

**SB**

**258**

22-LS1333U  
Kurtz  
2/7/02

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 258( )  
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:  
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATORS LEMAN, Ellis, Wilken, Taylor, Lincoln, Davis, Elton, Stevens

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the use of electronic ballots, and to voting equipment allowing  
2 disabled voters to cast secret, independent, and verifiable ballots."

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

4 \* Section 1. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
5 to read:

6 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Frank Haas Act.

7 \* Sec. 2. AS 15.15.030(5) is amended to read:

8 (5) The [STATE GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT SHALL BE  
9 PRINTED ON WHITE PAPER WITH THE] names of the candidates and their party  
10 designations shall be placed in separate sections on the state general election ballot  
11 under the office designation to which they were nominated. The party affiliation, if  
12 any, shall be designated after the name of the candidate. The lieutenant governor and  
13 the governor shall be included under the same section. Provision shall be made for  
14 voting for write-in and no-party candidates within each section. Paper ballots for the

1           state general election shall be printed on white paper.

2       \* Sec. 3. AS 15.15.030(13) is amended to read:

3                       (13) Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, the director may  
4           provide for voting by use of electronic ballots or optically scanned ballots where the  
5           requisite [OPTICAL SCANNING] equipment is available. If the director provides  
6           for voting by use of electronic ballots, the director shall lease or purchase voting  
7           machines that would allow voters with disabilities, including those who are blind  
8           or visually impaired, to cast secret, independent, and verifiable ballots.

9       \* Sec. 4. AS 15.20.900 is amended to read:

10                   Sec. 15.20.900. Optically scanned or electronic ballots [BALLOT  
11           TABULATION]. (a) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this title, the director  
12           may adopt regulations that provide procedures for the tabulation of electronic ballots  
13           or optically scanned ballots, including procedures for

14                       (1) tests of the counting programs developed for each precinct  
15           tabulator to ensure that the system is functioning properly;

16                       (2) security for the voting and tabulation of ballots;

17                       (3) the transmission and accumulation of vote totals to assure the  
18           integrity of the vote counting process;

19                       (4) observation by the public of the counting process in the regional  
20           offices; and

21                       (5) the disposition of ballots.

22                       (b) The state ballot counting review board established under AS 15.10.180  
23           shall test the counting programs for the tabulation of electronic ballots or optically  
24           scanned ballots and certify their accuracy in accordance with the regulations adopted  
25           under (a) of this section.

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2002 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bill Version: SB 258  
 () Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: OOG  
 Title An Act relating to the use of BRU Elections  
electronic ballots Component Elections  
 Sponsor Senator Leman  
 Requester Senate State Affairs Committee Component No. 21

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual	0.0					
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>						
-------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0.0					
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2002) cost: 0.0  
 Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2003 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: Gail Fenumiai, Election Administrative Supervisor Phone 465-3935  
 Division Division of Elections Date/Time 2/6/02 4:36 PM  
 Approved by: Lieutenant Governor Fran Ulmer Date 02/06/2002  
 Agency Office of the Lieutenant Governor

SITE: JUNEAU LIO  
 COMMITTEE: SSTA  
 DATE: 2-7-02

SUBJECT OF MEETING:  
 SB 258  
 UPDATE #:



PLEASE SIGN IN

P R I N T YOUR NAME                      ADDRESS (MAILING & ZIP)                      REPRESENTING                      DO YOU WANT TO TESTIFY? Y or N

✓ Tony Sirveillo TX			
Email address:			
✓ Jim Dickson DC			
Email address:			
✓ June Haas			
Email address:			
✓ Sandy Sanderson			
Email address:			
✓ Daryl Nelson			
Email address:			
✓ GAIL		Div of Elections	
Email address:			
Email address:			



During Session, January - May:  
State Capitol, Room 115  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
(907) 465-2095  
465-3810 FAX



During Interim, June - December:  
716 W 4th Ave, Suite 520  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 269-0240  
269-0242 FAX

Senator Loren Lemman

## **Sponsor Statement for CSSB 258 ( ) Authorizing Electronic Ballots**

CS Senate Bill 258 ( ), The Frank Haas Act, removes the requirement that ballots be printed on paper, and allows the Division of Elections to purchase electronic, paperless balloting equipment. The bill also requires that electronic balloting equipment purchased by the Division after the effective date allow voters with disabilities, including those who are blind or visually impaired, to cast a secret, independent, and verifiable ballot.

