

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement

SB 87

Alaska continues to face significant fiscal challenges. It is important that the Legislature evaluate business as usual and find efficient and effective changes and updates to our processes and statutes. The State of Alaska has spent on average, over the last ten years, \$196,469,347 on major maintenance (Capital Improvement) for public schools and \$73,581,490 on energy for public schools. These are major cost drivers for schools and school districts in Alaska.

The purpose of this legislation is to increase energy and operating efficiency in our school buildings. The goal is to make schools more affordable, maintainable, and to extend the life of our public school facilities. This legislation aims to achieve this by improving the quality and energy efficiency of the facilities and decreasing facilities' energy costs and consumption.

Senate Bill 87 establishes a working group to develop up-to-date energy efficiency codes/standards and establish options for standardized components appropriate for each climate region in each climate zone.

The working group will establish standardized components for school buildings that improve energy efficiency. They will also establish maximum acceptable costs for construction per square foot for any K-12 facility, adjusted for region and climate zones. This cap on state funding requires designs to prioritize classroom infrastructure and functional design. We must carefully evaluate the facilities we are funding in all areas of the state, while considering the State's investment during this challenging fiscal time.

In so doing, the working group will assess the possibility of co-locating school facilities with other state and local services specifically in rural areas, in an effort to help reduce costs to the State and school districts. This bill will allow for the Department of Education and Early Development, the Alaska Energy Authority, and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to consult with each other regarding all publically owned, rented, and leased spaces and evaluate the possibility of co-location in an effort to reduce costs.

Once the working group has concluded their work and provided recommendations, the Department of Education and Early Development will use those recommendations to develop regulations for all public school projects that are funded by the state at 50% or more.

Thank you in advance for your support of this important legislation.