



Representative Beth Kerttula

House Minority Leader

Sponsor Statement

CS House Bill 18

"An Act establishing Alaska Public Gardens Day on the Saturday immediately preceding Memorial Day each year."

House Bill 18 establishes Alaska Public Gardens Day on the Saturday immediately preceding Memorial Day each year. This recognition would commemorate the state's public gardens and the role gardens play in promoting environmental stewardship, education, plant conservation, recreation and research.

Alaska has three American Public Garden Association member gardens: the Alaska Botanical Garden in Anchorage; the University of Alaska Fairbanks Georgeson Botanical Garden in Fairbanks; and the Jenson-Olson Arboretum in Juneau. Each plays an important role in their community and in helping to preserve northern latitude plants.

Our gardens serve the public in many ways. They are tourism designations and have vast local recreation value. They also serve as important practical educational facilities for children and adults to learn about gardening, ecology, and science as well as partnering with other organizations to provide school-based education programs, public health education programs and community and school gardens. They provide workforce training sites for youth and adults in transition and work on habitat restoration. In addition, they provide information on the how to choose regionally appropriate plants that are native to the area for landscaping purposes.

These public gardens have a measurable impact on the quality of life in our communities and it is important to set aside a day each year to celebrate their role in keeping Alaskans and visitors connected to our natural world.

Thank you for your support of House Bill 18.