An important aspect of this change in statute is that it will make it possible for blind or visually impaired voters to cast their ballots independently. Currently, those voters must depend on a sighted person to accompany them in the voting booth, read the ballot out loud, and assist them in casting their vote.

The passage of CSSB 258 ( ) begins the important process of phasing in new balloting equipment that will enable more Alaskans to vote privately.

Frank Haas was a long-time Alaskan advocate for the visually impaired. CSSB 258 ( ) has been named in his honor, and is a continuation of his efforts to allow the visually impaired to cast their ballots privately.

**Contact:** Russ Kelly, Legislative Intern to Senator Loren Lemman, at (907) 465-3841  
**Updated:** February 7, 2002

Witness List For  
CSSB 258 ( ): An Act relating to the use of electronic ballots

In Juneau:

Senator Loren Leman, sponsor  
Russ Kelly, Legislative Intern, assisting sponsor  
Gail Fenumiai, Division of Elections  
Lynne Koral, Alaska Independent Blind  
Bill Craig

At Anchorage LIO:

Bonnie Nelson  
Daryl Nelson

Offnet:

Jim Dickson, American Association of People with Disabilities - (202) 882-2569  
Sandy Sanderson, Anchorage, AK - (907) 276-1926  
June Haas, Haines, AK - (907) 766-2349

Potential witnesses:

Tony Sirvello, Harris County, Texas - Clerk's Office - (713) 755-3551

Witness List For  
SB 258: An Act relating to the use of electronic ballots

In Juneau:

Senator Loren Leman, sponsor  
Russ Kelly, Legislative Intern, assisting sponsor  
Gail Fenumiai, Division of Elections  
Lynne Koral, Alaska Independent Blind

At Anchorage LIO:

Bonnie Nelson  
Daryl Nelson

Offnet:

Jim Dickson, American Association of People with Disabilities, (202) 882-2569

Potential witnesses:

Bill Craig

During Session, January - May:  
State Capitol, Room 115  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
(907) 465-2095  
465-3810 FAX

During Interim, June - December:  
716 W 4th Ave, Suite 520  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 269-0240  
269-0242 FAX



Senator Loren Leman

## **Sponsor Statement for SB 258 Authorizing Electronic Ballots**

Senate Bill 258, The Frank Haas Act, removes the requirement that ballots be printed on paper, and allows the Division of Elections to purchase electronic, paperless balloting equipment. The bill also requires that electronic balloting equipment purchased by the Division after the effective date be accessible to the visually impaired.

This change in statute will make it possible for visually impaired voters to cast their ballots privately and securely. Currently, those voters must depend on a sighted person to accompany them in the voting booth, read the ballot out loud, and assist them in casting their vote.

The passage of SB 258 begins the important process of phasing in new balloting equipment that will enable more Alaskans to vote privately.

Frank Haas was a long-time Alaskan advocate for the visually impaired. SB 258 has been named in his honor, and is a continuation of his efforts to allow the visually impaired to cast their ballots privately.

**Contact:** Russ Kelly, Legislative Intern to Senator Loren Leman, at (907) 465-3841  
**Released:** January 28, 2002

**Subject: voting access articles**

**Date:** Mon, 4 Feb 2002 10:09:07 -0900

**From:** "Lynne Koral" <aiblink@ak.net>

**To:** "Lauri Allred" <Lauri\_Allred@gov.state.ak.us>,  
"Janet Kowalski" <janet\_kowalski@gov.state.ak.us>,  
"Gail Fenumiai" <Gail\_Fenumiai@gov.state.ak.us>,  
"Russell Kelly" <Russell\_Kelly@Legis.state.ak.us>, <akblind@yahoogroups.com>,  
"Patrick Reinhart" <patrick\_reinhart@labor.state.ak.us>,  
"Serena Dowling" <sdowling@accessalaska.org>,  
"Ruth L'Hommedieu" <lhmm Dieu@ptialaska.net>,  
"Duane M. French" <Duane\_French@labor.state.ak.us>

Some of you might have seen these, and indeed, Serena, you might have sent these to your vast group, but the "moving backwards" article clearly states that no polling place had in the GAO report afforded access for blind and visually impaired folks to cast a secret ballot. Those on the Senate state Affairs committee are: Sen. Eugene Therriault, Chair, Fairbanks; Sen. Rick Halford, Eagle River; Sen. Randy Phillips, Eagle River; Sen. Ben Stevens and Sen. Bettye Davis, both from Anchorage and both co-sponsors.

