

SJR

7

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO: SJR 7

Revision Date: _____
Title: Proposing amendments... duration
of a regular session.
Sponsor: Senator Frank
Requestor: Senator Frank

Department Affected: Legislative Affairs Agency
BRU: Legislative Council
Component: Session Expenses, Legal Services
Admin. Serv., Public Serv., Leg. Salaries & Allow

COMPONENT SERIAL NO:

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
OPERATING						
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS	0	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>
TOTAL OPERATING	0	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>
CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>	<1,000.0>

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

- Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

SJR 7 reduces the length of the legislative session from 120 days to 100 days. The estimated daily cost of the session is \$50,000 a day. If the session is reduced by 20 days a savings of \$1,000,000 is calculated.

Prepared By: Pamela A. Stoops, Director
Division: Administrative Services

Pamela A. Stoops

Phone: 465-3850
Date: 2/7/91

Approved By: Warren W. Endicott, Executive Director
Agency: Legislative Affairs Agency

Warren W. Endicott

Date: 2/7/91

Distribution (by preparer): Legis

Impacted Agency(ies).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SJR7

Revision Date: 01/29/91 Department Affected: Office of the Governor - Election:
 Title: Amend. to Const. - Duration of reg. BRU: Elections
 Session, est. of St. Rev. submit to Legis. Component: II - Primary and General Elections
 Sponsor: Senator Frank
 Requestor: Judiciary COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 0022

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL		2.2*				
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING		2.2*				

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		2.2*				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		2.2*				

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

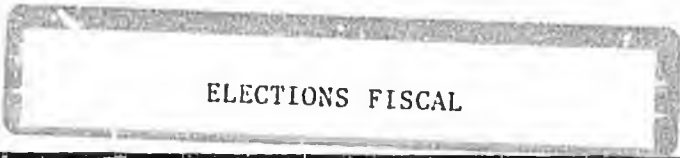
Estimate of current year impact: -0-

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.) * This figure covers cost of inclusion of information about this issue in the Official Election Pamphlet as required by AS 15.58, and programming for DataVote counting of votes cast on this measure. However, only 4 measures can be printed on a single ballot card. Should this measure require printing an additional ballot card, the fiscal impact would be: 53.4.

Prepared By: Linda Edgeworth, Information Officer Phone: 465-4611
 Division: Division of Elections Date: 01/29/91

Approved by Commissioner: Charles E. Thickett
 Agency: Division of Elections Date: 1-29-91

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB, & Impacted Agency(ies).



STEVE FRANK
DISTRICT K
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Alaska State Legislature



Senate

MEMBER
Finance Committee
Resources Committee
Legislative Council
Special Committee on Banking &
Economic Development

VICE-CHAIR
Community & Regional
Affairs Committee

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Members of the Seventeenth Legislature
FROM: Senator Steve Frank
RE: Senate Joint Resolution No. 7

Sometimes important legislation comes in a lengthy package, but other times a bill can accomplish a great deal in just a few words. I believe that this is the case with SJR7, a short resolution that could greatly improve the way the Alaska Legislature does its business.

This resolution proposes a constitutional amendment that would reduce the regular length of the regular legislative sessions from the current 120 days to 100, with the House and Senate actually meeting for only 90 days.

While simply cutting 20 days off the session limit may not seem in itself a startling act of political advancement - and it certainly is not an original idea - this is not the resolutions central provision. More important is the change in how the Legislature would make use of its limited time in session if Alaska voters approved this constitutional amendment.

Under SJR7, the 100-day session would be split into 45-day segments, with a ten day break in the middle. And on the final day of the first 45-day segment, the governor would be required to submit to the Legislature the state's official revenue forecast for the coming fiscal year.

SPONSOR STATEMENT

There are three primary reasons why I believe those changes could be beneficial:

- With an established ten-day break at the mid-session, legislators could count on having time to return to their districts at least once for something more substantial than the hurried weekends that now characterize most home visits during the session. Most legislators, and not a few constituent groups, would welcome such an opportunity to go home and be available to discuss how the session is shaping up and where legislation of interest is going.

- Secondly, along those same lines, the ten day break might well persuade some people to run for office who now find the current situation of having to leave home and family for four months intolerable. This is a major obstacle to holding office for many people, and if we are truly interested in having a "citizen legislature," then we ought to do something to make it easier for more people to participate.

- Finally, getting the revenue forecast from the Governor just as the mid-session break is beginning would be far preferable to the current situation.

Right now we get the Spring forecast in April, when the session has entered the home stretch. There are a thousand other things going on by that point in the session, the agency budgets are well on their way to being completed and there is no time to give the forecast the reflection it deserves.

If we had the numbers to study over the break, the forecast would get more attention, and it certainly would be a major item for discussion during the visit back to the district. We would then return to the capital with a more timely mandate from our constituents, and could finish building the budget with more relevant revenue information.

As stated earlier, these changes may not seem monumental, but I believe they would help legislators do a better job and at the same time, provide an opportunity for more input from constituents and possibly encourage more people to seek legislative office. Any

bill that can achieve those goals in less than two pages is worthy of support, and I think a majority of Alaskan's would ratify this amendment to our constitution.

Alaska State Legislature

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Legislative Research Agency



April 27, 1990

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Steve Frank

FROM: Linda J. Snow *L. Snow*
Legislative Analyst

RE: Correlation Between Length of Legislative Session and Percent of Dedicated State Revenues
Research Request 90.337

You asked this agency to examine the length of states' legislative sessions and the percent of revenues that are dedicated by states to see if a correlation exists.

Tables 1 and 2 present data from all states, showing average length of sessions (including special sessions) over a two-year period, and the percent of state revenues that are dedicated. Table 1 ranks the states by the length of the average legislative session for a two-year period (1986-87), and Table 2 ranks the states by percent of dedicated revenues.

The data for percent of earmarked revenues was obtained from a survey conducted by the National Conference of State Legislatures in 1985 and 1986. We obtained the data about the length of the 1986 and 1987 legislative sessions from the *1988-89 The Book of The States*, and the relevant tables are attached.

