

HB

296

2/28

Alaska State Legislature

Representative Jim Whitaker

Session
Capitol Building, Room 411
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: (907) 465-3004
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Interim
119 N. Cushman St., Suite 213
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Memorandum

To: Representative Carl Morgan, Co-Chair Community & Regional Affairs
Representative Kevin Meyer, Co-Chair Community & Regional Affairs

From: Representative Jim Whitaker

Re: Hearing Request, HB 296, Municipal Mergers and Consolidation

Date: 2/20/02

HB 296, Municipal Mergers and Consolidation, has been referred to the House Community and Regional Affairs Committee. I respectfully request a hearing of this bill before the committee at your earliest possible convenience.

Persons who may wish to testify include:

Mayor Steve Thompson, City of Fairbanks: 907-459-6715
Kevin Waring, Chairperson, Local Boundary Commission: 907-269-4559
Deborah Sedwick, Commissioner, Dept. of Community and Economic Development:
907-465-2500

By: Bonnie Williams
Introduced: 02/14/02
Adopted: 02/14/02

RESOLUTION NO. 2002 - 13

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HB 296 AN ACT MAKING CONSOLIDATION
STATUTES FAIR TO ALL PARTIES BY UPHOLDING GOVERNMENT BY THE
CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED**

WHEREAS, in the year 2001 the citizens of the Fairbanks North Star Borough and especially the City of Fairbanks went through a long, bitter and difficult struggle over the issue of consolidation; and

WHEREAS, the outcome of that struggle could have resulted in the elimination of the City of Fairbanks against the majority view of the residents of that city under current state law; and

WHEREAS, such an outcome would be an outrageous abuse of governing with the consent of the governed; and

WHEREAS, the city of North Pole could then subsequently have been similarly deprived of its right of self-rule.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly supports Representative Jim Whitaker's HB 296, which corrects this gross inequity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to all members of the Alaska State House and State Senate, and to the Governor of the State of Alaska.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 14 DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2002.

Hank Bartos

Hank Bartos
Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

Mona Lisa Drexler, CMC

Mona Lisa Drexler, CMC
Municipal Borough Clerk

Ayes: Williams, Solie, Cummings, Foote, Holm, Henry, Webb, Hutchison, Sattley, Bartos

Noes: Beck

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House of Representatives
District 31



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Sponsor Statement

HB 296 – Municipal Consolidation

Within Alaska statutes, Title 29 allows municipalities to merge by consolidation or unification. Through the years, many communities have attempted to merge through this process, some successfully, some not so successfully. It is through those efforts that deficiencies in fair voting practices surrounding municipal mergers has come to light.

HB 296 seeks to establish a more fair and timely process in the petition and election of municipal mergers by limiting the time allowed for gathering signatures as well as setting clear requirements for how the outcome of the election is to be determined.

HB 296
Municipal Mergers & Consolidations

Section 1 – Amends AS 29.06.100 (a) to limit the time period in which a petitioner may gather signatures for a petition to consolidate. The new time period will be 365 days prior to filing the petition with the LBC.

This removes the potential for signatures to be gathered over the course of several years, with the possibility that many of the signatures may be of persons who no longer reside within the jurisdiction.

Section 2 – Amends AS 29.06.140(a) to require a majority of the votes in each of the municipalities proposed to be merged or consolidated in order for the question to pass.

This assures that a merger or consolidation will be decided by the majority of the voting residents of each of the communities in the proposal.

Section 3 – Amends AS 29.06.140(b) to disallow the formation of a service area to be part of a merger or consolidation petition or question on the ballot.

This prevents a “dual question” vote, wherein a vote to consolidate would also form a service area.