**Fact Sheet on Voter Turnout, Voting Difficulties, and Disability in the 2000 Elections:  
Laying a Challenge at Democracy's Door**

By Douglas Kruse and Lisa Schur, Rutgers University

Kay Schriener and Todd Shields, University of Arkansas

Sent to us by Serena Dowling

American democracy rests on the participation of the citizenry in the selection of elected officials. By choosing their representatives, citizens express their views about what matters to them and what should be done about it. Not every American citizen has an equal opportunity to cast a ballot, however. Many thousands of voters and potential voters are disenfranchised by barriers to electoral participation.

These barriers are a threat to the potential of our democracy to realize its promise of equality and justice for all. When some voters cannot participate in an equal footing, all Americans lose. When some citizens are left out, democracy suffers.

For many disabled citizens, elections represent another example of society's inaccessibility. This report is intended to clarify the experiences of people with disabilities in American electoral politics.

To investigate the relationship between voter turnout, voting difficulties, and disability, a national random-household telephone survey of 1,002 Americans citizens of voting age was conducted through the Rutgers Center for Public Interest Polling following the November,

2000 elections. A broad definition of disability was used, based on questions from the 2000 Census. For more meaningful comparisons the sample was stratified so that interviews were conducted with 432 people with disabilities and 570 people without disabilities. Survey respondents were asked standard questions about voting, voter registration, and factors that could help explain turnout and registration. They were also asked questions concerning actual or expected difficulties in voting at a polling place, and views of several voting methods often used by people with disabilities.

The General Accounting Office released a report on November 14, 2001 finding that only 16% of polling places in 2000 had no potential impediments to access by people with disabilities. This fact sheet complements the GAO study by providing individual-level information on the voting experiences of people with disabilities, with comparison of voter turnout, voting difficulties, and views of curbside voting between people with and without disabilities.

### Voter Turnout

- People with disabilities were on average about 12 percentage points less likely than those without disabilities to vote, after adjusting for differences in demographic characteristics (age, sex, race, education, and marital status). This was an improvement over the 1998 elections, in which people with disabilities were about 20 percentage points less likely than people without disabilities to vote (based on a similar survey following the 1998 elections).

If people with disabilities voted at the same rate as those without disabilities, there would have been 3.2 million additional voters in 2000, raising the overall turnout rate by 1.7 percentage points.

### Absentee Voting and Voting Difficulties

- People with disabilities were almost twice as likely as other citizens to vote by absentee ballot. Among those who voted, 20% used an absentee ballot, compared to 11% of people without disabilities.
- Citizens with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to have encountered, or expect, difficulties in voting at a polling place:

Encountered difficulties, if last voted at polling place since 1990:

Citizens with disabilities: 5.8%

Citizens without disabilities: 2.0%

Would expect difficulties, if haven't voted at polling place since 1990:

Citizens with disabilities: 32.6%

Citizens without disabilities: 2.4%

- Reported problems with voting among people with disabilities are split among getting to the polling place, being able to vote once at the polling place, and general mobility.

Problems encountered if voted in past 10 years:

Any difficulty in voting at polling place: 5.8%

Getting to polling place: 1.3%

At polling place (getting inside, using booth/machine, long lines, seeing/understanding ballot): 3.5%

General mobility (walking, standing): 0.9%

Problems expected if haven't voted in past 10 years:

Any difficulty in voting at polling place: 32.6%

Getting to polling place: 5.7%

At polling place (getting inside, using booth/machine, long lines, seeing/understanding ballot): 17.9%

General mobility (walking, standing): 6.3%

\* Based on these results, an estimated 1.3 million citizens with disabilities encountered problems in voting since 1990 during the last time they voted at a polling place, while an additional 1.7 million citizens who have not voted at a polling place since 1990 would expect to encounter difficulties in voting at a polling place.

