

**From:** [Susan A](#)  
**To:** [Senate State Affairs](#)  
**Subject:** Public Testimony SB 34  
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Public Testimony Supporting SB 34: "An Act relating to the duration of a regular session of the legislature"

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write today to express my support for Senate Bill 34, which proposes the repeal of AS 24.05.150(b), the statute that currently governs the duration of a regular legislative session in Alaska. As we navigate unprecedented challenges and changes in our society and economy, it is crucial that our legislative body has the flexibility to adapt to evolving circumstances.

Flexibility for Unprecedented Times:

The world has entered an era of constant change, requiring that our institutions remain adaptable and capable of responding to emerging challenges. From global health crises to environmental catastrophes, it is clear that we cannot operate under rigid rules that may no longer serve the public's best interests. SB 34 empowers the legislature to remain dynamic, adjusting session lengths based on the needs of the people of Alaska.

Need for Clarity on Replacement:

While I wholeheartedly support the flexibility SB 34 offers, it is essential that the legislature clarify what will replace the repealed statute. This clarity will ensure that there is no ambiguity regarding session duration and will allow stakeholders to plan accordingly. The public and other governmental bodies must understand how future legislative sessions will be managed. We need to know whether new procedural rules will be put in place, or if the length of sessions will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Predictability in some form must be maintained for the benefit of all Alaskans.

Opportunity for Efficiency and Accountability:

By removing an outdated restriction, SB 34 allows for a more efficient legislative process. It gives lawmakers the ability to extend or shorten sessions in response to urgent matters, such as economic crises or disaster relief, without being constrained by a fixed timeline. This flexibility will allow the legislature to act swiftly and decisively in times of need, while also providing opportunities to ensure accountability for every decision made.

Ensuring Long-Term Legislative Health:

It is important to recognize that while the repeal of AS 24.05.150(b) allows flexibility, it is equally important that the legislature maintains its commitment to efficiency and transparency. We must have clear guidelines in place to prevent abuse or confusion. The bill creates an opportunity for a more robust and thoughtful conversation about how the legislature can balance flexibility with accountability, ensuring that the people's business is conducted in a manner that reflects the state's needs and values.

In these times, it is critical that our government has the tools necessary to respond to emerging challenges. SB 34 offers the necessary flexibility to adjust the legislative calendar to meet those needs, but it also presents an opportunity for further clarity and planning about what will replace the repealed statute. I urge the committee to support SB 34 while ensuring that the legislature moves forward with a clear plan to guide future sessions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Allmeroth  
Two Rivers  
Myself