

SB

18

<TARGET><BILL>SB 18</BILL><SUBJECT>SB
18</SUBJECT><COMM>SSTA27</COMM></TARGET>

**SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 1/19/11

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: _____
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
IN TO OFFICE: 2-10-11

State Affairs Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 18

SB 18-DURATION OF REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

"An Act relating to the duration of regular sessions of the legislature; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with CS _____ (_____) Same Title New Title
- adopt previous CS _____ (_____) Same Title New Title
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt _____ Letter of Intent
- further referral to _____ Committee

Dept Abbr.	
ADM	LEG
CED	LAW
COR	LWF
CRT	MVA
EED	DNR
DEC	DPS
DFG	REV
GOV	DOT
DHS	UA

NEW FISCAL NOTE(S)				
Dept.	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN #
LEG			X	

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S)				
Dept.	Fiscal	Indet.	Zero	FN #

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:	PRINTED LAST NAME	DO PASS	DO NOT PASS	NO REC	AMEND
	Paskvan			X	
	Meyer			X	
	Giessel		X		
CHAIR:	wielechowski			X	

CS SB 18

27-LS0122\B

← adopted

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

This CS corrects a drafting oversight by moving the effective date to 2012. Thus, beginning in 2012 we'd have a 120-day session.

← adopted

AMENDMENT B.1

Currently every legislature is to convene and begin its work on the third Tuesday in January. With a 120-day session, that would mean concluding its work in mid-to-late May. The logistics of Juneau's economy, particularly regarding the housing and tourism market, should encourage the Legislature to wrap up as early in May as practical. This amendment would have the legislature convene on the second Tuesday in January during even years for its 120-day sessions. Adjournment would occur sometime between April 14-20 in odd years, and between May 7-14 in even years.

AMENDMENT B.2

This amendment, in lieu of Amendment B.1, would instead provide a consistent start of the Legislature by establishing that every legislature will convene on the second Tuesday in January, rather than just the years with 120-day sessions. Thus, adjournment would occur sometime between April 7-14 in odd years, and May 7-14 during even years.

27-LS0122\B
Gardner
2/3/11

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 18()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATOR STEVENS

A BILL
FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to the duration of regular sessions of the legislature; and providing for**
2 **an effective date."**

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

4 * **Section 1.** AS 24.05.150(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) The legislature shall adjourn from a **first** regular session within 90
6 consecutive calendar days, including the day the legislature first convenes in that
7 [REGULAR] session. **The legislature shall adjourn from a second regular session**
8 **within 120 consecutive calendar days, including the day the legislature first**
9 **convenes in that session.**

10 * **Sec. 2.** AS 24.05.150 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

11 (c) Notwithstanding (b) of this section, the legislature may extend a first or
12 second regular session once for up to 10 consecutive calendar days. An extension of
13 the regular session requires the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the
14 membership of each house.

- 1 * **Sec. 3.** Section 1 of this Act takes effect January 1, 2012.
- 2 * **Sec. 4.** Section 2 of this Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

A M E N D M E N T

OFFERED IN THE SENATE

BY SENATOR STEVENS

TO: CSSB 18(), Draft Version "B"

1 Page 1, following line 3:

2 Insert a new bill section to read:

3 **** Section 1.** AS 24.05.090 is amended to read:

4 **Sec. 24.05.090. Duration of legislature; sessions.** [THE LEGISLATURE
5 SHALL CONVENE AT THE CAPITAL EACH YEAR ON THE THIRD TUESDAY
6 IN JANUARY AT 1:00 p.m.] Each legislature has a duration of two years and consists
7 of a "First Regular Session" that meets in the odd-numbered years, and a "Second
8 Regular Session" that meets in the even-numbered years, and any special session that
9 the governor or legislature calls. **The legislature shall convene a First Regular**
10 **Session at the capital on the third Tuesday in January at 1:00 p.m. and shall**
11 **convene a Second Regular Session at the capital on the second Tuesday in**
12 **January at 1:00 p.m.**

13

14 Page 1, line 4:

15 Delete "Section 1"

16 Insert "Sec. 2"

17

18 Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

19

20 Page 2, line 1:

21 Delete "Section 1 of this Act takes"

22 Insert "Sections 1 and 2 of this Act take"

23

- 1 Page 2, line 2:
- 2 Delete "Section 2"
- 3 Insert "Section 3"

AMENDMENT

OFFERED IN THE SENATE

BY SENATOR STEVENS

TO: CSSB 18(), Draft Version "B"

1 Page 1, line 1, following "**duration**":

2 Insert "**convening**"

3

4 Page 1, following line 3:

5 Insert a new bill section to read:

6 "*** Section 1.** AS 24.05.090 is amended to read:

7 **Sec. 24.05.090. Duration of legislature; sessions.** [THE LEGISLATURE
8 SHALL CONVENE AT THE CAPITAL EACH YEAR ON THE THIRD TUESDAY
9 IN JANUARY AT 1:00 p.m.] Each legislature has a duration of two years and consists
10 of a "First Regular Session" that meets in the odd-numbered years, and a "Second
11 Regular Session" that meets in the even-numbered years, and any special session that
12 the governor or legislature calls. **The legislature shall convene the First Regular**
13 **Session at the capital on the second Tuesday in January at 1:00 p.m. and shall**
14 **convene the Second Regular Session at the capital on the second Tuesday in**
15 **January at 1:00 p.m.**

16

17 Page 1, line 4:

18 Delete "**Section 1**"

19 Insert "**Sec. 2**"

20

21 Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

22

23 Page 2, line 1:

24 Delete "Section 1 of this Act takes"

1 Insert "Sections 1 and 2 of this Act take"

2

3 Page 2, line 2:

4 Delete "Section 2"

5 Insert "Section 3"

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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Senator Gary Stevens
President of the Senate

MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Bill Wielechowski, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

From: Senator Gary Stevens

Date: January 20, 2011

Re: SB 18 Hearing Request

I respectfully request a hearing of SB 18 before the Senate State Affairs Committee. "An Act relating to the duration of regular sessions of the legislature; and providing for an effective date," SB 18 is informally known as the 90/120-day session bill.

Please find attached the sponsor statement, current bill text, a sectional analysis, and supporting documents. A fiscal note from LAA has been requested and is forthcoming.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact myself, or my aide Tim Lamkin at extension 4925 with any questions or additional requirements you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Senator Gary Stevens *President of the Senate*

SPONSOR STATEMENT Senate Bill 18

Senate Bill 18 strikes a compromise by maintaining a 90-day first session, and a 120-day second session during each Alaska Legislature.