### Views About Curbside Voting

Respondents were asked their view of whether "voting a ballot in an automobile at curbside" is "just as good as voting in person inside the polling station, or not as good?" Majorities of people with and without disabilities feel that it is not as good:

Curbside voting is just as good:

Citizens with disabilities: 36.1%

Citizens without disabilities: 36.8%

Curbside voting is not as good:

Citizens with disabilities: 54.9%

Citizens without disabilities: 57.8%

### Implications of Findings

The research summarized here contain both good news and bad news. The good new is that "the disability gap" – the difference in participation rates between individuals with disabilities and nondisabled individuals – may be narrowing. In the 2000 presidential election, the gap was 12 percentage points (compared to 20 percentage points in the 1998 election). This should increase politicians' attention to the views of people with disabilities.

Unfortunately, Americans with disabilities continue to experience and anticipate difficulties in voting. Three million citizens with disabilities have encountered problems in voting, or would expect to encounter problems. If impediments were removed and people with disabilities began voting in the same proportion as other Americans, fully 3.2 million more people would be casting ballots. Policymakers must take immediate and effective steps to remove the barriers to participation for individuals with disabilities.

These findings lay a challenge at democracy's door. The stability and responsiveness of any democracy depends on its ability to fully represent its citizens. America must find the will to open democracy's door – to all.

### Moving Backwards on Voting Access

American Association of People with Disabilities' Jim Dickson in conjunction with Clyde Terry

November 16, 2001

The house of Representatives is about to pass legislation that denies an accessible secret ballot to voters with visual and or manual disabilities and allows polling places to remain physically inaccessible. Yesterday, with Congressman Steny Hoyer's support, HR3295, The Help America Vote Act of 2001, cleared committee and is expected to be on the House floor right after Thanksgiving.

Contact your Congressman and insist that they vote against HR 3295 because it does not

have the following:

- National standards on polling place and voting systems access
- A specific date by which all polling places must be made physically accessible
- The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board must be charged with defining accessibility standards
- No person with a disability will be denied the right to vote because of their disability
- The Department of Justice will enforce the federal standard
- Private right of action under the Voting Rights Act should be extended to people with disabilities

Background:

This week the House Administration Committee voted out HR 3295 "Help America Vote Act of 2001" a bill to reform our election system. The bill ignores the facts that people with disabilities have been denied access to polling places for years and that voters who are blind or visually impaired have been denied the right to a private secret vote forever. The bill does not require polling places to be accessible nor does it require that any standards be developed to define what accessibility means. It only asks that states find an "effective and practical" means for people with disabilities to vote privately. Such a standard of "effective and practical" is less than what is required in current law and will result in many local officials not making the basic accommodations as it is not practical. At this point in history we can demand better, the knowledge and technology exist to assure that all Americans including those with disabilities can get to vote and vote privately and independently.

This outrageous act occurred the day after the Government Accounting Office (GAO) released a special report conducted during the November 2000 election where they found at least 84% of the polling places in America had at least one barrier to persons using wheelchairs and no polling place offered persons who were blind or visually impaired the opportunity to cast a vote privately.

There has been substantial opposition by state and local election officials to making polling places and equipment accessible to persons with disabilities. Their reasons vary between too costly, they don't know how, or they don't want to be bothered. We need to show Congress that the disability community represents more votes than state officials. When it comes to costs, most of the bills in the Congress provide millions of dollars for states to purchase equipment so the cost is not on the local official. Secondly, if there were standards by the Access Board that would give the information on how to make places accessible for voting purposes and if they don't want to be bothered about Americans with disabilities then they will need to be educated that people with disabilities have the same rights as all other voters. This bill unfortunately perpetuates the discrimination and must be defeated.



# Justice For All Alerts

## Disabled Denied Voting Access, Says GAO

Posted: 18 Oct 2001 07:46:30 -0700

JUSTICE FOR ALL -- A Free Service of the  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
www.aapd-dc.org  
www.jfanow.org

"Disabled Denied Voting Access, Says GAO"

AAPD's Disability Vote Project, headed by Jim Dickson, is working to increase voting among people with disabilities and make our voting systems more accessible. The following Disability Vote Project Press Release discusses a new independent Congressional report documenting voting inaccessibility.

