

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Member:
House Finance Committee

Chair:
House Budget Sub Committees on:
- Department of Health & Social Services
- Department of Transportation & Public
Facilities



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House Bill 150 Sponsor Statement

The Technical and Vocational Education Fund authorized under AS 23.15.840 sunsets on June 30, 2014. House Bill 150 extends the sunset date to June 30, 2024.

In 2000 the Alaska Legislature created the Training and Vocational Education Program to provide financial assistance to support facilities throughout the state that provide technical and educational programs for industry specific training.

Alaska was experiencing unemployment rates that were reaching to above 50% of the national average in 2008. With large projects on the horizon, there was a clear need for a trained, resident work force. The TVEP program was extended to provide training to Alaskan residents to help reduce the unemployment rate and put Alaskan residents to work. Figures released on March 14, 2013 by the Department of Labor indicated that unemployment rates in Alaska for December of 2012 were 6.6%, while the national average was 8.1%. Alaska has had a consistent lower rate than the national average for the past forty-six months, indicating the effectiveness of this program.

Funds for the TVEP program are appropriated from amounts the state collects in unemployment insurance contributions at a rate of .15 percent and are allocated according to statute.

The more we can train our youth, as they enter the work force, the more we will re-enforce the desirability of staying in Alaska as part of a highly skilled, resident work force. The last five years has shown this Fund works. We can double the effectiveness with ten more years.