In the Fall of 2006, Alaskan voters narrowly passed ballot measure #1 to limit legislative sessions to 90 days. The Legislature has since worked under a 90-day session for 4 sessions. We've tried it. However, the best interests of Alaskans are not being served, nor are the arguments supporting passage of the ballot measure being proven true.

The most compelling argument in favor of shortening the session was the notion it would save money by reducing the cost of government. Obviously the costs of having regular legislative sessions have been reduced. However, the overall annual costs of the legislature have actually increased. Legislative salaries are still paid out, paper and copy costs accrue for more interim committee meetings, and legislator travel expenses accrue throughout the year, not just during session. There has not been a significant cost savings, if any, by reducing legislative sessions to 90 days.

As regards what other states are doing, half have no limit, and the other half range from 30 to 140 session days per year. It's very common to look at what other states are doing and to embrace or dismiss their policies depending on what side of an issue a person stands. Comparatively, Alaska is in the middle of the road on this issue and SB 18 would move us even closer to the middle.

There's also the idea that less time in Juneau means less time away from the home district, away from family, and normal interim activities (private sector work, etc), and thus greater "competition" among candidates who will have more incentive to run for office. Unfortunately there has been a steady decline in the total number of candidates running for state office since 2000, with the 2008 & 2010 election seasons showing the lowest number of candidates in a primary since 1998.

The bottom line is, the roughly \$60 million spent on administering the Legislative ("Peoples") Branch of government, the watchdog of the Executive Branch, is a drop in the bucket compared to the \$10 billion being spent by the executive agencies. And while the legislature respects and acknowledges the initiative process in Alaska, particularly the 90-day session vote in 2006, it is within the confines of Alaska's Constitution to resume a 120-day legislative session, at least partially as SB 18 proposes, to balance the power structure of Alaska's state government, and better serve the public.

Thank you for your support of this important issue.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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Senator Gary Stevens
President of the Senate

SECTIONAL ANALYSIS **Senate Bill 18**

SECTION 1: AS 24.05.150(b)

Establishes that the legislature shall adjourn its first regular session within 90 calendar days and its second regular session within 120 calendar days from the time it convenes.

SECTION 2: AS 24.05.150 (c)

Adds a new subsection (c) that reiterates Article 2, Section 8 of the Alaska State Constitution, providing for a 10-day extension of a regular session if made by an affirmative vote from two-thirds of the membership of each house.

SECTION 3:

Establishes the effective date of Section 1 of the bill to be January 1, 2013.

SECTION 4:

Establishes an immediate effective date of Section 2 of the bill.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number _____
 Bill Version SB 18
 () Publish Date _____

Identifier (file name) SB18-LEG-SES-01-25-11 Dept. Affected Legislature
 Title "An Act relating to the duration of regular sessions of the
Legislature and providing for an effective date." Appropriation Leg Council, Operating Budget
 Allocation Salaries and Allowances, Session,
 Sponsor Senator Stevens Legislative Operating Budget
 Requester Senate State Affairs OMB Component Number 776-782-796

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

	Appropriation Required	Information					
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
OPERATING EXPENDITURES							
Personal Services							
Travel							
Contractual							
Supplies							
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims							
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES							
---------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF							
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2011) cost _____

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version

Prepared by Shane Miller, Finance Manager
 Division Administrative Services Division
 Approved by Pamela Varni, Executive Director
Legislative Affairs Agency

Phone 465-6626
 Date/Time 1/25/11 3:27 PM
 Date 1/25/2011

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB 18

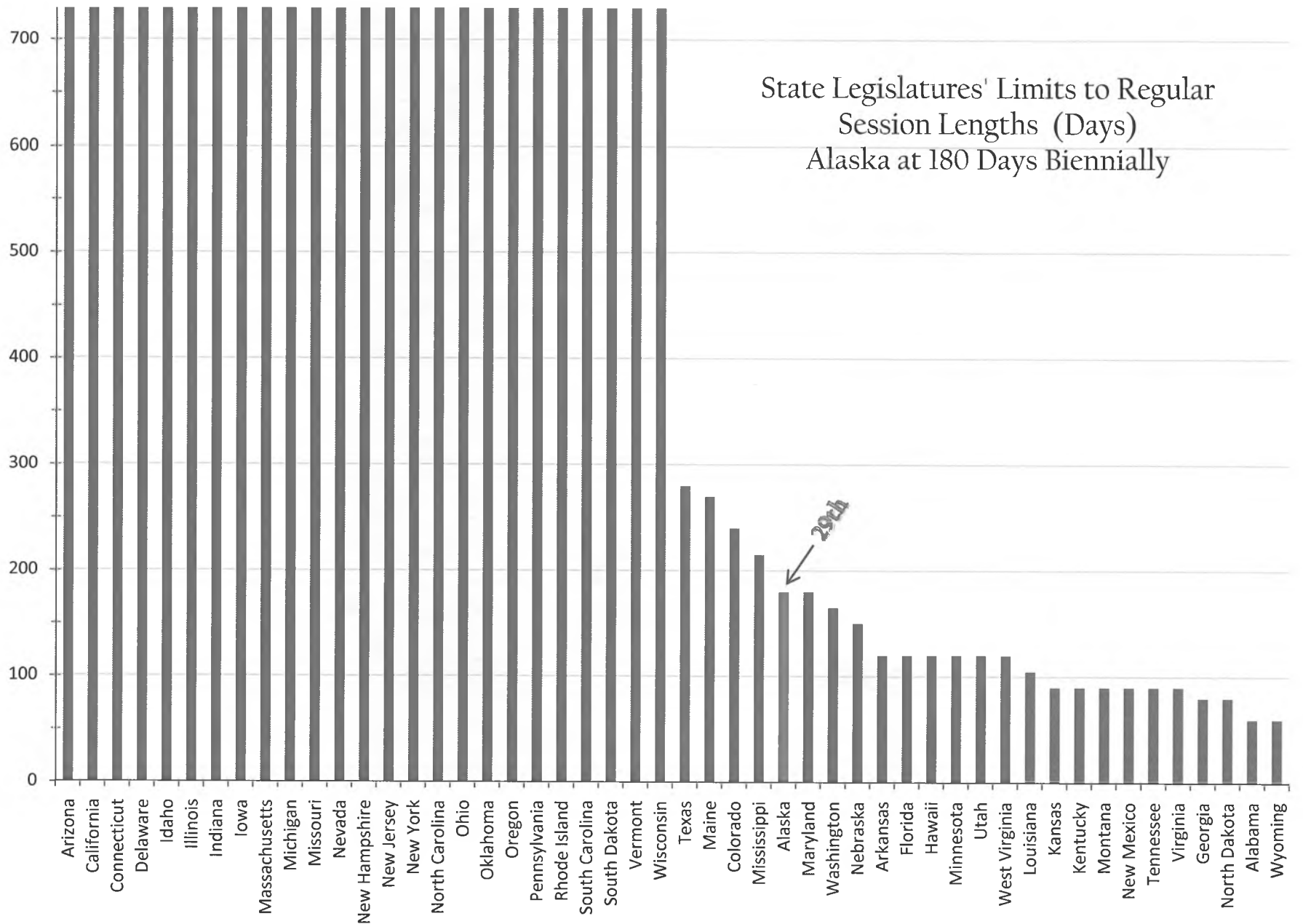
Analysis

SB 18 increases the number of days of the second session of a Legislature from 90 days to 120 days, beginning with the 28th Legislature which convenes in January 2013. The second session would convene in 2014.

