

**HOUSE BILL NO. 173**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVE GREEN**

**Introduced: 3/31/99**

**Referred: Judiciary, Finance**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act providing for preparation by the Alaska Legislative Council for**  
2 **redistricting before appointment of the Redistricting Board; and relating to**  
3 **preclearance under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **\* Section 1. FINDINGS.** The legislature finds that

6 (1) redistricting requires

7 (A) the assimilation, compilation, and analysis of large amounts of data  
8 and maps;

9 (B) complex statistical analysis; and

10 (C) a thorough consideration of legal issues under the Constitution of  
11 the State of Alaska and the Constitution of the United States;

12 (2) there is an enormous amount of preparatory work that must be done before  
13 the appointment of the Redistricting Board if the Redistricting Board is to adopt a plan within  
14 30 days after receiving redistricting data from the United States Bureau of the Census;

1 (3) Alaska's redistricting plan will be subject to review by the United States  
2 Department of Justice under 42 U.S.C. 1973 - 1973l (Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended),  
3 and ensuring that the plan complies with the provisions of 42 U.S.C. 1973 - 1973l, as  
4 amended, will require in-depth analysis of voting patterns over the past decade.

5 \* **Sec. 2.** PURPOSE. It is the purpose of this Act to empower the legislative council to  
6 make necessary preparations for redistricting in a timely fashion and to make tools needed for  
7 the task of redistricting available to the Redistricting Board as soon as that body is appointed.

8 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 15.10 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 **Article 2. Redistricting Board.**

10 **Sec. 15.10.200. Voting Rights Act review.** The independent legal counsel for  
11 the Redistricting Board provided for in art. VI, sec. 9, Constitution of the State of  
12 Alaska, shall

13 (1) submit the board's redistricting plan for preclearance to the United  
14 States Department of Justice or the United States District Court for the District of  
15 Columbia under 42 U.S.C. 1973c; and

16 (2) represent the state in all matters concerning redistricting until a final  
17 plan for redistricting and a proclamation of redistricting have been adopted and all  
18 challenges to them brought under art. VI, sec. 11, Constitution of the State of Alaska,  
19 have been resolved after final remand or affirmation.

20 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 24.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

21 **Sec. 24.20.085. Preparation for legislative redistricting.** (a) Upon request  
22 of the Alaska Legislative Council, the Department of Law, the Department of Labor,  
23 and the division of elections shall provide to the legislative council any necessary staff  
24 assistance before the appointment of the Redistricting Board.

25 (b) The legislative council may make arrangements for office space for the  
26 Redistricting Board and its staff before the convening of the Redistricting Board,  
27 including the leasing of appropriate facilities and office equipment.

28 (c) The legislative council shall compile and provide to, or contract with a  
29 third party to compile and provide to, the redistricting board the information necessary  
30 to implement a successful redistricting plan, including

31 (1) paper maps or a computer data base built from the TIGER/Line file

1 received from the United States Bureau of the Census describing all units of census  
2 geography;

3 (2) a computer data base of election and voter registration information  
4 from the division of elections to assist the Redistricting Board in determining  
5 compliance with statutory and constitutional requirements;

6 (3) information indicating the location of cultural, economic,  
7 geographic, demographic, and trade area factors in the state; and

8 (4) information or analysis of state and federal court decisions  
9 concerning reapportionment.

10 (d) The legislative council is responsible for developing a computerized system  
11 that uses census data and maps to prepare plans for state senate and house districts in  
12 conformity with statutory and constitutional criteria and within applicable time  
13 constraints. The legislative council may contract for the acquisition of the computer  
14 software and hardware and for the provision of computer services that are necessary  
15 to prepare for redistricting. The computer system shall be developed so that it can be  
16 made available to the Redistricting Board and used immediately upon the Redistricting  
17 Board's convening.

18 (e) The legislative council

19 (1) shall prepare a budget and an accounting procedure for the  
20 Redistricting Board; and

21 (2) may, upon request of the Redistricting Board, prepare and submit  
22 supplemental appropriation requests for the work of the Board.