

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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North to the Future

Senator Cathy Giessel
Senate District N

SENATE BILL 170 **SPONSOR STATEMENT**

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources' Geologic Materials Center in Anchorage offers a critical service to promoting our state's economy and scientific knowledge. The center serves as the main repository for geologic materials from all over Alaska, gathering samples from oil and gas exploration, mining, and infrastructure development. Having all these samples in one location allows scientists, companies, universities and other government agencies access to materials they otherwise would have to find themselves, saving time and money.

The center currently is unable to charge fees for the use of its space and samples because it is prevented by law. Virtually every other such facility in the United States requires a fee to see and work on the geologic materials. Recently, the center relocated from a series of trailers into a modern, integrated facility that meets scientific best practices. Without the ability to charge fees, the center will inevitably run at a loss.

Senate Bill 170 enables the Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys to set and collect fees for the use of its facilities. The bill also directs those fees back to the Division and by extension the Geologic Materials Center, rather than into the general fund. User groups would pay fees in order to continue the operations of the center or for services they use. By setting a fee structure and the means to use those fees, Senate Bill 170 helps the center move towards its eventual goal of being self-sustaining.

I respectfully urge your consideration and support for this piece of legislation.

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