Several states are considered to have "full time" legislatures, and although our data indicated that some sessions can last up to two years, we indicated no more than a 365-day session per year, and did not include "special sessions" for these states as they would have had to run concurrently with the regular sessions. The states with "full time" legislatures are California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin¹. We also adjusted our tables for errors in *The Book of The States* regarding the session lengths for New Mexico and Alaska².

¹Brenda Erickson, policy specialist, Legislative Management, National Conference of State Legislatures, personal communication, April 27, 1990.

²Other minor errors may exist of which we are unaware. However, we believe that they would not alter the trends portrayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Senator Frank
April 27, 1990
Page 2

After examination of the tables, it appears that no correlation between proportion of dedicated state revenues and length of legislative session exists, and no statistical testing is needed. However, if you would like this agency to perform more indepth statistical analysis on this or any other subject, please feel free to contact our office.

Attachments

TABLE 1
DEDICATED REVENUES AND LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION
(SORTED BY SESSION LENGTH)
50 State Legislatures, in Calendar Days

STATE	1988 Dedicated Revenues** (%)	Length of Session 1989	1989 Regular Session	1989 Special Sessions
MASSACHUSETTS*	40%	365	365	0
NEW JERSEY	35%	365	365	0
MICHIGAN	34%	365	365	0
ILLINOIS	18%	365	365	0
OHIO	18%	365	365	0
CALIFORNIA	12%	365	365	0
PENNSYLVANIA	9%	365	365	0
WISCONSIN	8%	365	365	0
NEW YORK*	6%	365	365	0
OKLAHOMA	24%	284	144	140
NORTH CAROLINA	5%	215	214	1
MAINE	17%	199	197	2
TEXAS	17%	199	140	59
RHODE ISLAND	4%	185	185	0
OREGON	53%	177	177	0
NEW HAMPSHIRE	3%	177	176	1
KANSAS*	25%	176	174	2
DELAWARE	8%	173	172	1
NEVADA	40%	168	157	1
SOUTH CAROLINA	87%	164	164	0
ARIZONA	32%	164	159	5
CONNECTICUT	7%	155	155	0
NEBRASKA	19%	151	141	10
MISSOURI	37%	146	129	17
MINNESOTA	15%	143	140	3
MONTANA	65%	137	111	26
TENNESSEE	62%	136	136	0
WASHINGTON	30%	135	105	30
COLORADO	4%	131	120	11
VERMONT	13%	124	124	0
ALASKA	8%	121	121	0
INDIANA	27%	119	116	3
IOWA	20%	119	119	0
ALABAMA	89%	112	94	18
NORTH DAKOTA	22%	107	107	0
MISSISSIPPI	25%	101	98	3
LOUISIANA	9%	100	80	20
HAWAII	5%	99	99	0
WEST VIRGINIA	21%	98	90	8
MARYLAND	19%	90	90	0
ARKANSAS	18%	87	83	4
IDAHO	24%	85	85	0
FLORIDA	47%	70	61	9
SOUTH DAKOTA	22%	70	70	0
GEORGIA	7%	65	64	1
NEW MEXICO	34%	61	61	0
WYOMING*	69%	51	51	0
VIRGINIA	61%	50	46	4
UTAH*	48%	50	45	5
KENTUCKY*	16%	5	4	1

*Dedicated revenue data for 1988 not available for these states. Used 1984 data.

**Preliminary data.

Prepared by the Legislative Research Agency, April 1990 (90.337).

TABLE 2
DEDICATED REVENUES AND LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION
(SORTED BY PERCENTAGE OF DEDICATED REVENUES)
50 State Legislatures, in Calendar Days

STATE	1988 Dedicated Revenues** (%)	Length of Session 1989	1989 Regular Session	1989 Special Sessions
ALABAMA	89%	112	94	18
SOUTH CAROLINA	87%	164	164	0
WYOMING*	69%	51	51	0
MONTANA	65%	137	111	26
TENNESSEE	62%	136	136	0
VIRGINIA	61%	50	46	4
OREGON	53%	177	177	0
UTAH*	48%	50	45	5
FLORIDA	47%	70	61	9
MASSACHUSETTS*	40%	365	365	0
NEVADA	40%	168	167	1
MISSOURI	37%	146	129	17
NEW JERSEY	35%	365	365	0
MICHIGAN	34%	365	365	0
NEW MEXICO	34%	61	61	0
ARIZONA	32%	164	159	5
WASHINGTON	30%	135	105	30
INDIANA	27%	119	116	3
KANSAS*	25%	176	174	2
MISSISSIPPI	25%	101	98	3
OKLAHOMA	24%	284	144	140
IDAHO	24%	85	85	0
NORTH DAKOTA	22%	107	107	0
SOUTH DAKOTA	22%	70	70	0
WEST VIRGINIA	21%	98	90	8
IOWA	20%	119	119	0
NEBRASKA	19%	151	141	10
MARYLAND	19%	90	90	0
ILLINOIS	18%	365	365	0
OHIO	18%	365	365	0
ARKANSAS	18%	87	83	4
TEXAS	17%	199	140	59
MAINE	17%	199	197	2
KENTUCKY*	16%	5	4	1
MINNESOTA	15%	143	140	3
VERMONT	13%	124	124	0
CALIFORNIA	12%	365	365	0
PENNSYLVANIA	9%	365	365	0
LOUISIANA	9%	100	80	20
WISCONSIN	8%	365	365	0
DELAWARE	8%	173	172	1
ALASKA	8%	121	121	0
CONNECTICUT	7%	155	155	0
GEORGIA	7%	65	64	1
NEW YORK*	6%	365	365	0
NORTH CAROLINA	5%	215	214	1
HAWAII	5%	99	99	0
RHODE ISLAND	4%	185	185	0
COLORADO	4%	131	120	11
NEW HAMPSHIRE	3%	177	176	1

*Dedicated revenue data for 1988 not available for these states. Used 1984 data.

**Preliminary data.

Prepared by the Legislative Research Agency, April 1990 (90.337).