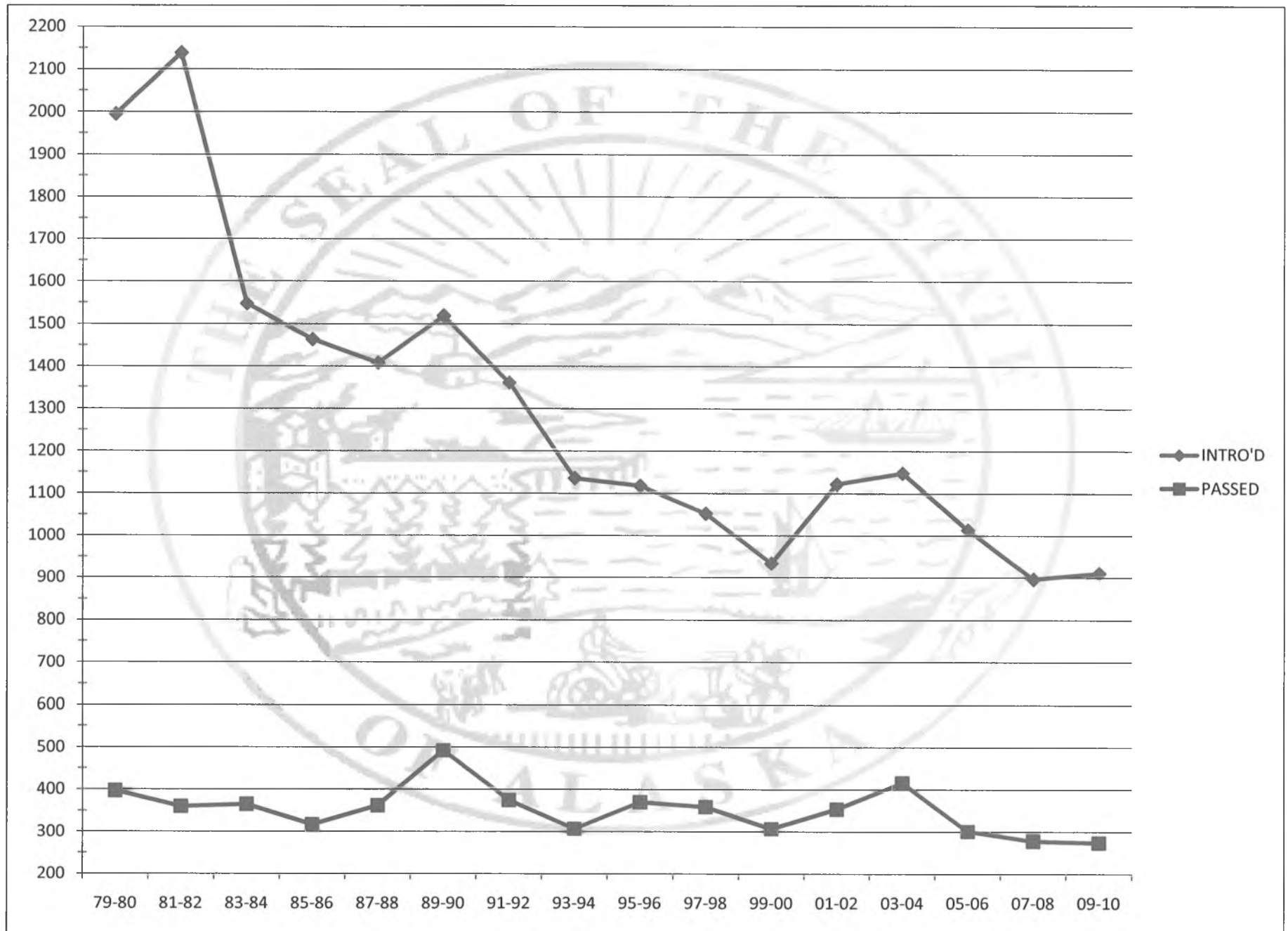
When the session was reduced from 120 to 90 days, the cost savings were redesignated into the special session contingency account in the event that reducing the number of session days resulted in more or longer special sessions. It is the intent of Senate Leadership that funding in the special session contingency account be used to absorb the cost of the additional 30 days of regular session.

This will reduce the funding available for special sessions after a second session of a Legislature and would result in a supplemental request for additional funds to cover a special session if one were called.

