



Representative Chris Tuck

House Majority Leader

Serving House District 23 • Dimond Estates, Foxridge, Taku, Campbell, Northwood, and Windemere

Sponsor Statement House Bill 1 Election Registration and Voting

The right to vote embodies the spirit of American democracy. Casting a vote is the most discretely effective way to have one's voice heard in the political process. When we exercise our right to vote we impact our community far beyond an election: we are able to elect individuals who will make decisions on our behalf about how our government will be run, set the policies that will guide our state, and how resources, both national and local, are distributed.

Unfortunately, a surprising number of Americans don't exercise their right to vote. On average, only about half of eligible US voters cast ballots. Although, Alaska is one of a handful of states which exceeded 50 percent voter turnout in 2014, almost half of Alaskan voters are effectively not being heard.

House Bill 1 includes a series of changes designed to increase voter participation and access to voting across the state by improving and clarifying the voting process. These changes include:

- Providing same day voter registration to allow all eligible Alaskans the opportunity to vote;
- Enhancing online voter registration with electronic signatures to make the registration process quicker and easier;
- Ensuring the same early voting locations are available during every election;
- Creating an option for permanent absentee voting for individuals that plan to vote by mail every year; and
- Clarifying and unifying terminology for early voting to remove confusion between early voting and absentee in-person voting.

By adopting the changes in House Bill 1, we can take a step forward to increase the voice of all Alaskans.

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