Jonathan Young, JFA Moderator

=====

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 16, 2001

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Jim Dickson: (202) 262-8240 (cell)  
Disability Vote Project for  
the American Association of People with Disabilities

NEW GAO REPORT SHOWS DISABLED ARE DENIED VOTING ACCESS  
57% of Voting Jurisdictions Report Problems for Voters with Disabilities

WASHINGTON - A report requested by top lawmakers in Congress and released yesterday from the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) has found that 57 percent of voting jurisdictions experienced problems conducting the 2000 federal elections. These problems included widespread inaccessibility for people in wheelchairs or with vision or hearing impairments. The GAO has been investigating the voting barriers since the beginning of this year.

"The GAO's report is hardly news to the millions of Americans with disabilities. We have been struggling for years to get local election officials to give us adequate access to polling places," said Jim Dickson of the Disability Vote Project for the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).

"Over one half of all polling places in America are not fully accessible to people in wheelchairs," continued Dickson. "And for the 10 million blind and low vision Americans, exercising the right to vote does not currently include casting an independent secret ballot."

Prior to yesterday's GAO report release, a coalition of

groups including AAPD, the National Organization on Disability, the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association and the Blinded Veterans of America began class-action lawsuits against the cities of Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia, PA. Those lawsuits ask city officials to purchase and begin using accessible voting machines. The coalition of groups has found that jurisdictions such as Harris County, Texas, the nation's third largest county, have already put accessible voting systems in place.

"We cannot afford to have our voting apparatus randomly discriminate or to have our voting system appear to breakdown for some Americans," said Dickson.

"Every eligible American has the right to vote and to have that vote counted regardless of disability or the financial resources of the community in which they live. Americans with disabilities should not have to sue every jurisdiction just to exercise the right to vote," said Dickson.

"Disabled Americans are counting on Congress to make voting accessible to all eligible voters before the 2002 elections."

-30-

The American Association of People with Disabilities' (AAPD) mission is to advance the political and economic power of all people with disabilities. Visit the AAPD website at [www.aapd-dc.org](http://www.aapd-dc.org).

###

=====  
Justice-For-All FREE Subscriptions  
To subscribe or unsubscribe, send mail to [majordomo@JFANOW.ORG](mailto:majordomo@JFANOW.ORG)  
with one or the other in the body of your message:  
subscribe justice  
unsubscribe justice

[Justice For All  
Previous Article](#)

[Justice For All  
Next Article](#)

[Justice For All  
Index Page](#)

[Justice For All  
Home Page](#)

Justice For All is Moderated by Frederick Allan Fay, Ph.D. [ifa@jfanow.org](mailto:ifa@jfanow.org)

WEB Page Generation by TNET.COM

Generated: Tue Feb 5 21:25:28 2002

Page Format: May 5th, 1998

Copyright © 1997-1998 TNET Services - All Rights Reserved

Page format and its Auto-Creation is a product of TNET Services

# STATE OF ALASKA

OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR

Division of Elections  
P.O. Box 110017  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0017  
PHONE (907) 465-4611

February 5, 2002

Senator Loren Leman  
State Capitol Building 516  
Room 403  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Leman:

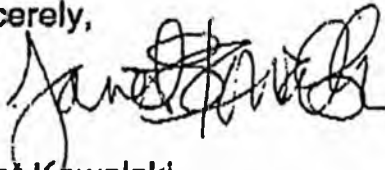
I have reviewed the legislation, SB 258, that you sent me regarding the use of electronic ballots and the purchase of voting equipment that is accessible to those who are blind or visually impaired.

As I testified in the House, this legislation takes a major step forward in meeting the need for private and secret balloting for visually impaired voters in Alaska. Your bill as introduced supports the Division's current project to expand secret ballot voting in the polling place to all Alaskans. The bill does not place an undue burden on the Division of Elections' processes or our budget. Without this enabling legislation, the Division cannot provide electronic secret ballot voting to any voter.

Although the goal of the Division is to provide unassisted, secret ballot voting for all voters, there is a great deal of work to be done before the Division can confidently say that we have addressed all of the issues, including funding, to make that happen. We therefore support the bill as written and its initial concept: creating unassisted, private, secret ballot voting for blind and sight impaired voters.