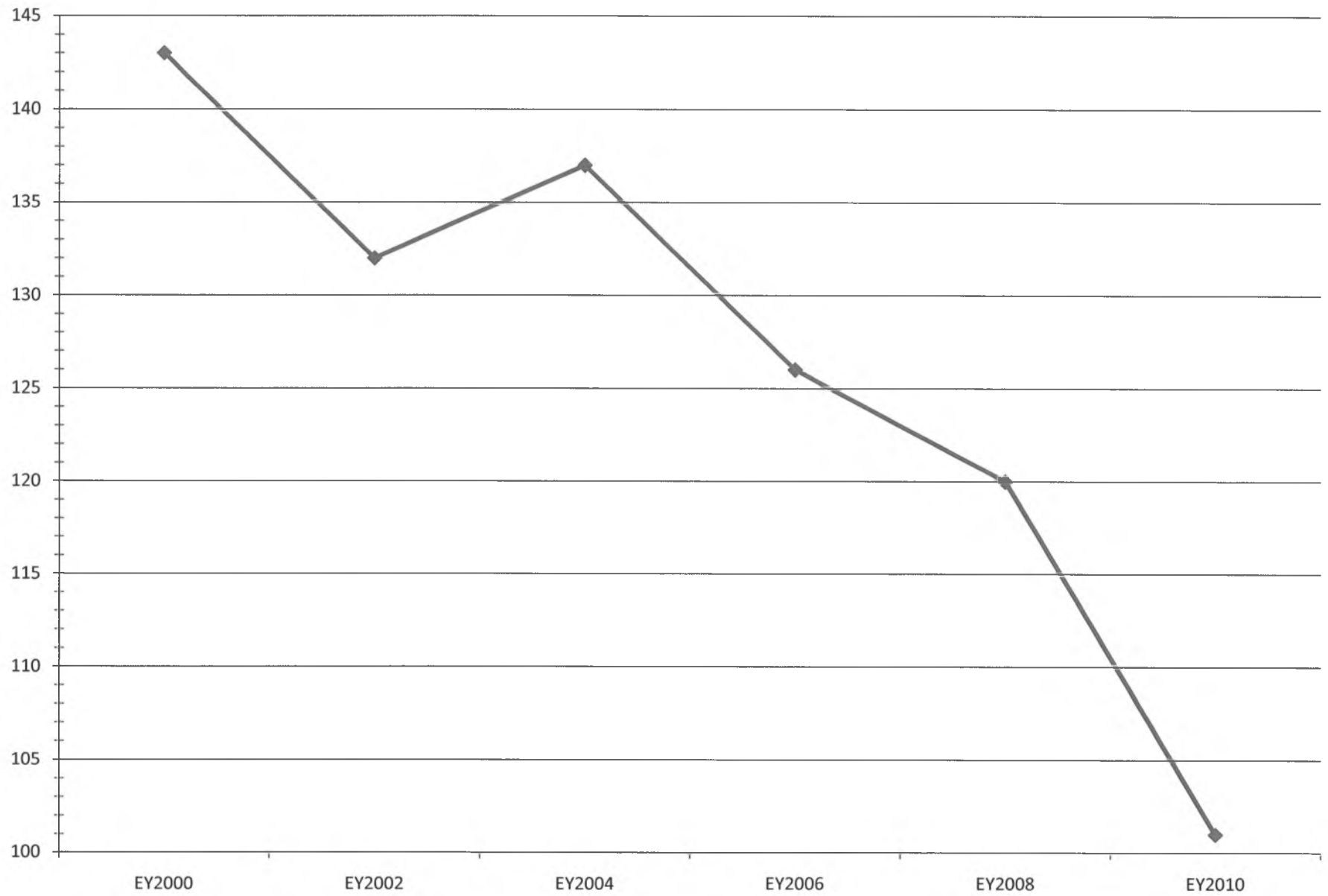
State Legislatures' Limits to Regular Session Lengths (Days)
 Alaska at 180 Days Biennially



Alaska State Legislature - Legislation Introduced and Passed, 1979-2010



Total Candidates Filed For Alaska State House & Senate 2000-2010



Source: AK Division of Elections, Official List of Primary Candidates, 2000-2010

Interim Committee Meetings of the Alaska Legislature, 2000-2010

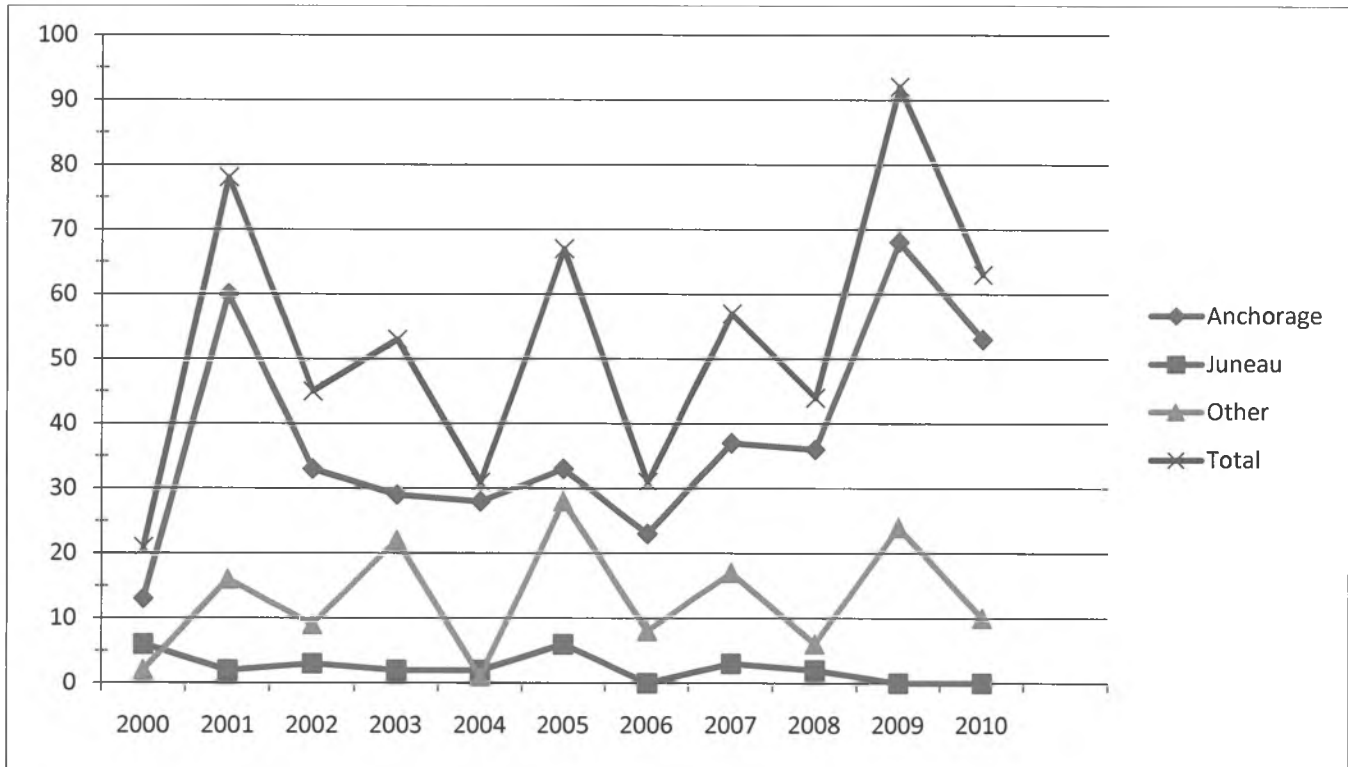


Table 1: Interim Committee Meetings of the Alaska Legislature, 2000-2010

YEAR	Location			Total
	Anchorage	Juneau	Other	
2000	13	6	2	21
2001	60	2	16	78
2002	33	3	9	45
2003	29	2	22	53
2004	28	2	1	31
2005	33	6	28	67
2006	23	0	8	31
2007	37	3	17	57
2008	36	2	6	44
2009	68	0	24	92
2010	53	0	10	63
Total	413	26	143	582

Notes and Source: The figures above represent the number of meeting of caucuses (other than political caucuses), councils, task forces, and standing and special committees for dates outside of regular or special sessions as listed in the Alaska Legislature's Bill Action and Status Inquiry System (BASIS).

