

ALASKA STATE SENATE



Contact:

Interim Address:

**301 Santa Claus Lane, St. #b
North Pole, AK 99705**

(907)-488-5725

Fax# (907)-488-4271

Session

(907)-465-3719

FAX# (907)-465-3258

**State Capitol
Room 504**

SENATOR JOHN COGHILL

Senate Bill 89 Legislative Ethics Amendments Version R

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 draws a 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 \$250.00**. 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.