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To: Alaska Legislature
House Judiciary Committee

Testimony regarding HJR 18 (Constitutional Amendment to elect Attorney General)

Please consider two recent scenarios where the people of Alaska might have been better served by an elected Attorney General.

First, the 2004-2010 scandal, which included state legislators, that required involvement by the Federal Department of Justice – Public Integrity Section to resolve. Would we been able to police ourselves without direct Federal involvement if we had an Attorney General who was politically independent and directly responsible to the voters?

Second, in 2010 a new position in state government was created for a sitting legislator, a very probable violation of Article 2, Section 5 of the Alaska Constitution. Might, we the people, have had a more objective effort to resolve this situation if we had an elected Attorney General?

I understand that a “bad apple” can be appointed or elected. What motivates me to comment on this legislation is the concept, introduced at 8:57:22 of audio minutes of the State Affairs Committee held on 2/11/14, stating by a member that an elected Attorney General must be of the same political party as the Governor. That simply is a very bad idea intended, I believe, only to see that the interests of any political party trump the interests of Alaskans most of who are not registered as members of any political party. I support this legislation with the caveat that the elected A.G. will be first and foremost an independent advocate for the people with very little emphasis on party affiliation.

Thank you. Lynn Willis