Attachment A

Impact Statement for Alaska Ballot Initiative 05LEGS (2006) "90 Day Regular Session," Alaska
Legislative Affairs Agency

Fiscal Note to HB22 (2006), prepared by Karla Schofield, Deputy Director, Alaska Legislative
Affairs Agency, Jan. 16, 2006

Ballot Initiative 05LEGS – 90 Day Regular Session

As required by AS 15.58.020 (6) (c) the Legislative Affairs Agency has prepared the following statement of costs and cost savings to the Legislative Affairs Agency of implementing the law proposed in Ballot Initiative 05LEGS.

The initiative would limit regular sessions of the Legislature to 90 days, including the day the legislature first convenes in that regular session. The 90 day limit would take effect beginning with the second regular session of the 25th Alaska Legislature in January 2008.

The Legislative Affairs Agency would realize a cost savings of \$700,000 per year due to shortening the existing 121 day session to 90 days. However, shortening the regular session to 90 days may or may not result in more frequent special sessions so that legislators can work on single subject legislation, or work on legislation that did not make it through the process during the regular session. If more special sessions were held, the \$700,000 cost savings realized by shortening the session, would be offset by the costs of holding more frequent special sessions.



LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICES

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September 4, 2009

FROM: Chuck Burnham, Legislative Analyst
RE: Comparing Selected Aspects of 90-day and 120-day Legislative Sessions
LRS Report 10.034

You asked that we compare certain impacts on the Alaska Legislature of reducing session lengths from 120 days to 90 days. Specifically, you asked us to compare annual costs to the legislature under the different session lengths, and the number of interim committee meetings held, on average, under each scenario.

Briefly, for reasons we discuss below, we find comparing the actual costs of recent 90-day sessions to previous 120-day sessions to be problematic. However, assuming no special sessions or other extraordinary costs, and that all other cost factors are equal, 90-day regular sessions are projected by the Legislative Affairs Agency to result in reduced costs of approximately \$700,000 annually (in 2006 dollars), primarily attributable to reduced personnel expenditures. By comparison, recent 30-day special sessions have incurred average overall costs of approximately \$900,000.

Our research indicates that the number of interim committee meetings held since the implementation of 90-day regular sessions does not exceed the annual average of such meetings in the previous eight years of 120-day sessions.

Background



As you know, sessions of the Alaska Legislature were reduced in length from 120 days to 90 days by a citizen's initiative (05LEG) that was narrowly approved in the 2006 statewide general election.¹ The shorter sessions took effect beginning with the second session of the 25th legislature (2008); therefore, two regular sessions and about 1.5 interim periods have elapsed since the initiative took effect. Given the relatively short time-period in which the 90-day session has been in place, we do not believe sufficient data are available to make a reliable determination as to the typical relative costs of these sessions of differing lengths.

Comparing the relative costs of recent sessions is further complicated by the two 30-day special sessions called in 2008 by Governor Palin primarily to address aspects of the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) and a number of other energy-related issues, which collectively cost approximately \$1.84 million. It is unclear to us whether one or both of those sessions would have been necessary had the 2008 regular legislative session lasted longer than 90 days. Attributing the costs of those special sessions for the purpose of the comparison for which you asked is therefore problematic.

¹ More information on the initiative is available on the Division of Elections website at <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/petitions/status.php#05LEGS>.

"All Other Things Equal" Comparison

Given the issues discussed above, we believe the most reliable comparison of the relative costs of 90-day and 120-day sessions is made using historical expenditure data to determine relative session costs assuming no special sessions or other extraordinary expenditures.² Such data has been previously published by the Legislative Affairs agency in fiscal notes accompanying previous legislative attempts to shorten sessions (most recently HB22 [2006]), and as part of the ballot language for the initiative that successfully shortened regular sessions.³ The last such calculation concluded that a 90-day session generates a reduction in costs of \$700,000 annually, in 2006 dollars, as compared to a 120-day session, with the majority of those savings attributable to reduced expenditures for employee wages and benefits.⁴ We again emphasize, however, that those savings would be reduced commensurate with costs for any special sessions that occur as a result of the shorter regular session.

 To provide context to the differences in costs we discuss above, it is important to note that since the switch to 90-day sessions, the Legislature's overall operating budget has increased from about \$53.4 million in fiscal year (FY) 2008 to just over \$66 million in FY 10. Therefore, while a substantial sum, the annual reduction of \$700,000 associated with the reduction in session lengths to 90 days represents about 1.05 percent of the Legislature's current-year operating costs. 

Interim Meetings

According to the Alaska Legislature's Bill Action and Status Inquiry System (BASIS), a total of 449 interim meetings of official legislative entities occurred between May 7, 2000, and August 9, 2009.⁵ Table 1 (following page) tallies these meetings by year and location. The number of hearings ranged from a low of 21 in 2000 to a high of 78 in 2001, and averaged about 47 annually for each of the full-year periods we reviewed (2001-2008). As you can see the 44 interim meetings in 2008, and 22 interim meetings thus far in the 2009 interim, do not exceed the average number of such meetings from 2000-2007.

² Please note, however, that special sessions in Alaska are not particularly "extraordinary." In fact, since 2003, the legislature has convened in special session ten times for a total of 176 days.

³ We include copies of the fiscal note for HB 22(2006) and the applicable ballot language for 05LEGS as Attachment A. These documents were prepared by Karla Schofield, Deputy Director, Alaska Legislative Affairs Agency. Ms. Schofield can be reached at (907) 465-6626.

⁴ Assuming costs for the legislature have increased with the rate of general inflation published by the Alaska Department of Labor, in 2008 this figure would have increased to about \$747,600.

⁵ Among the wide variety of information contained in BASIS are the hearing calendars for legislative entities for every year since 1993. The system is available online at <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/>. May 7, 2000, marked the end of the third special session of the 21st Alaska Legislature, which immediately followed the second regular session.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number: _____
 Bill Version: CS HB22(STA)
 () Publish Date: _____

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): _____ Dept. Affected: Legislature
 Title "An Act relating to a 90-day regular session of the Legislature." BRU Leg Council, Leg Operating Budget
 Component All
 Sponsor "Representatives Samuels, Rokeberg,....."
 Requester House State Affairs Component No. 782

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Personal Services	(420.0)	(420.0)	(420.0)	(420.0)	(420.0)	(420.0)
Travel	(195.0)	(195.0)	(195.0)	(195.0)	(195.0)	(195.0)
Contractual	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)
Supplies	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)	(21.0)
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CHANGE IN REVENUES ()	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
TOTAL	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)	(657.0)

Estimate of any current year (FY2006) cost: _____
 Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2004 budget proposal: _____

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

CS HB22(STA) would limit the regular session to 90 days. If this legislation becomes law, the 1st Session of the 25th Legislature would convene for 90 days. The Legislature would realize a cost savings of approximately \$21.9 per day for each day of a shorter session. Shortening the session by 30 days would result in a cost savings of, 30 times \$21.9, or \$657.0 per year.