TABLE 1
DEDICATED REVENUES AND LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION
(SORTED BY SESSION LENGTH)
50 State Legislatures, in Calendar Days

STATE	Dedicated Revenues (%)	Average Session 1986-87	1986 Session	1987 Session	1986 Special Sessions	1987 Special Sessions
WISCONSIN	12%	365	365	365	0	0
NEW JERSEY	39%	364	364	364	0	0
CALIFORNIA	13%	364	363	365	0	0
MASSACHUSETTS	40%	362	365	359	0	0
OHIO	18%	362	359	365	0	0
MICHIGAN	39%	354	357	351	0	0
PENNSYLVANIA	15%	342	324	360	0	0
ILLINOIS	18%	331	365	297	0	0
NEW YORK	6%	268	177	359	0	0
DELAWARE	5%	254	178	169	1	160
COLORADO	25%	192	139	218	27	0
OKLAHOMA	43%	180	158	192	0	9
MAINE	20%	173	99	210	4	32
RHODE ISLAND	1%	172	171	171	0	1
SOUTH CAROLINA	55%	161	157	164	0	0
KANSAS	25%	151	155	140	0	6
NEW HAMPSHIRE	24%	149	154	143	0	0
MISSOURI	29%	147	118	175	0	0
WEST VIRGINIA	21%	142	61	152	70	1
ARIZONA	29%	141	132	138	0	12
INDIANA	33%	141	117	163	0	1
NORTH CAROLINA	8%	136	42	229	1	0
CONNECTICUT	1%	134	92	147	28	1
NEBRASKA	29%	130	99	143	17	0
IOWA	13%	128	121	130	0	4
VERMONT	23%	127	117	136	0	0
ALASKA	2%	122	120	120	0	3
ALABAMA	89%	114	105	105	17	0
TENNESSEE	26%	113	114	111	0	0
TEXAS	20%	113	0	140	53	32
HAWAII	5%	108	108	100	7	0
MISSISSIPPI	30%	99	99	90	5	3
WASHINGTON	26%	96	59	105	0	27
MARYLAND	24%	90	90	90	0	0
MINNESOTA	13%	89	43	133	1	1
OREGON	19%	84	0	168	0	0
IDAHO	32%	82	83	80	0	0
LOUISIANA	4%	77	72	76	6	0
NEVADA	52%	76	0	151	0	0
FLORIDA	28%	73	61	61	1	23
SOUTH DAKOTA	32%	67	63	70	0	1
MONTANA	60%	66	0	109	23	0
GEORGIA	9%	66	62	70	0	0
UTAH	48%	66	45	45	11	30
VIRGINIA	24%	60	60	46	13	1
KENTUCKY	16%	55	99	0	0	10
NORTH DAKOTA	21%	54	0	104	4	0
ARKANSAS	18%	54	0	99	0	8
NEW MEXICO	44%	47	30	60	2	2
WYOMING	69%	42	27	49	4	4

Source: Council of State Governments, "1988-89 The Book of the States;" and 1985 and 1986 NCSL survey.

Prepared by the Legislative Research Agency, April 1990 (90-337A).

TABLE 2
 DEDICATED REVENUES AND LENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION
 (SORTED BY DEDICATED REVENUES)
 50 State Legislatures, in Calendar Days

STATE	Dedicated Revenues (%)	Average Session 1986-87	1986 Session	1987 Session	1986 Special Sessions	1987 Special Sessions
ALABAMA	89%	114	105	105	17	0
WYOMING	69%	42	27	49	4	4
MONTANA	60%	66	0	109	23	0
SOUTH CAROLINA	55%	161	157	164	0	0
NEVADA	52%	76	0	151	0	0
UTAH	48%	66	45	45	11	30
NEW MEXICO	44%	47	30	60	2	2
OKLAHOMA	43%	180	158	192	0	9
MASSACHUSETTS	40%	362	365	359	0	0
NEW JERSEY	39%	364	364	364	0	0
MICHIGAN	39%	354	357	351	0	0
INDIANA	33%	141	117	163	0	1
IDAHO	32%	82	83	80	0	0
SOUTH DAKOTA	32%	67	63	70	0	1
MISSISSIPPI	30%	99	99	90	5	3
MISSOURI	29%	147	118	175	0	0
ARIZONA	29%	141	132	138	0	12
NEBRASKA	29%	130	99	143	17	0
FLORIDA	28%	73	61	61	1	23
TENNESSEE	26%	113	114	111	0	0
WASHINGTON	26%	96	59	105	0	27
COLORADO	25%	192	139	218	27	0
KANSAS	25%	151	155	140	0	6
NEW HAMPSHIRE	24%	149	154	143	0	0
MARYLAND	24%	90	90	90	0	0
VIRGINIA	24%	60	60	46	13	1
VERMONT	23%	127	117	136	0	0
WEST VIRGINIA	21%	142	61	152	70	1
NORTH DAKOTA	21%	54	0	104	4	0
MAINE	20%	173	99	210	4	32
TEXAS	20%	113	0	140	53	32
OREGON	19%	84	0	168	0	0
OHIO	18%	362	359	365	0	0
ILLINOIS	18%	331	365	297	0	0
ARKANSAS	18%	54	0	99	0	8
KENTUCKY	16%	55	99	0	0	10
PENNSYLVANIA	15%	342	324	360	0	0
CALIFORNIA	13%	364	363	365	0	0
IOWA	13%	128	121	130	0	4
MINNESOTA	13%	89	43	133	1	1
WISCONSIN	12%	365	365	365	0	0
GEORGIA	9%	66	62	70	0	0
NORTH CAROLINA	8%	136	42	229	1	0
NEW YORK	6%	268	177	359	0	0
DELAWARE	5%	254	178	169	1	160
HAWAII	5%	108	108	100	7	0
LOUISIANA	4%	77	72	76	6	0
ALASKA	2%	122	120	120	0	3
RHODE ISLAND	1%	172	171	171	0	1
CONNECTICUT	1%	134	92	147	28	1

Table L
Proportion of Tax Revenues Earmarked by State,
Fiscal Years 1954, 1963, 1979, and 1984

