

SENATE BILL NO. 237

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR COWDERY

Introduced: 1/12/04

Referred: Labor and Commerce, Health, Education and Social Services

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to the Alaska Railroad workforce development scholarship program."**

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

3 * **Section 1.** AS 42.40.250 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

4 (32) administer the Alaska Railroad workforce development
5 scholarship program.

6 * **Sec. 2.** AS 42.40 is amended by adding a new section to article 8 to read:

7 **Sec. 42.40.895. Workforce development scholarship program.** (a) In order
8 to foster the long-term development of an educated and skilled workforce for the
9 Alaska Railroad, there is established in the corporation the Alaska Railroad workforce
10 development scholarship program.

11 (b) The corporation shall annually award scholarships to qualified residents to
12 attend in-state postsecondary technical and vocational schools and in-state colleges
13 and universities. The scholarships shall be awarded for education and training in
14 management, administration, technical, skilled, and service professions necessary to
15 maintain and operate the Alaska Railroad. The recipient of a scholarship awarded

1 under this section may use the scholarship to pay for tuition, books, supplies, housing,
2 food, transportation, and related educational expenses while enrolled in a qualified
3 education program.

4 (c) The corporation shall award at least \$1,200,000 each year from the
5 corporation's net revenue as scholarships under this section.

6 (d) The board shall adopt rules as the board considers necessary to implement
7 the Alaska Railroad workforce development scholarship program.

8 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska enacted in sec. 1(b), ch. 153, SLA 1984,
9 is amended to read:

10 (b) It is the purpose of this Act to

11 (1) create a viable economic entity with the powers and duties
12 necessary to operate and manage the Alaska Railroad pending eventual transfer of the
13 railroad to the private sector for its ownership or operation or both consistent with 45
14 U.S.C. 1201 - 1214 (Alaska Railroad Transfer Act of 1982);

15 (2) provide for the level of transportation service that best satisfies the
16 needs of the people of the state consistent with the other findings and policies of this
17 section;

18 (3) create a public corporation with the powers, duties, and functions
19 needed to operate the Alaska Railroad and manage its rail, industrial, port, and other
20 properties in the best interest of the people of the state by ensuring that the corporation
21 will

22 (A) be exclusively responsible for the management of the
23 financial and legal obligations of the Alaska Railroad;

24 (B) operate the railroad as a common carrier subject to the
25 jurisdiction of the United States Interstate Commerce Commission consistent
26 with 45 U.S.C. 1207;

27 (C) have the ability to raise capital by issuing bonds upon
28 approval of the legislature exempt from federal and state taxation and applying
29 for federal money to which the state may be entitled or that may be available;

30 (D) carry out its responsibilities on a self-sustaining basis;

31 (E) provide the best possible combination of types and levels of

1 safe, efficient, and economical transportation to meet the overall needs of the
2 state, supported when necessary by state investment;

3 (F) provide for the prudent operation of the railroad according
4 to sound business management practices; and

5 (G) preserve the integrity of the railroad utility corridor for
6 transportation, communication, and transmission purposes;

7 (4) ensure that borrowing by the corporation does not directly or
8 indirectly endanger the state's own borrowing capacity;

9 **(5) provide for development of an educated and skilled workforce**
10 **to operate, maintain, and develop the Alaska Railroad.**