The Legislature traditionally charges expenses occurring during session to session expense accounts and expenses occurring during the interim to interim expense accounts. For example: Most legislative staff payroll costs are charged to operating expense accounts during the interim. Staff salaries for most legislative staffers are charged to session during the session. The Legislature's payroll is higher

Prepared by: Karla Schofield, Deputy Director Phone 465-3852
 Division Administrative Services Date/Time 1/16/06 11:51 AM
 Approved by: Pamela A. Varni, Executive Director Date 1/16/2006
 Agency Legislative Affairs Agency

FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA
2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

BILL NO. CS HB22(STA)

ANALYSIS CONTINUATION

during a legislative session. If the regular session were shortened to 90 days, the session payroll would decrease and the interim payroll would increase. There would be a decrease in the total amount of the payroll due to the higher cost of personal services during a session. The majority of the personal services costs would be a transfer of costs between allocations.

This fiscal note does not address the costs for special sessions.

The costs savings below are for items not needed for a shorter session.

	Per Day	times 30 days	Total
Personal Services	-14.0	30	-420.0
Travel			
Session per diem costs approx. 10.0 per day. If session were shortened more long term per diem claims would be filed during the year, approx. 23 claims per day 23 days @ 150/day = 3.5 10.0 - 3.5 = 6.5	-6.5	30	-195.0
Contractual			
Telephones, chaplin fees, copier maintenance	-0.7	30	-21.0
Supplies			
Lounge supplies	-0.7	30	-21.0
Printshop paper supplies	_____		_____
	-21.9		-657.0
Current number of session days	120		
Proposed number of session days	90		

	30		

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS SINCE STATEHOOD

Legislature/Session & Number of Days	Day/Date Convened	Day/Date Adjourned	Adjournment Time	
			SENATE	HOUSE
1ST LEGISLATURE: 1959 - 1960 1st Session - 81 days 2nd Session - 65 days	Mo 1/26/59 Mo 1/25/60	Tu 4/16/59 Tu 3/29/60	9:50pm 12:00pm	9:45pm 12:00pm
2ND LEGISLATURE: 1961 - 1962 1st Session - 74 days 2nd Session - 81 days	Mo 1/23/61 Mo 1/22/62	Th 4/6/61 Th 4/12/62	2:01am 1:22am	2:20am 1:10am
3RD LEGISLATURE: 1963 - 1964 1st Session - 76 days 2nd Session - 85 days* 1st Special Session - 3 days *Formal recess, 40 days	Mo 1/28/63 Mo 1/27/64 Mo 8/31/64	Sa 4/13/63 Sa 5/30/64 We 9/2/64	10:46am 1:00am 11:12am	10:45am 1:00am 11:08am
4TH LEGISLATURE: 1965 - 1966 1st Session - 75 days 2nd Session - 84 days	Mo 1/25/65 Mo 1/24/66	Fr 4/9/65 Su 4/17/66	4:32am 1:14am	4:35am 1:28am
5TH LEGISLATURE: 1967 - 1968 1st Session - 77 days 1st Special Session - 6 days 2nd Session - 86 days	Mo 1/23/67 Fr 9/29/67 Mo 1/22/68	Su 4/9/67 We 10/4/67 Tu 4/16/68	11:35am 2:37am 8:05am	11:32am 2:35am 8:00am
6TH LEGISLATURE: 1969 - 1970 1st Session - 95 days 2nd Session - 147 days	Mo 1/27/69 Mo 1/12/70	Th 5/1/69 Su 6/7/70	4:18am 3:33am	4:30am 3:51am
7TH LEGISLATURE: 1971 - 1972 1st Session - 121 days 2nd Session - 161 days	Mo 1/11/71 Mo 1/10/72	Tu 5/11/71 Tu 6/18/72	3:23am 12:50am	3:26am 12:59am
8TH LEGISLATURE: 1973 - 1974 1st Session - 90 days 1st Special Session - 27 days 2nd Session - 96 days 2nd Special Session - 4 days	Mo 1/8/73 We 10/17/73 Mo 1/21/74 Mo 6/17/74	Sa 4/7/73 Mo 11/12/73 Fr 4/27/74 Th 6/20/74	5:45pm 4:35pm 8:21pm 6:17pm	5:50pm 4:35pm 8:25pm 6:12pm
9TH LEGISLATURE: 1975 - 1976 1st Session - 139 days 2nd Session - 142 days	Mo 1/20/75 Mo 1/12/76	Sa 6/7/75 Tu 6/1/76	2:30am 8:19am	2:43am 8:14am
10TH LEGISLATURE: 1977 - 1978 1st Session - 141 days 2nd Session - 161 days	Mo 1/10/77 Mo 1/9/78	Mo 5/30/77 Su 6/18/78	10:41am 9:32pm	12:33pm 11:36pm
11TH LEGISLATURE: 1979 - 1980 1st Session - 112 days 1st Special Session - 3 days 2nd Session - 145 days 2nd Special Session - 3 days	Mo 1/15/79 Mo 8/6/79 Mo 1/14/80 Mo 9/22/80	Su 5/6/79 We 8/8/79 Fr 6/6/80 We 9/24/80	12:15pm 2:16pm 8:43pm (6/5) 9:38am	3:00pm 7:26pm (8/7) 1:01am 2:55am (9/23)
12TH LEGISLATURE: 1981 - 1982 1st Session - 165 days 1st Special Session - 3 days 2nd Session - 144 days	Mo 1/12/81 Mo 7/13/81 Mo 1/11/82	Th 6/25/81 We 7/15/81 We 6/3/82	7:06pm (6/24) 6:11pm (7/14) 5:35pm	12:23am 1:32am 7:23am (6/2)
13TH LEGISLATURE: 1983 - 1984 1st Session - 162 days 2nd Session - 152 days	Mo 1/17/83 Mo 1/9/84	Mo 6/27/83 Fr 6/8/84	9:39am 4:38pm	9:28pm (6/26) 4:05pm
14TH LEGISLATURE: 1985 - 1986 1st Session - 119 days 1st Special Session - 30 days* 2nd Session - 120 days	Mo 1/14/85 Mo 7/15/85 Mo 1/13/86	Su 5/12/85 Tu 8/13/85 Mo 5/12/86	9:42pm * 11:54pm	10:52pm * 11:59pm
* The First Special Session of the Fourteenth Legislature (considering the question of impeachment of Governor Sheffield) adjourned in 30 days under Article II, Section 9, Constitution of the State of Alaska.				