State	1954	1963	1979	1984
New England				
Connecticut	26%	23%	0%	1%
Maine	46	39	19	20
Massachusetts	56	54	41	40
New Hampshire	53	54	31	24
Rhode Island	6	4	0	1
Vermont	42	39	23	23
Mid-Atlantic				
Delaware	0	3	0	5
Maryland	47	40	34	24
New Jersey	7	2	25	39
New York	13	10	0	6
Pennsylvania	41	63	15	15
Great Lakes				
Illinois	39	43	14	18
Indiana	49	39	43	33
Michigan	67	67	38	39
Ohio	48	48	21	18
Wisconsin	63	61	N/A	12
Plains				
Iowa	61	44	19	13
Kansas	77	66	29	25
Minnesota	73	74	12	13
Missouri	67	40	20	29
Nebraska	55	63	41	29
North Dakota	73	43	29	21
South Dakota	59	54	33	32
Southeast				
Alabama	89	87	88	89
Arkansas	41	36	21	18
Florida	40	39	28	28
Georgia	29	22	11	9
Kentucky	46	29	N/A	16
Louisiana	85	87	5	4
Mississippi	40	37	N/A	30
North Carolina	38	30	20	8
South Carolina	69	62	56	55
Tennessee	72	77	60	26
Virginia	39	32	27	24
West Virginia	67	39	21	21
Southwest				
Arizona	47	51	31	29
New Mexico	80	31	36	44
Oklahoma	62	59	N/A	43
Texas	81	66	54	20
Rocky Mountain				
Colorado	75	51	17	25
Idaho	51	44	38	32
Montana	61	53	55	60
Utah	74	62	52	48
Wyoming	61	64	54	69
Far West				
Alaska	N/A	6	1	2
California	42	28	12	13
Hawaii	N/A	7	5	5
Nevada	55	35	34	52
Oregon	37	36	23	19
Washington	35	30	29	26
Average	61	41	25	21

Note: N/A—Not available.

Source: 1954 and 1963, Tax Foundation, *Earmarked State Taxes*; 1979, Montana, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, memo (March 19, 1980); 1984 NCSL survey conducted in 1985 and 1986.

LEGISLATURES

Table 3.15
BILL AND RESOLUTION INTRODUCTIONS AND ENACTMENTS:
1986 AND 1987 REGULAR SESSIONS

State	Duration of session ^a	Introductions		Enactments		Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session
		Bills	Resolutions	Bills	Resolutions		
Alabama	Jan. 14-April 28, 1986	1,577	985	280	344	N.A.	105C
	April 21-Aug. 3, 1987	1,883	755	537	689	12	105C
Alaska	Jan. 3-May 12, 1986	429	100	146	39	5	120C
	Jan. 9-May 20, 1987	637	96	178	67	3	122C
Arizona	Jan. 3-May 14, 1986	956	63	420	20	12	125C
	Jan. 2, May 19, 1987	937	34	369	8	5	127C
Arkansas	No regular session in 1986						
	Jan. 12-April 20, 1987	176	297	1,072	191	67	82C
California	Dec. 3, 1984-Nov. 30, 1986 (c)	3,067	360	3,128	322	361	(a)
	Dec. 1, 1986-Nov. 30, 1987 (c)	4,389	274	1,034	115	96(b)	(a)
Colorado	Jan. 8-May 27, 1986	523	N.A.	267	N.A.	11 (b)	140C
	Jan. 7-Aug 13, 1987	634	N.A.	338	N.A.	18	219C
Connecticut	Feb. 5-May 7, 1986	1,736	207	493	N.A.	6	65L
	Jan. 7-June 3, 1987	3,877	252	701	N.A.	2	106L
Delaware	Jan. 4-June 30, 1986	640	300	300	N.A.	13	52L
	Jan. 13-June 30, 1987	682	436	194	16	7	53L
Florida	April 8-June 7, 1986	2,546	205	465	155	3 (b)	61C
	April 7-June 6, 1987	2,698	165	535	135	13	61C
Georgia	Jan. 5-March 7, 1986	1,250	839	907	748	6	40L
	Jan. 2-March 12, 1987	1,574	779	799	661	9	40L
Hawaii	Jan. 5-April 23, 1986	2,239	976	348	425	19	99C
	Jan. 21-April 30, 1987	3,716	1,185	384	504	34	100C
Idaho	Jan. 6-March 28, 1986	663	88	356	28	8	82C
	Jan. 12-April 1, 1987	619	88	367	49	3	80C
Illinois	Jan. 8, 1986-Jan. 13, 1987	1,926	1,887	373	1,791	76	51L
	Jan. 14-Nov. 6, 1987	4,497	1,882	784	1,753	254(b)	69L
Indiana	Nov. 9, 1985-March 5, 1986	956	18 (d)	248	3 (d)	5 (b)	30L
	Nov. 18, 1986-April 29, 1987	1,420	19 (d)	371	6 (d)	2	61L
Iowa	Jan. 3-May 3, 1986	799	105	201	24	2	110C
	Jan. 2-May 10, 1987	609	149	234	45	9	119C
Kansas	Jan. 3-June 6, 1986	938 (e)	52 (e, f)	400	33 (f)	17 (g)	(a)
	Jan. 2-May 21, 1987	1,063	44 (f)	404	19 (f)	5 (g)	69L
Kentucky	Jan. 7-April 15, 1986	1,388	384	462	317	2	57L
	No regular session in 1987						
Louisiana	April 21-July 1, 1986	3,235	169	1,083	4	23	(a)
	April 20-July 3, 1987	2,525	116	944	5	6	(a)
Maine	Jan. 8-April 16, 1986	519	43	341	37	0	56L
	Dec. 3, 1986-June 30, 1987	1,883	51	692	48	11	92L
Maryland	Jan. 8-April 7, 1986	2,938	127	865	43	122	66C
	Jan. 14-April 13, 1987	2,668	113	778	25	95	65C
Massachusetts	Jan. 1, 1986-Jan. 6, 1987	8,824	(h)	712	N.A.	3 (b, g)	371C
	Jan. 7, 1987-(i)	(i)	(j)	(j)	(j)	(j)	(f)
Michigan	Jan. 8-Dec. 30, 1986	587	16 (k)	332	3 (k)	6	357C
	Jan. 14-Dec. 30, 1987	1,503	26 (k)	286	0	2	351C
Minnesota	Feb. 3-March 17, 1986	1,625	21	166	2	1	26L
	Jan. 6-May 18, 1987	3,241	38	405	9	1 (g)	55L
Mississippi	Jan. 7-April 15, 1986	2,390	500	514	200	10	99C
	Jan. 6-April 5, 1987	2,472	438	569	229	5 (b)	90C
Missouri	Jan. 8-May 5, 1986	1,193	66	244	6	15	128C
	Jan. 7-June 30, 1987	1,334	85	203	9	15 (l)	175C
Montana	No regular session in 1986						
	Jan. 5-April 23, 1987	1,308	86	738	57	4	90L
Nebraska	Jan. 8-April 16, 1986	531	143	316	97	14 (b)	60L
	Jan. 7-May 29, 1987	787	245	358	134	3 (b)	90L

