessica Geary 
Executive Director

DATE: March 31, 2025

SUBJECT: Request for Approval of Capitol Security Enhancements

Open access to the Capitol enjoyed by the citizenry of the state has long been a source of pride for many of us here. However, the increase in active-shooter incidents and other acts of violence in public settings across the nation in recent years suggests the risks of this practice now outweigh the benefits. There is growing consensus that the time has come for stronger security measures to protect those who work at and visit the State Capitol.

Last July, the 33rd Legislature's Legislative Council Security Subcommittee approved a visitor screening pilot program at the Capitol. Conducted during the busy visitor season, the pilot successfully demonstrated the ability to route visitors through a line without adding much delay.

Following the pilot, an RFQ for visitor screening services was issued to implement a full screening program. The RFQ provides for contracted personnel to operate a walk-through metal detector and x-ray machine at the Capitol's main entrance during the legislative session. We are now requesting Legislative Council approval to award the contract.

In conjunction with the screening program, two policies were developed to ensure clear procedures, consistent enforcement, and public transparency:

1. **Visitor Screening Policy** – Establishes screening procedures for all Capitol visitors during business hours, outlines exemptions, defines prohibited items, and ensures ADA-compliant accommodations. Under this policy, only visitors (those without Blue, Orange, or Purple ID badges) are subject to screening.
2. **Capitol Complex Identification Badge Policy** – Creates a standardized badge system to distinguish between visitors and individuals with regular access, and sets requirements for proper badge display, issuance, and renewal. Badge colors will correspond to role categories (e.g., Blue for legislative staff, Orange for executive/judicial employees, Purple for legislator family members).

We are also requesting Legislative Council adopt these two policies. Together, the contract award and the policies will preserve the citizenry's access to the Capitol while improving the safety of both its occupants and visitors. These measures reflect a balanced approach to protecting public entry while meeting current security needs.

We respectfully request your support in approving the RFP award and formally adopting the Visitor Screening and ID Badge policies.