

Alaska State Legislature

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SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 68 (vsn U)

“An Act relating to public notice for certain state actions and public hearings; and providing for an effective date.”

Senate Bill 68 proposes changes to certain public notice requirements relating to certain land and water usages. The bill changes the requirement for public notice by allowing an option to use the Alaska Online Public Notice System. This would provide a new means to the current requirement that notices be posted in a newspaper of general circulation in an affected area. The bill would update, but not substantively change, other requirements for notice by the appropriate commissioner to determine the rights of persons regarding related issues.

By allowing for online public notice, it is possible to save applicants money as opposed to newspaper notice. The changes would utilize the state’s online public notice system, which is available to most Alaskans to view at no cost. Public notices posted on this system are permanently retained for future reference, whereas newspaper notices are difficult to retrieve. Utilizing the online public notice system ensures that Alaskans have equal access to public notices rather than just newspaper subscribers or residents of certain areas. Finally, online public notice would eliminate coordinating issues with newspaper publications and reduces permit processing timeframes.

The public is encouraged to utilize the “Subscriptions” feature on the Alaska Online Public Notice System (<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/>) to tailor what notifications from which departments they wish to receive. The State of Alaska is eager to educate the public on the benefits of using the online notice system. SB 68 enables public notice to be delivered to Alaskans through the Internet.