LEGISLATURES

1986 AND 1987 REGULAR SESSIONS—Continued

Bills introduced by sponsor	Length of session	State	Duration of session*	Introductions		Enactments		Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session
				Bills	Resolutions	Bills	Resolutions		
A.	105C	Nevada	No regular session in 1986						
12	105C		Jan. 19-June 18, 1987	1,491	235	824	164	3	151C
5	120C	New Hampshire	Jan. 8-June 10, 1986	733	4	230	3	5	17L
3	122C		Jan. 6-May 28, 1987	1,062	4	416	1	8	29L
12	125C	New Jersey	Jan. 14, 1986-Jan. 12, 1987	7,120	581	211	8 (d)	24	61L
5	127C		Jan. 13, 1987-Jan. 11, 1988	2,154	197	460	11 (d)	57	43L
67	82C	New Mexico	Jan. 21, 1986-Feb. 20, 1987	592	36	120	9	4	50C
361	(a)		Jan. 20-March 21, 1987	1,415	33	399	3	44	60C
96(b)	(a)	New York	Jan. 8-July 3, 1986	5,842	3,896	939	3,883	65	(m)
11(b)	140C		Jan. 7, 1987-(i)	15,095	3,667	855	3,651	26	(i)
18	219C	North Carolina	June 5-July 16, 1986	1,172	55	239	25	N.A.	(n)
6	65L		Feb. 9-Aug. 14, 1987	3,723	93	879	37	N.A.	(a)
2	106L	North Dakota	No regular session in 1986						
13	52L		Jan. 6-April 19, 1987	1,239	174	761	137	6	73L
7	53L	Ohio	Jan. 6-Dec. 30, 1986	431	N.A.	44	N.A.	1	96L
3(b)	61C	(n)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	(n)	
13	61C	Oklahoma	Jan. 7-June 13, 1986	722	186 (o)	321	10	7	90L
6	40L		Jan. 6-July 16, 1987	866	272	238	83	33	(a)
9	40L	Oregon	No regular session in 1986						
19	99C		Jan. 12-June 28, 1987	2,571	144	906	60	15 (b)	168C
34	100C	Pennsylvania	Jan. 7-Nov. 26, 1986	1,349	231 (p)	275	152	6 (b)	(a)
8	82C		Jan. 6-(q)	3,312	405 (r)	145	234	2	(a)
3	80C	Rhode Island	Jan. 7-June 26, 1986	3,263	279	931	279	59 (b)	82L
76	51L		Jan. 6-June 25, 1987	3,601	276	1,083	276	55 (b)	75L
254(b)	69L	South Carolina	Jan. 14-June 19, 1986	1,047	(h)	328	(h)	11 (b)	91L
5(b)	30L		Jan. 13-June 25, 1987	2,165 (b)	(b)	791	(h)	8 (b)	94L
2	61L	South Dakota	Jan. 14-March 17, 1986	684	95	424	37	13 (b)	35L
2	110C		Jan. 13-March 23, 1987	656	108	387	99	11	40L
9	119C	Tennessee	Jan. 15-May 14, 1986	4,157	262	1,141 (s)	245	10 (b)	(a)
17(g)	(a)		Jan. 17-May 7, 1987	2,651	105	578 (s)	92	1	(a)
5(g)	69L	Texas	No regular session in 1986						
2	57L		Jan. 13-June 1, 1987	4,179	2,070	1,185	1,649	52	140C
23	(a)	Utah	Jan. 13-Feb. 26, 1986	664	101	222	53	8	45C
6	(a)		Jan. 12-Feb. 25, 1987	595	80	255	53	4	45C
0	56L	Vermont	Jan. 7-May 3, 1986	493	108	116	79	3	70L
11	92L		Jan. 7-May 22, 1987	698	110	136	85	0	83L
122	66C	Virginia	Jan. 8-March 8, 1986	1,603	387	644	283	4	55C
95	65C		Jan. 14-Feb. 28, 1987	1,621	322	981	256	1	46C
3(b, c)	371C	Washington	Jan. 13-March 12, 1986	1,426	98	325	23	47	60C
(j)	(i)		Jan. 12-April 26, 1987	2,334	129	528	26	74	105C
6	357C	West Virginia	Jan. 8-March 9, 1986	1,911	180	199	49	26 (b)	61C
2	351C		Jan. 14-June 14, 1987	1,978	267	164	98	015 (b)	60C (i)
1	36L	Wisconsin	Jan. 7, 1985-Jan. 5, 1987	1,624	212	293	83	11	127L
10	99C		Jan. 5, 1987-Jan. 3, 1989 (u)	1,609	201	232 (v)	110	10	730C
5(b)	90C	Wyoming	Feb. 17-March 15, 1986	209	7	130	7	6	N.A.
15	128C		Jan. 13-March 2, 1987	781	N.A.	242	4	4	40L
15 (l)	175C	American Samoa	Jan. 13-April 3, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	45L
4	90L		July 14-Sept. 30, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	45L
14 (b)	60L		Jan. 12-March 27, 1987	136 (w)	91 (w)	32 (w)	44 (w)	8 (w)	N.A.
3 (b)	90L		July 13-Sept. 25, 1987	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Puerto Rico	Jan. 13-June 5, 1986	705	1,582	152	148	23	144C
			Jan. 12-May 18, 1987	613	1,170	93	117	27	127C
		Virgin Islands	Jan. 13, 1986-Jan. 12, 1987	485	47	145	25	27 (b)	22C
			Jan. 16, 1987-Dec. 14, 1987	143	53	70	39	7	22C

LEGISLATURES

1986 AND 1987 REGULAR SESSIONS—Continued

*Actual adjournment dates are listed regardless of constitutional or statutory limitations. For more information on provisions, see Table 3.2, "Legislative Sessions: Legal Provisions."

