

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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**Senator Mia Costello**  
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## **Senate Bill 169—Smoke/Fire Dampers & Smoke Ctrl Systems**

### **Sponsor Statement**

*"An Act relating to the inspection and testing of fire dampers, smoke dampers, combination fire and smoke dampers, and smoke control systems; and providing for an effective date."*

Fire dampers, smoke dampers, combination fire smoke dampers, and smoke control systems all work to prevent the spread of fire and smoke in public and commercial buildings. These critical life safety systems allow individuals to exit buildings with significantly reduced risk of smoke inhalation, and they keep pathways clear of smoke and fire for rescue crews.

When a fire breaks out in one room, fire and smoke dampers seal the ductwork to prevent it from transferring rapidly through the walls to many other rooms. Smoke control systems pressurize the air in stairwells to prevent smoke from entering, allowing for safe egress for building occupants and ingress for firefighters.

Most fire-related fatalities are not caused by burns but by smoke inhalation, which these systems are installed to prevent. When fire and smoke dampers go without inspection or testing for many years, the motors and mechanisms can fail, often sealing the ductwork shut. To solve the problem of a blocked air duct, HVAC technicians and maintenance crews often prop the seals open, not understanding their purpose and rendering the systems completely ineffective in the case of an emergency.

Senate Bill 169 would direct the Department of Public Safety to adopt regulations that require the inspection and testing of fire dampers, smoke dampers, and smoke control systems by an individual who has a current fire and life safety certification issued through a program accredited by the American National Standards Institute.