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House District 35 – West Fairbanks

House Bill 9 – Version A Sponsor Statement

“An Act relating to the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska.”

The University of Alaska has a mission to inspire learning, advance and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, and public service, and emphasize the North and its diverse peoples. The University of Alaska Board of Regents is an eleven-member board responsible with crafting policy and fulfilling the University’s mission. House Bill Nine would add one faculty member to the Board of Regents for a two-year term. The addition of a faculty member would help the Board of Regents advance its mission and provide representation to this key stakeholder group.

Currently, there are six states that require Faculty Regents to be a voting member of their University Board of Regents. These states believe that the interests of the institution are best served when a Faculty Regent is granted voting representation. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities has stated that the University of Alaska system should “create a space for inclusive dialogue as the Board of Regents deliberates on the future of the University of Alaska System.” One way to ensure that this inclusive dialogue occurs through current fiscal stressors as well as future organizational challenges is through the addition of a seat for a qualified Faculty Regent.

As the University has dealt with years of budget cuts and fiscal instability, the Board of Regents has been in the driver’s seat making the tough decisions for the University’s future. Adding one faculty member would provide better representation to this important constituency and create greater dialog on the Board when making decisions for years to come.

Please join me in supporting HB 9 so the University of Alaska provides a seat at the table for its faculty and can continue to fulfill its mission.