Key:

C—Calendar day.

L—Legislative day (in some states, called a session or workday; definition may vary slightly, however, generally refers to any day on which either chamber of the legislature is in session).

N.A.—Not available.

(a) California: 1984-86 Senate = 254L; Assembly = 251L; 1986-87 Senate = 131L; Assembly = 228L; Kansas: 1986 Senate = 69L; House = 70L; Louisiana: 1986 Senate = 43L; House = 37L; North Carolina: 1986 Senate = 30L; House = 29L; 1987 Senate = 131L; House = 134L; Oklahoma: 1987 Senate = 89L (Adjourned on July 17, 1987); House = 90L; Pennsylvania: 1986 Senate = 64L; House = 72L; 1987 Senate = 86L; House = 82L; Tennessee: 1986 Senate = 37L; House = 36L; 1987 Senate = 44L; House = 43L.

(b) Number of vetoes overridden: California: 1987 - 1 (House); Colorado: 1986 - 3; Florida: 1986 - 1; Illinois: 1987 - 29; Indiana: 1986 - 1; Massachusetts: 1986-1987 - 1; Mississippi: 1987 - 2; Nebraska: 1986 - 6, 1987 - 3; Oregon: 1987 - 4; Pennsylvania: 1986 - 1; Rhode Island: 1986 - 2, 1987 - 2; South Carolina: 1986 - 5, 1987 - 4; South Dakota: 1986 - 3; Tennessee: 1986 - 6; West Virginia: 1986 - 1, 1987 - 5; Virgin Islands: 1986 - 10.

(c) After organizational session in December, legislature recesses until the first Monday in January of the odd-numbered year and continues in session until Nov. 30 of the next even-numbered year.

(d) Joint resolutions.

(e) Plus carryover legislation from the previous session. Kansas - 373 bills, 30 resolutions.

(f) Concurrent resolutions.

(g) Plus line item vetoes. Kansas: 1986 - 3, 1987 - 2; Massachusetts: 1986 - 4; Minnesota: 1987 - 1.

(h) Figures given under bill introductions include resolution introductions.

(i) Still in session as of November 30, 1987.

(j) Totals not available as still in session as of November 30, 1987.

(k) Includes joint.

(l) Veto information not available.

(m) Session is divided into "workdays" during which the legislature is actually meeting in session, and "legislative days" in which only one or two legislators perfunctorily open and adjourn for the day in order to speed up the bill consideration process. In 1986, the Senate met for 151C and 73L.

(n) Final figures not available.

(o) Includes joint, concurrent, and single-house resolutions.

(p) Also, 13 Sunset Review Resolution Introductions.

(q) Senate adjourned on January 5, 1988; House on December 13, 1987.

(r) Also, 1 Sunset Review Resolution Introductions.

(s) Public and private acts.

(t) Extended 24 legislative days.

(u) Scheduled end of regular session. All information as of April 8, 1988.

(v) 194 bills pending action.

(w) Totals include those for special sessions as well.

LEGISLATURES

Table 3.16
BILL AND RESOLUTION INTRODUCTIONS AND ENACTMENTS:
1986 AND 1987 SPECIAL SESSIONS

State	Duration of session*	Introductions		Enactments		Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session
		Bills	Resolutions	Bills	Resolutions		
Alabama	Sept. 8-Sept. 24, 1986 No special sessions in 1987	269	N.A.	57	79	N.A.	30C
Alaska	No special sessions in 1986 July 1-July 3, 1987	4	2	5	1	0(a)	3C
Arizona	No special sessions in 1986 Jan. 21-Jan. 25, 1987 June 29-July 2, 1987 July 20-July 22, 1987	11 6 3	1 0 0	3 4 3	0 0 0	0 0 0	5C 4C 2C
Arkansas	No special sessions in 1986 June 2-June 5, 1987 Oct. 6-Oct. 9, 1987	100 10	18 6	61 3	13 3	1 0	4C 4C
California	Sept. 8-Nov. 30, 1986 Nov. 9-Nov. 10, 1987	3 17	3 2	0 4	2 1	0 0	(b) 2L
Colorado	Aug. 8-Sept. 3, 1986 No special sessions in 1987	18	N.A.	17	N.A.	0	27C
Connecticut	May 21-June 6, 1986 June 11-June 13, 1986 June 23-June 30, 1986 July 22-July 22, 1987	2 1 2 2	12 7 28 18	2 1 2 2	N.A. N.A. N.A. N.A.	1 0 0 0	2L 3L 2L 1L
Delaware	Sept. 18-Sept. 18, 1986 July 7-Dec. 8, 1987(c)	0 N.A.	0 N.A.	1 N.A.	0 N.A.	0 N.A.	1L N.A.
Florida	June 19-June 19, 1986 Feb. 4-Feb. 4, 1987 Sept. 21-Oct. 8, 1987 Oct. 12-Oct. 15, 1987	15 5 45 5	0 1 6 1	9 2 12 2	0 1 6 1	0 0 1 0	1C 1C 18C 4C
Georgia	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Hawaii	July 24-July 30, 1986 No special sessions in 1987	12	0	2	0	0	7C
Idaho	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Illinois	Nov. 18, 1986-Jan. 13, 1987 July 1-July 1, 1987	19 0	13 11	0 2	13 11	0(d) 0	8L 1L
Indiana	No special sessions in 1986 April 30-April 30, 1987	20	0	19	0	0	1L
Iowa	No special sessions in 1986 June 4-June 6, 1987 Oct. 27-Oct. 27, 1987	2 2	8 1	1 1	2 1	0 0	3C 1C
Kansas	No special sessions in 1986 Aug. 31-Sept. 5, 1987	10	9(e)	0	3(e)	0	6L
Kentucky	No special sessions in 1986 Oct. 14-Oct. 23, 1987	3	50	2	50	0	8L
Louisiana	Dec. 4-Dec. 9, 1986 No special sessions in 1987	238	16	38	0	2	(b)
Maine	May 28-May 30, 1986 Oct. 28-Oct. 28, 1986 Oct. 9-Oct. 9, 1987 Oct. 21-Nov. 20, 1987	25 10 33 19	0 1 0 0	25 10 28 12	1 1 0 0	0 0 2 2	4L 1L 1L 4L
Maryland	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Massachusetts	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Michigan	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Minnesota	April 2-April 2, 1986 June 25-June 25, 1987	4 13	0 0	3 5	0 0	0 0	1L 1L
Mississippi	May 28-June 1, 1986 Aug. 27-Aug. 29, 1987	14 38	13 20	1 21	9 19	0 0	5L 3C
Missouri	No special sessions in 1986/1987						

