

**SB**

**9**



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATOR GRETCHEN GUESS

**Memorandum**

Date: January 13, 2005

To: Senator Gene Therriault  
Chair, State Affairs Committee

From: Senator Gretchen Guess

Re: Hearing Request for Senate Bill (SB) 9

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Please consider this memorandum a formal request for a hearing of Senate Bill 9, *"An Act relating to the terms of legislators, to a 90-day regular session of the legislature, to the date of convening a regular session, and to procedures of legislative committees during the interim; and providing for an effective date."* This bill changes the legislative session to 90 days in statute and provides some structural changes to accomplish an efficient 90 day session.

If you have any questions regarding SB 9, please feel free to contact me or my aide, Ryan Jager, at x2435.

Thank you very much for your consideration.



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## Sponsor Statement

### Senate Bill 9:

*"An Act relating to the terms of legislators, to a 90-day regular session of the legislature, to the date of convening a regular session, and to procedures of legislative committees during the interim; and providing for an effective date."*

The purpose of SB 9 is to revise our Legislative process to improve its function and efficiency through the following four changes.

- **Change the legislative session from 120 to 90 days.** The salient purpose of this bill is changing the legislative session from 120 to 90 days in statute. Although the Alaska State Constitution calls for 120-day session, it allows fewer than 120 days by law. It is my belief the legislature can do its job in 90 days. Additionally, this change should save the state approximately \$1M annually.
- **Move the start of session to February.** As allowed in the constitution, this bill moves the beginning of session from the current second Monday in January (third Monday after gubernatorial elections) to the first Monday in February. This change allows sixty days after the March forecast for the legislature to finish the budget; the same amount of time with the current 120 day session. Since the Governor's budget will be presented at the same time (December 15), a legislator does have the option of reviewing the budget during the month of January.
- **Swear in Legislators in December.** This bill calls to swear in legislators at the same time as the Governor – first Monday in December. The purpose of this change is to allow newly elected legislators to start serving in their communities before session begins, to be able to complete basic office functions (e.g., hire staff, order stationary), and to receive any orientation or overviews he or she may want or need before the session begins.
- **Limited Committee Action during Interim.** Finally, this bill allows limited committee action during the interim. Specifically, with thirty days notice, a committee may meet and move a bill out of committee as long as it is not the last committee of referral. Additionally, the bill allows telephonic voting during these committee meeting to ensure the state does not incur any extra costs. This change allows the flexibility that may be needed with a 90 day session.

These changes allow the Alaska Legislature to better serve all Alaskans while simultaneously doing so more efficiently at less public expense.

Thank you for your consideration.



**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
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**SB9: Sectional**

*" An Act relating to the terms of legislators, to a 90-day regular session of the legislature, to the date of convening a regular session, and to procedures of legislative committees during the interim; and providing for an effective date."*

- Section 1:** The term of each member of the legislature will begin on the first Monday in December of any election year rather than the second Monday in January following a presidential election year or the third Tuesday in January following gubernatorial election year.
- Section 2:** The legislature will convene at the capital each year on the first Monday in February rather than the Second Monday in January.
- Section 3:** The legislature will adjourn from a regular session within 90 consecutive calendar days, including the day the legislature first convenes in that regular session.
- Section 4:** On the first Monday of December of each election year before the first regular session, the lieutenant governor will direct the administration of the oath of office to each new member who is certified as being elected from each district.
- Section 5:** Makes changes to the manner in which business may be conducted during the interim in the following ways.
- The chair of a standing or special committee that meets during the interim shall give at least 30 days' public notice, and must include the subject and the number of the measure to be heard.
  - A member of a standing or special committee may attend a hearing held by that committee during the interim either telephonically or by teleconference.
  - A standing or special committee may report a measure from committee during the interim only if the measure has a subsequent referral or referrals of record. A committee member who is voting telephonically or by teleconference may direct the chair to sign the committee report on behalf of the member and indicate on the member's recommendation. The direction to the chair shall be given in such a manner the public and other committee members know its contents. The chair of the committee shall deliver the committee report to the Senate secretary or the chief clerk of the House of Representatives, as appropriate, to be taken up when the legislature next convenes in session.
- Section 6:** This act will take effect December 3, 2007.



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**Memorandum**

Date: January 13, 2005

To: Senator Gene Therriault  
Chair, State Affairs Committee

From: Office of Senator Gretchen Guess

Re: Teleconferencing Request for Hearing on Senate Bill (SB) 9

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Please consider this memorandum a formal request that teleconferencing services be provided for Senator Gretchen Guess. She is currently in Anchorage, and will need teleconferencing services to be provided by the Anchorage Legislative Information Office on the date of the hearing for SB 9.

Should Senator Guess return to Juneau in time for the hearing on SB 9, please disregard this request.

If you have any questions regarding this request for teleconferencing services, please feel free to contact Senator Guess' aide P'yan Jager, at x4126.

Thank you very much for your consideration.