

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Representative Bob Herron

State Capitol Building, Room 406

Phone 907.465.4942

rep.bob.herron@akleg.gov

HB 1 "An Act declaring the Arctic policy of the state" Sectional Analysis

Section 1 Places findings and intent of the legislature related to the Arctic in uncodified law.

- a) Specifically, the legislature finds that:
 - 1) Alaska makes the United States an Arctic nation;
 - 2) All of Alaska is affected by activity in its Arctic region and vice-versa;
 - 3) Alaskans are Arctic experts;
 - 4) Climate change and increased activity present risks to the Arctic, but with appropriate expertise and pan-Arctic cooperation, economic development can be sustainably pursued for the benefit of all Alaskans;
 - 5) Environmentally conscious development is vital to the state's well-being;
 - 6) Respect for indigenous peoples is critical to understanding the Arctic;
 - 7) Other regions and nations are rapidly developing Arctic policies & strategies, so Alaska must effectively communicate its Arctic vision for safety, security & prosperity
 - 8) The state & federal government should strengthen Arctic cooperation;
 - 9) Alaska should create and maintain an official body to further develop Arctic strategies and policies;
- b) The legislature intends that this Arctic policy:
 - 1) Be implemented through statutes and regulations;
 - 2) Not conflict with existing state policy;
 - 3) Serve as a guide for legislation derived from the AAPC's Imp. Plan;
 - 4) Communicate the Arctic interests of the state to other governments.

Section AS 44.99.105 Declares a state Arctic policy.

- a) It is state's Arctic policy to:
 - 1) Uphold the state's commitment to economically vibrant communities while maintaining a healthy environment, including efforts to:
 - A. Ensure local benefit;

- B. Improve regulatory processes;
 - C. Attract investment by improving infrastructure and the investment climate;
 - D. Continue strategies for adapting to climate change;
 - E. Encourage technological innovation that focuses on emerging opportunities.
- 2) Collaborate with all appropriate entities to achieve transparent and inclusive Arctic decision-making, including efforts to:
- A. Strengthen international cooperation;
 - B. Enhance state participation in the Arctic Council;
 - C. Work to partner in the development of federal and international Arctic policies, thereby incorporating local expertise;
 - D. Strengthen communication with Arctic Council Permanent Participants;
 - E. Reiterate Alaska's support for ratification of Law of the Sea.
- 3) Enhance Alaska's security by strengthening Arctic safety, including efforts to:
- A. Enhance response to disasters, oil spills, and search and rescue;
 - B. Increase safety of Arctic maritime transportation;
 - C. Sustain and develop new infrastructure;
 - D. Work with feds to increase Coast Guard and other security presence.
- 4) Strengthen resilience of arctic communities and integrate local knowledge, including efforts to:
- A. Recognize indigenous cultures' relation to the environment;
 - B. Build science and research capacity;
 - C. Employ integrated strategic planning that considers science and local knowledge;
 - D. Safeguard the Arctic environment and its living resources;
 - E. Work to integrate local knowledge into conventional resource management decision-making.
- b) The state should support and encourage consideration of the recommendations in the AAPC Implementation Plan. Priority lines of effort for the state's Arctic policy include:
- 1) Promoting economic and resource development;
 - 2) Addressing the infrastructure and response capacity gap in the Arctic;
 - 3) Supporting healthy communities; and
 - 4) Strengthening a state-based agenda for Arctic science & research.
- c) The state's definition of its Arctic boundary aligns with that of the federal Arctic Research and Policy Act (1984). For international purposes, "Arctic" means the entirety of the state.