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS SINCE STATEHOOD

Legislature/Session & Number of Days	Day/Date Convened	Day/Date Adjourned	Adjournment Time	
			SENATE	HOUSE
15TH LEGISLATURE: 1987 - 1988 1st Session - 122 days (extended)** 1st Special Session - 3 days 2nd Session - 121 days	Mo 1/19/87 Mo 7/1/87 Mo 1/11/88	We 5/20/87 Fr 7/3/87 Tu 5/10/88	11:58pm (5/19) 1:31am 4:12am	1:30am 12:12am 6:04am
** The First Session of the Fifteenth Legislature was extended by a proclamation by the Governor.				
16TH LEGISLATURE: 1989 - 1990 1st Session - 121 days 2nd Session - 122 days 1st Special Session - 14 days	Mo 1/9/89 Mo 1/8/90 Mo 6/25/90	Tu 5/9/89 We 5/9/90 Su 7/8/90	11:59pm 11:59pm (5/8) 5:13pm	11:32pm 12:01am 5:00pm
17TH LEGISLATURE: 1991 - 1992 1st Session - 122 days 2nd Session - 122 days 1st Special Session - 4 days 2nd Special Session - 8 days	Mo 1/21/91 Mo 1/13/92 We 05/13/92 Mo 06/15/92	We 5/22/91 We 5/13/92 Sat 5/16/92 Mon 6/22/92	9:39pm (5/21) 11:59pm (5/12) 4:56pm (5/15) 3:44pm	12:37am 12:06am 5:40am 4:17pm
18TH LEGISLATURE: 1993 - 1994 1st Session - 121 days 2nd Session - 121 days 1st Special Session: Senate - 7 days House - 5 days 2nd Special Session - 3 days	Mo 1/11/93 Mo 1/10/94 Tu 5/10/94 Th 5/12/94 Mo 9/26/94	Tu 5/11/93 Tu 5/10/94 Mon 5/16/94 Mon 5/16/94 We 9/28/94	9:02pm unclear 4:36pm 12:35am	9:11pm 11:59pm 6:15pm 12:40am
19TH LEGISLATURE: 1995 - 1996 1st Session - 121 days 2nd Session - 122 days 1st Special Session - 30 days	Mo 1/16/95 Mo 1/8/96 We 5/8/96	Tu 5/16/95 We 5/8/96 Th 6/6/96	10:05pm 12:18am 4:37pm	10:13pm 12:13am 4:51pm
20TH LEGISLATURE: 1997 - 1998 1st Session - 119 days 2nd Session - 122 days 1st Special Session - 7 days 2nd Special Session - 2 days	Mo 1/13/97 Mo 1/12/98 Tu 5/26/98 Mo 7/20/98	Su 5/11/97 We 5/13/98 Mon 6/1/98 Tu 7/21/98	11:04pm 12:09am 1:26pm 9:25pm	11:43pm 12:03am 1:51pm 8:57pm
21ST LEGISLATURE - 1999 - 2000 1st Session - 121 days 1st Special Session - 6 days 2nd Special Session - 9 days 2nd Session - 115 days 3rd Special Session - 3 days	Tu 1/19/99 Th 5/20/99 We 9/22/99 Mo 1/10/00 Th 5/4/00	Tu 5/19/99 Tu 5/25/99 Th 9/30/99 We 5/3/00 Sa 5/6/00	11:56pm 6:06pm 6:55pm 7:11pm 11:47am	11:53pm 6:10pm 6:39pm 7:46pm 11:40am
22ND LEGISLATURE - 2001 - 2002 1st Session - 121 days 1st Special Session - 3 days 2nd Session - 123 days (extended) 2nd Special Session - 5 days 3rd Special Session - 4 days	Mo 1/8/01 Th 6/7/01 Mo 1/14/02 Fr 5/17/02 Mo 6/24/02	Tu 5/8/01 Sa 6/9/01 Th 5/16/02 Tu 5/21/02 Th 6/27/02	11:48pm 10:55am 11:59:59pm*** 5:32pm 12:41am	11:52pm 10:41am 11:58pm 5:08pm 1:42am
***Adjourned at midnight under the provisions of art. II, sec. 8 of the Alaska Constitution				
23rd LEGISLATURE: 2003 - 2004 1st Session - 121 days 2nd Session - 122 days 1st Special Session - 3 days	Tu 1/21/03 MO 1/12/04 Tu 6/22/04	WE 5/21/03 WE 5/12/04 TH 6/24/04	1:57pm 11:44pm (5/11) 4:35pm	11:59:59pm**** 12:00am 5:26pm
****Adjourned at midnight under the provisions of art. II, sec. 8 of the Alaska Constitution				
24TH LEGISLATURE: 2005 - 2006 1st Session - 121 days 1st Special Session - 15 days 2nd Session - 121 days 2nd Special Session - 30 days 3rd Special Session - 30 days 4th Special Session - 7 days* *House started on 2nd day	MO 1/10/05 WE 5/11/05 MO 1/9/06 WE 5/10/06 WE 7/12/06 TU 11/14/06*	TU 5/10/05 WE 5/25/05 TU 5/9/06 TH 6/8/06 TH 8/10/06 MO 11/20/06	9:51pm 10:38am 11:54pm 11:32pm 9:58pm 2:09pm	10:15pm 10:19pm (5/24) 9:08pm 11:12pm 10:02pm 11:22am (11/17)

LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS SINCE STATEHOOD				
Legislature/Session & Number of Days	Day/Date Convened	Day/Date Adjourned	Adjournment Time	
			SENATE	HOUSE
25TH LEGISLATURE: 2007 - 2008				
1st Session - 121 days	TU 1/16/07	WE 5/16/07	11:51pm	11:56pm
1st Special Session -1 day	TU 6/26/07	TU 6/26/07	4:55pm	5:04pm
2nd Special Session - 30 days	TH 10/18/07	FR 11/16/07	2:09pm	4:15pm
2nd Session - 90 days	TU 1/15/08	SU 4/13/08	12:55pm	12:54pm
3rd Special Session - 30 days	TU 6/03/08	WE 7/02/08	11:59:59pm*	11:59:59pm*
4th Special Session - 30 days	WE 7/9/08	TH 8/7/08	8:41pm	9:40pm
*Adjourned at midnight under the provisions of art. II, sec. 9 of the Alaska Constitution				
26TH LEGISLATURE: 2009 - 2010				
1st Session - 90 days	TU 1/20/09	SU 4/19/09	7:29pm	7:54pm
1st Special Session -1 day	MO 8/10/09	MO 8/10/09	3:49pm	3:50pm

SOURCE: Legal Services, *Summary of Alaska Legislation 2009* (Juneau: Legislative Affairs Agency, 2009).