LEGISLATURES

1986 AND 1987 SPECIAL SESSIONS—Continued

State	Duration of session*	Introductions		Enactments		Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session
		Bills	Resolutions	Bills	Resolutions		
Montana	March 24-March 29, 1986	33	5	17	5	0	6L
	June 16-July 1, 1986	77	5	45	2	0	14L
	No special sessions in 1987						
Nebraska	Nov. 12-Nov. 20, 1986	3	6	3	5	0	7L
	Dec. 5-Dec. 12, 1986	5	3	3	3	0	7L
	No special sessions in 1987						
Nevada	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
New Hampshire	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
New Jersey	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
New Mexico	June 23-June 24, 1986	10	0	2	0	0	2C
	July 11-July 12, 1987	2	1	2	1	0	2C
New York	(f)						
	No special sessions in 1987						
North Carolina	Feb. 18-Feb. 18, 1986	13	1	7	1	N.A.	1L
	No special sessions in 1987						
North Dakota	Dec. 2-Dec. 5, 1986	10	2	7	2	0	4L
	No special sessions in 1987						
Ohio	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Oklahoma	No special sessions in 1986						
	July 6-July 6, 1987	1	1	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1L
	July 7-July 14, 1987 (g)	1	1	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	2L
Oregon	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Pennsylvania	No special sessions in 1986						
	Nov. 9-Nov. 30, 1987	61	2	0	0	0	(b)
Rhode Island	No special sessions in 1986						
	Sept. 8-Sept. 8, 1987	6	2	6	2	0	1L
South Carolina	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
South Dakota	No special sessions in 1986						
	July 16-July 16, 1987	3	1	3	1	0	1L
Tennessee	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Texas	Aug. 6-Sept. 4, 1986	157	19	254	197	0	30C
	Sept. 8-Sept. 30, 1986	142	273	33	231	1	23C
	June 2-June 3, 1987	16	10	6	6	0	2C
	June 22-July 21, 1987	286	524	78	415	1	30C
Utah	May 13-May 14, 1986	23	5	16	4	0	2L
	June 18-June 18, 1986	1	1	1	1	0	1L
	Nov. 18-Nov. 23, 1986	14	1	5	1	0	4L
	May 20-June 17, 1987	22	0	20	0	0	2L
Vermont	No special sessions in 1986/1987						
Virginia	Sept. 15-Sept. 27, 1986	41	21	16	19	0	12C
	April 8-April 8, 1987	2	9	2	9	0	1L
Washington	No special sessions in 1986						
	April 27-May 21, 1987 (h)	2 (h)	5 (h)	14 (h)	8 (h)	0 (h)	27C
	Aug. 10-Aug. 10, 1987 (b)						
	Oct. 10-Oct. 10, 1987 (b)						
West Virginia	May 15-May 30, 1986	100	13	25	12	5 (i)	10L
	July 18-Sept. 9, 1986	24	35	7	14	1	9L
	Dec. 8-Dec. 8, 1987	3	7	2	5	2	1L
Wisconsin	Jan. 27-May 30, 1986	1	4	1	3 (j)	1	34L
	March 24-March 26, 1986	1	1	1	1	0	3L
	May 20-May 29, 1986	44	3	12	3	0	6L
	July 15-July 15, 1986	3	1	2	1	0	1L
	Sept. 15-Sept. 16, 1987	2	1	2	1	0	2C
	Nov. 18-(k)	6 (l)	3 (l)	0 (l)	2 (l)	2 (l)	(k)

LEGISLATURES

1986 AND 1987 SPECIAL SESSIONS—Continued

Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session	State	Duration of session*	Introductions		Enactments		Measures vetoed by governor	Length of session
				Bills	Resolutions	Bills	Resolutions		
0	6L	Wyoming	June 16-June 19, 1986	8	3	6	2	N.A.	4C
0	14L		May 19-May 22, 1987	10	0	5	0	0	4C
0	7L	American Samoa	March 13-March 22, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
0	7L		April 21-April 25, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
			May 14-May 20, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
			June 10-June 11, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
			Nov. 24-Dec. 3, 1986	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		March 27-April 6, 1987	(m)	(m)	(m)	(m)	(m)	N.A.	
		Puerto Rico	June 6-June 23, 1986	18	15	5	2	N.A.	18L
			Aug. 13-Sept. 1, 1986	19	23	11	6	2	20L
			Dec. 18-Dec. 24, 1986	3	6	8	0	N.A.	7L
0	2C		May 19-May 19, 1987	0	0	0	1	N.A.	1L
0	2C		June 4-June 23, 1987	14	13	10	40	N.A.	20L
			Sept. 8-Sept. 27, 1987	21	16	9	1	N.A.	20L
		Oct. 26-Oct. 26, 1987	1	1	N.A.	4	N.A.	1L	
N.A.	1L	Virgin Islands	March 23-March 25, 1986 (b)	4	0	4	0	0	1C
			Oct. 24-Oct. 24, 1986 (b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	(b)	1C
		No special sessions in 1987							

