

# ALASKA STATE SENATE



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## HCS CSSB 89(STA) Version O

This bill is a **product of discussions by the Select Committee of Legislative Ethics** over the **past couple of years**. There are some clarifications of existing statutes and amendments to current law to accommodate issues arisen dealing with confidentiality and meeting quorums.

**The bill creates three exceptions to the bright line for legislators and legislative staff to follow for assisting constituents with problems they encounter with state agencies.** Once an issue has been appealed to an administrative hearing officer, the legislator or legislative staffer may no longer make contacts with the agency, unless that person is a licensed professional to represent a person in such a proceeding and is being compensated for that representation. There are also provisions for inadvertent ex parte contact.

SB 89 clarifies that a **gift of a ticket from a lobbyist to a charity** event sanctioned by Legislative Council **cannot exceed \$249.99**. It also further **describes a contribution to a charity event** as a ticket to a charity event or a gift in connection with the charity event.

It also **extends the reporting deadline for reporting gifts of travel and from charitable events from 30 to 60 days** and **expands legislative ethics training to legislative volunteers or educational trainees who are on the job for more than 30 days**.

The bill adds **public members of the ethics committee** to the statute prohibiting members from knowingly making **unauthorized disclosure of confidential information**. This bill clarifies that disclosures prohibited by state and federal confidentiality laws are not required by the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

Lastly, the bill adds a statute **creating an alternate public member** and would allow **any alternate member** of the ethics committee who participates in the beginning of a proceeding to **participate in the entire proceeding**. The Chief Justice of the Alaska Supreme Court would appoint the alternate for the public members.