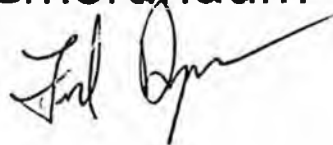


HB

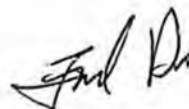
255

Memorandum

From: Representative Dyson



To: Senator Tim Kelly, Chair Senate Community and Regional Affairs



RE: HB 255 (CRA)

Please consider hearing House Bill 255(CRA) in Senate Community and Regional Affairs at the committee's earliest convenience. The bill received wide support on the House floor and is supported by the Division of Municipal and Regional Assistance. There is no known opposition to the bill.

Thanks.



Alaska State Legislature

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REPRESENTATIVE FRED DYSON

Sponsor Statement for CS for House Bill 255 (CRA)

The Community and Regional Affairs Committee Substitute for House Bill 255 is intended to allow an existing second class city, or unincorporated area, to form a "home rule community" government structure under state law. The city or area would be allowed, through the charter system, to flexibly define its scope of governing powers and services to meet specific area needs.

For instance, a community charter may be drafted to provide for police or fire protection services while leaving transportation issues in the state purview. Under the provision of their charter, a local government may assume any of a wide range of powers, from alcohol and animal control to airport and public works management.

Currently, all home rule governments are required to meet strict financial auditing requirements, provide land-use, zoning and platting services and constitute their own school district. The proposed substitute for House Bill 255 removes these requirements* allowing smaller communities to share in the strength and flexibility of the charter system while avoiding some the thickest red tape. The goal: greater self-determination and a more locally relevant government structure.

A new charter-base home rule community may be the best option for unincorporated areas that would not be viable under the second class city model. Existing second class cities which are strained by general law requirements may find relief in a more narrowly crafted charter that allowed them to forego services beyond their capability while accepting responsibility for local needs that can be met with local resources.

Please feel free to contact my office with questions or concerns.

*Financial statements are required in lieu of a full audit. Land use, zoning and platting may be done, but are not required. A home rule community would not constitute a school district.

- E-mail -
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<http://www.akrepublicans.org>

Key Distinctions involved in HB 255

Second class cities may not currently adopt a charter. The only powers they have are one's granted specifically in statute.

A charter, will allow a small community (second class city or unincorporated area) to take on any powers not specifically prohibited in statute through a charter approved by a majority of affected voters.

Currently all Home Rule Cities are school districts

Under House Bill 255(CRA) Home Rule Communities could not be a school district. (Section 17)

Currently all Home Rule Cities are required to perform a full financial audit

Under HB 255 Home Rule Communities are only required to submit a financial statement. (Section 15)

Currently Home Rule Cities are required to zone and plat land.

Under HB 255 Home Rule Communities may zone and plat land, but are not required to do so. (Section 18)

Currently an unincorporated area must have 400 people to be eligible to adopt a charter.

Under HB 255 there is no population requirement to be met prior to adopting a charter. (the "(a)(1)" reference on line 27 of Page 2 is the 400 resident requirement)

HB 255

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

Working for strong economies, healthy communities, and a quality environment in Southeast Alaska

March 24, 2000

Representative Fred Dyson
Alaska State Legislature
Room 104, Capitol Bldg
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: Support for HB 255

Dear Representative Dyson:

The Southeast Conference Board of Directors recently met and discussed HB 255 (CRA) "An Act relating to cities incorporated under state law that are home rule communities" and would like to offer their support to this important legislation.

Many of the smaller communities of Southeast Alaska would benefit from the ability to participate and offer services within the capability of their local resources. This has been a missing piece and your bill does an excellent job of filling the gap. HB 255 gives the smaller communities the option to pursue strategies that are meaningful to them and to tailor those services offered to local consensus.

The Southeast Conference appreciates the work you have done on this legislation in the House and supports passage in the Senate. A part of the mission statement of the Southeast Conference is to help develop strong economies and healthy communities. We feel that HB 255 will be a welcome addition to the building tools for our region.

Thank You.

Sincerely,



Frank Homan
Executive Director

HYDER COMMUNITY ASSOC. INC.

P. O. BOX 149
HYDER, ALASKA
99823
(907) 838-9148
FAX (907) 838-2714

IN JUNEAU REPLY TO:
John Pearson
HCA Economic Development Office
8216 Cedar Drive
Juneau, Ak 99801
Tel: 907-789-1402
Fax: 907-789-1403

Date: March 22, 2000

To: Members of the Alaska Legislature
From: Paul Larkin, Administrator, Hyder Community Association
Ref: HB 255 "Home Rule Community"



Dear Legislative Members:

With great interest and full support, the Hyder Community Association, representing approximately 130 residents of Hyder, Alaska has become very supportive of HB255 addressing a new "Home Rule Community" designation.

We view this legislation as a great opportunity for smaller communities such as ours, to go the extra step in assuming local responsibility and providing added services within the community.

Under HB 255 we would be able to assume any of a wide range of local powers from environmental controls to public works management. This bill would allow us to contract with state and local governments to provide certain services; contract with private organizations for services, apply for and receive federal funds; engage in funding measures such as bonds, establish a legally recognized forum to address local concerns; and have a platform to petition the state and federal government.

Much of our interest in this bill results from our desire to improve life and bring positive economic development to Hyder, while not being strapped with the costly complications found in the Incorporated First Class City designation process.

As an unorganized community, the Hyder Community Association presently provides fire and emergency services, operates a library, plows snow on the side streets, oversees the state harbor, float facility and local roads. In addition we operate a visitor center, museum, and manage various grants.

Today Hyder is in the process of establishing a new job creating economic base. With a historical five or six, year round jobs in the community, we currently have a major Alaska bottled water plant under construction, creating 41 new jobs in Hyder. This remarkable feat, with no assistance from the State of Alaska in our efforts to eliminate all unemployment and welfare in our community, brings the focus this needed legislation into realistic view.

I want to assure you of our full support for HB255 and trust you will recognize the value this bill to our small Alaska communities.

Please feel free to contact John Pearson in Juneau, on 789-1402 if there are any questions or a need for additional support for this important bill.