*Actual adjournment dates are listed regardless of constitutional or statutory limitations. For more information on provisions, see Table 3.2, "Legislative Sessions: Legal Provisions."
 Key:
 C—Calendar day
 L—Legislative day
 N.A.—Not available
 (a) 2 line items overridden.
 (b) California: 1986 Senate 63L, Assembly 69C. Louisiana: 1986 Senate 13L, House 16L. Pennsylvania: 1987 Senate 14L, House 13L.
 (c) Final data not available.
 (d) 11 vetoes overridden; includes amendatory and item vetoes and restore reductions.
 (e) Concurrent resolutions.
 (f) Special session was held Dec. 6 - Dec. 31, 1986; information not available.
 (g) Senate adjourned July 7.
 (h) Figures given include totals for all special sessions.
 (i) 5 vetoes overridden.
 (j) Partial veto.
 (k) In session as of April 8, 1988.
 (l) Totals as of April 8, 1988.
 (m) Included in numbers given in Table 3.15, "Bill and Resolution Introductions and Enactments: 1986 and 1987." Separate figures not available.

Juice

QUALITY SERVICES

Date MAY 11 1990

Fairbanks
Daily News Miner

Client No. 616

Session limits force lawmakers into action

616

When I covered legislatures in the mid-1970s, there was no limit to the length of the session. Legislative action dragged on until mid-June, taking years off the lives of everyone involved.

Since 1984 a constitutional amendment limits sessions to 120 days. Still, the Legislature's work proceeded at such a dismal pace this year that a constitutional amendment for a 90-day limit moved swiftly out of the Senate Sunday to die just one move short of a House floor vote Tuesday.

The 90-day limit amendment, SJR 63, was introduced by Sen. Steve Frank, R-Fairbanks, and attracted five early co-sponsors when it was introduced Jan. 19.

As amended, SJR 63 would have the Legislature meet for 45 days, take a 10-day break, then return to work for 45 days. The idea might have come from all the three- and four-day weekends taken by the Legislature this year.

SJR 63 passed the Senate Sunday by a 14-6 vote. It failed to get the



**Fred
Pratt**

necessary two-thirds majority in its first trip to the Senate floor May 5, with voting generally along party lines.

All Republicans except Sen. Drue Pearce, R-Anchorage, voted for the session limit, joined by Sen. Pat Rodey, D-Anchorage, in the first vote and two others, Sens. Mike Szymanski, D-Anchorage, and Jim Duncan, D-Juneau, in the second vote.

The idea of setting arbitrary limits to the Legislature's working time is one you can argue about late into several nights, and my own opinion on the topic has changed 180 degrees over the years.

Those who advocate session

limits have some good arguments. They say longer sessions mean fewer "citizen legislators" and more "full-time politicians," since the average person can't take six months off from work each year to live in Juneau.

Not surprisingly, the full-time politicians like longer sessions. They also have some good arguments.

They will point out that citizen legislatures are fine for small northeastern or rural midwestern states where all the laws and all the policy decisions for the state's future were set a century ago, but not good enough for Alaska.

If our Legislature works only three months a year, how can it keep up with a state the size of ours, with developing economies in global commodities like oil, timber, fisheries and mining?

There was a time, back during the trans-Alaska pipeline boom, when I and others found this argument convincing. We had to increase the quality of our Legisla-

ture, and that naturally means longer sessions. Running Alaska with a 60-day session would be like running a 2,000-acre farm with one horse.

The opponents counter this argument with an equally good one. On Jan. 16, 1959, the first Alaska State Legislature convened, with no laws on the books for its new state.

It had to write all the fish and game law, all the criminal code, establish the judiciary and manage vast resources coming from statehood land selections. It could and did use older territorial laws and other state laws as models, but these often made a poor fit in Alaska.

The first session of the First Alaska Legislature did all this and adjourned April 16, 1959, after 80 days. The next year, in the second session, they went home March 29 after meeting only 63 days.

One argument against session limits is the unseemly scramble that comes with the deadline. This was common before the session

limit, however, and it's a characteristic of the political process itself.

It's the nature of politicians to put off decisions until the last minute. That's why I've come around to the idea of a session deadline. If it wasn't for lunch, some legislators would never get up in the morning.

In effect, we have a year-round Legislature no matter how long the session lasts. We have so many interim committees, special committees and interim work by standing committees that most legislators can fill up all the time they want with public service.

And there's no excuse for the end-of-session legislative logjam. For much of this year's session the House didn't even meet on Tuesday's and Thursdays, and quite a few times there were so many people gone on Fridays or Mondays that little work could be accomplished.

Fred Pratt, a free-lance writer living in Fairbanks, is a reporter and long-time observer of Alaska politics.

EDITORIAL

QUALITY SERVICES

Date MAY 3 1990

Chugiak
Eagle River Star

Client No. 616

Legislative session too long

The 1990 legislative session is due to end on Tuesday when it reaches the 120-day limit imposed by voters.

Even that is too long, according to information from senators John Binkley (Bethle) and Steve Frank (Fairbanks). They co-sponsored a resolution asking to put on the ballot a constitutional amendment which would reduce the sessions to 100 days. Only 90 days would be spent in actual meetings. Legislators would have a 10-day mid-session break to return home and visit with constituents.

HERE IS WHAT the Senators had to say about their proposal. "While simply cutting 20 days off the session limit may not seem in itself a startling act of political advancement . . . that's not the resolution's central provision. More important is the change in how the legislature would make use of its limited time in session . . . The 100-day session would be split into two 45-day segments with a 10-day break in the middle. On the final day of the first 45-day segment, the governor would be required to submit to the legislature the state's official revenue forecast for the coming fiscal year."

The 10-day break would give legislators time to return to their districts, the senators said, for more than a hurried weekend. The break for attention to family and business needs might also encourage more people to run for office. "If we truly are interested in having a 'citizen legislature,' then we ought to do something to make it easier for more people to participate," the pair argued.

Getting the revenue forecast would be an improvement, it was advised. Now, the senators said, the forecast comes "when the session has entered the home stretch . . . If we had the numbers to study over the break, the forecast would get more attention, and it certainly would be a major item for discussion during the visit back to the district."

WE ARE CONVINCED. Let's put it on the ballot.