Since providing this service is a goal of the Division, I strongly support this bill as drafted. Please let me know if I can answer any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,



Janet Kowalski  
Director  
Division of Elections

cc: Lt. Governor Fran Ulmer

Div. of Elections Support



# ALASKA INDEPENDENT BLIND

1102 W. International Airport Road • Anchorage, AK 99518 • Phone: 563-2525 • Fax: 562-5951



Frank Haas was an advocate for access issues for the visually impaired in Alaska. Voting access was especially important to Haas, and he advocated by writing and speaking with the Division of Elections and state legislators on this issue, focusing on the need for independence in his voting rights such as large print ballots or other technical means. Alaska Independent Blind is pleased that Rep. Joe Green recognized Haas' contribution to better voting access for the blind by naming House Bill 320 "The Frank Haas Act."

Originally from Wisconsin, Haas always wanted to see Alaska. As a young Army petroleum lab tech, Haas traded an assignment in Europe for an assignment at the Army tank farm in Lutak, near Haines. Following his stint in the Army, Haas returned to Haines where he lived for 44 years. Haas held a number of positions in his professional life. Immediately after his return to Haines he worked in a civilian position at the tank farm becoming operations supervisor.

In the 1970's, Haas earned a degree in education, but instead of teaching he was hired by the city of Haines, to be in charge of the water and waste water systems. He also earned a degree in travel and tourism and operated a ticket concession on Second Avenue in Haines.

In his private life Haas also wore a number of hats. He was active in his local church and chamber of commerce, as well as the American Legion, Elks, Haines Fire Department and Lynn Canal Community Players. That fire department still misses his cooking. Haas was also a public servant, holding seats on the Port Chilkoot city council and the Haines Borough Assembly. Haas joined the American Council of the Blind in 1984 and was a long-time member of Alaska Independent Blind, serving on the group's board of directors.

He thought it was important that blind people have easy access to the vehicles they travel in, especially in winter, and was instrumental in bringing about parking placards for those vehicles. He also worked to ensure that the city of Haines complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Since his death in 1999, others have continued the work that Haas started to bring voting independence to the visually impaired. Passage of this bill would be a fitting legacy to this man who worked so hard on behalf of others.

*AK Independent Blind Support*

During Session, January - May:  
State Capitol, Room 115  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
(907) 465-2095  
465-3810 FAX

During Interim, June - December:  
716 W 4th Ave, Suite 520  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 269-0240  
269-0242 FAX



Senator Loren Leman

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Senator Gene Therriault, Chairman  
Senate State Affairs Committee

**FROM:** Senator Loren Leman, Sponsor *Loren*

**DATE:** January 29, 2002

**RE:** Scheduling a hearing for SB 258  
Authorizing Electronic Ballots

---

Please schedule a hearing for SB 258: Authorizing Electronic Ballots at your earliest convenience.

SB 258, The Frank Haas Act, removes the requirement that ballots be printed on paper, and allows the Division of Elections to purchase electronic, paperless balloting equipment. The bill also requires that electronic balloting equipment purchased by the Division after the effective date be accessible to the visually impaired. This change in statute will make it possible for visually impaired voters to cast their ballots privately and securely.

Attached is a copy of the bill and sponsor statement Russ Kelly in my office will provide the packet information at your request. Please contact him at x3841 with any questions you have regarding this matter.

During Session, January - May:  
State Capitol, Room 115  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
(907) 465-2095  
465-3810 FAX



During Interim, June - December:  
716 W 4th Ave, Suite 520  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
(907) 269-0240  
269-0242 FAX

Senator Loren Leman

## **Sponsor Statement for SB 258 Authorizing Electronic Ballots**

Senate Bill 258, The Frank Haas Act, removes the requirement that ballots be printed on paper, and allows the Division of Elections to purchase electronic, paperless balloting equipment. The bill also requires that electronic balloting equipment purchased by the Division after the effective date be accessible to the visually impaired.

This change in statute will make it possible for visually impaired voters to cast their ballots privately and securely. Currently, those voters must depend on a sighted person to accompany them in the voting booth, read the ballot out loud, and assist them in casting their vote.

The passage of SB 258 begins the important process of phasing in new balloting equipment that will enable more Alaskans to vote privately.

Frank Haas was a long-time Alaskan advocate for the visually impaired. SB 258 has been named in his honor, and is a continuation of his efforts to allow the visually impaired to cast their ballots privately.

