

SB

166



SENATOR DAVE DONLEY

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SENATE BILL 166

"An Act relating to the time of filling by appointment a vacancy in the office of United States senator"

Senate Bill 166 amends current law to require a 5-day waiting period before the Governor may appoint an individual to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate. It is important to give the residents of Alaska an opportunity to voice their opinion on who is best suited to represent them in the U.S. Senate in the unlikely and unfortunate event of a vacancy occurring.

The Seventeenth Amendment of the United States Constitution grants state legislatures the exclusive authority to set the terms of temporary appointments to fill vacancies in the U.S. Senate.

Alaskans currently have an opportunity to choose a new U.S. Senator by a special election if a vacated U.S. Senate term is longer than 30 months. They have no guarantee of an opportunity to indicate their opinion on a replacement, however, if the remaining term is less than that period.

This legislation simply ensures a brief period in which Alaskans can express their opinions to the governor about whom they believe is the best person for a vacant U.S. Senate position. The governor still retains the power of appointment, but Alaskans will be guaranteed an opportunity to comment before he does so.

DD:dld

Co-Chair: Senate Finance Committee

Vice-Chair: Senate Judiciary Committee

Member: Legislative Budget and Audit Committee • Legislative Council

January-May: STATE CAPITOL • JUNEAU, AK • 99801 • (907) 465-3892 • FAX: (907) 465-6595

June-December: 716 West Fourth Avenue • Suite 400 • ANCHORAGE, AK • 99501 • (907) 269-0234 • FAX: (907) 269-0238

www.akrepublicans.org/Donley.htm • www.legis.state.ak.us/senate/donley/htm