**Contact:** Russ Kelly, Legislative Intern to Senator Loren Leman, at (907) 465-3841  
**Released:** January 28, 2002



## ALASKA INDEPENDENT BLIND

1102 W. International Airport Road • Anchorage, AK 99518 • Phone: 563-2525 • Fax: 562-5951



Frank Haas was an advocate for access issues for the visually impaired in Alaska. Voting access was especially important to Haas, and he advocated by writing and speaking with the Division of Elections and state legislators on this issue, focusing on the need for independence in his voting rights such as large print ballots or other technical means. Alaska Independent Blind is pleased that Rep. Joe Green recognized Haas' contribution to better voting access for the blind by naming House Bill 320 "The Frank Haas Act."

Originally from Wisconsin, Haas always wanted to see Alaska. As a young Army petroleum lab tech, Haas traded an assignment in Europe for an assignment at the Army tank farm in Lutak, near Haines. Following his stint in the Army, Haas returned to Haines where he lived for 44 years. Haas held a number of positions in his professional life. Immediately after his return to Haines he worked in a civilian position at the tank farm becoming operations supervisor.

In the 1970's, Haas earned a degree in education, but instead of teaching he was hired by the city of Haines, to be in charge of the water and waste water systems. He also earned a degree in travel and tourism and operated a ticket concession on Second Avenue in Haines.

In his private life Haas also wore a number of hats. He was active in his local church and chamber of commerce, as well as the American Legion, Elks, Haines Fire Department and Lynn Canal Community Players. That fire department still misses his cooking. Haas was also a public servant, holding seats on the Port Chilkoot city council and the Haines Borough Assembly. Haas joined the American Council of the Blind in 1984 and was a long-time member of Alaska Independent Blind, serving on the group's board of directors.

He thought it was important that blind people have easy access to the vehicles they travel in, especially in winter, and was instrumental in bringing about parking placards for those vehicles. He also worked to ensure that the city of Haines complied with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Since his death in 1999, others have continued the work that Haas started to bring voting independence to the visually impaired. Passage of this bill would be a fitting legacy to this man who worked so hard on behalf of others.

**BILL ID: HB 320**

HOUSE BILL NO. 320

01 "An Act relating to the use of electronic ballots."

02 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

03 \* Section 1. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended  
by adding a new section

04 to read:

05 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Frank Haas Act.

06 \* Sec. 2. AS 15.15.030(5) is amended to read:

07 (5) The [STATE GENERAL ELECTION BALLOT SHALL BE

08 PRINTED ON WHITE PAPER WITH THE] names of the candidates and  
their party

09 designations shall be placed in separate sections on the state  
general election ballot

10 under the office designation to which they were nominated. The  
party affiliation, if

11 any, shall be designated after the name of the candidate. The  
lieutenant governor and

12 the governor shall be included under the same section. Provision  
shall be made for

13 voting for write-in and no-party candidates within each section.

Paper ballots for the

14 state general election shall be printed on white paper.

15 \* Sec. 3. AS 15.15.030(13) is amended to read:

01                   (13) Notwithstanding any other provision of this  
title, the director may  
02           provide for voting by use of electronically generated ballots or  
optically scanned  
03           ballots where the requisite [OPTICAL SCANNING] equipment is  
available. If the  
04           director provides for voting by use of electronically generated  
ballots, the  
05           director shall provide equipment enabling the visually impaired  
to vote without assistance.

07       \* Sec. 4. AS 15.20.900 is amended to read:

08                   Sec. 15.20.900. Optically scanned or electronically  
generated ballots

09           [BALLOT TABULATION]. (a) Notwithstanding any other provisions  
of this title,

10           the director may adopt regulations that provide procedures for  
the tabulation of

11           electronically generated ballots or optically scanned ballots,  
including procedures

12           for

13                   (1) tests of the counting programs developed for each  
precinct

14           tabulator to ensure that the system is functioning properly;

15                   (2) security for the voting and tabulation of ballots;

16 (3) the transmission and accumulation of vote totals  
to assure the  
17 integrity of the vote counting process;  
18 (4) observation by the public of the counting process  
in the regional  
19 offices; and  
20 (5) the disposition of ballots.  
21 (b) The state ballot counting review board established  
under AS 15.10.180  
22 shall test the counting programs for the tabulation of  
electronically generated ballots  
23 or optically scanned ballots and certify their accuracy in  
accordance with the  
24 regulations adopted under (a) of this section.