NOTE: All Special Sessions were called by the Governor, except the 1st Special Session of the 14th Legislature, the 1st Special Session of the 17th Legislature, the Second Special Session of the 22nd Legislature, the First Special Session of the 25th Legislature, and the First Special Session of the 26th Legislature which were called by the Legislature.

Rep. Max Gruenberg



Rep. Bryce Edgmon

Rep. Paul Seaton, Chairman
HOUSE 90-DAY SESSION EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE

The following report is submitted with the unanimous consent of the House 90-Day Session Evaluation Subcommittee.

Introduction

In 2007 the Legislature passed HB 171 requiring Legislative Council to deliver a report to the full Legislature before the start of the 2010 session "considering issues related to the duration of the regular session and making recommendations regarding the amendment or repeal of any statutes or Uniform Rules implementing the 90-day regular session."

In 2008 Legislative Council created a subcommittee to assist in creating the 90-day session report. This subcommittee consists of three members of the House, appointed by the Speaker of the House, and three members of the Senate, appointed by the Senate President. House subcommittee members include Representative Seaton, Chair, Representative Edgmon, and Representative Gruenberg. Senate members are Senator Stevens, Senator Huggins, and Senator Wagoner.

House subcommittee members viewed our task as providing Legislative Council with a basis and recommendation for their report. House subcommittee members felt that we needed baseline information on which to base our recommendations. In order to gather this information the House members on the subcommittee submitted a "90-day Legislative Session Evaluation Survey" to all House members and House interim staff.

Senate members of the subcommittee determined that they would proceed on a different track and did not participate in the survey. This report exclusively discusses the deliberations of the House portion of the subcommittee hereafter referred to as "the subcommittee". House members will hereafter be referred to as Representatives.

Survey

An on-line survey provider called "SurveyMonkey" was utilized to deliver the survey. SurveyMonkey is the website of choice for entities such as Council of State Governments and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. The survey site allows multiple answer surveys to be filtered and downloaded, at a cost of \$19 per month. The subcommittee maintained this website for three months in order to collect as many responses as possible. The survey was e-mailed to all Representatives, and all interim House staff.

In order to achieve a maximum degree of participation among Representatives and House staff, the subcommittee determined that the survey should be delivered on an anonymous basis. However, it did include the option for respondents to provide their name if they wished.

For purposes of delineating staff responses regarding the impact of the 90-day session on moving expenses and other "personal" issues, the subcommittee determined that staff responses should be segregated between House staff residing in Juneau during the interim, and House staff residing elsewhere in Alaska during the interim, as these personal impacts would likely be different for the two groups.

The survey took into account that some Representatives, as well as many staff members may not have worked prior to the imposition of the 90-day session. An answer option was added to applicable comparative questions stating that the respondent was "unsure" as they have not worked during a 120-day session. In order to achieve objectivity the options for answering the "yes or no" questions were alternated so that one answer or the other was not listed first in order of preference. The subcommittee was also careful to give respondents the option to answer "no opinion" on pertinent questions so that they were not forced into picking one answer or the other if they did not have a position.

The survey contained 40 questions, in four general categories:

1. Impacts of the 90-day session on aspects of the personal lives of Representatives and staff such as moving expenses, housing, recreation time, health, etc;
2. Impacts of the 90-day session on the legislative office and constituent relations;
3. Impacts of the 90-day session on public participation and the committee process; and
4. Impacts of the 90-day session on miscellaneous aspects of the legislative process, as well as suggested changes to session structure, and length.

Results

The same survey was given to all Representatives and interim staff. The survey results are presented filtered into three groups: Representatives; House staff; and a combination of both. These surveys are attached as are all additional comments to survey questions.

The surveys presented with this report are largely self-explanatory so this report will not go into great detail discussing the survey results with a few exceptions. In the following narrative the number in parenthesis refers to the question number in the Representative survey. Although the staff survey has some different percentages there was not a difference on the main issues discussed below.

Thirty-one Representatives responded to this survey, as well as 47 non-Juneau House staff, and 23 Juneau-based House staff. Of the 31 Representatives, a large majority expressed displeasure with the 90-day session. Twenty Representatives prefer the session length at 120-days, 4 prefer the session to be set at 90-days, and 4 prefer it to be structured as 45-days, a 30-day break, and then another 45-days.

General trends can be seen by looking at the majority of responses to a number of issues. Sixty percent of responding Representatives answer that the 90-day session had a negative or somewhat negative effect on their health and sleep habits (question 9). Sixty-seven percent say the 90-day session had a negative or somewhat negative impact on their hiring and retention of staff (q.11) while only 3 percent say it had a positive or somewhat positive impact. Communication and interaction with constituents is generally seen as negatively impacted, with 83 percent saying they communicated less well (q.14), 79 percent saying they traveled less to the district (q.15), and 85 percent stating that they consider a 90-day session to be detrimental to their legislative effectiveness. Sixty percent heard a majority of negative comments about the 90-day length from their constituents compared to 7 percent hearing positive comments (q.17). The effect of the 90-day session is generally seen as disadvantageous to constituents, with 93 percent of responding Representatives feeling that they have less time to schedule meetings (q.18), and 97 percent believe there is less public testimony and more time constraints on public testimony (q. 22). Ninety percent also feel there is less than adequate evaluation of their personal legislation (q. 21); with 83 percent believing the 90-day session gives special interest groups more power to kill legislation (q.23), and 76 percent say committee chairs have more power to kill legislation (q.24). Seventy-nine percent say bills were not heard because they might take up too much committee time (q.26) while 87 percent feel there is more pressure to move bills with a single hearing because of the shortened session (q.25).

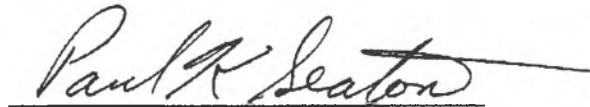
Representatives generally disagree with the validity of 90-day initiative proponent claims. Ninety-three percent do not think the shorter session cuts down legislative operating costs (q.13). Sixty-six percent do not believe the reduced number of session days leads to a greater number of people willing to run for office (q.32), and 83 percent do not see value in comparing the length of sessions to other states (q.31). Eighty-six percent of the responding Representatives feel the 90-day session cedes some of the power of the legislature to the Governor or the bureaucracy (q.33).

There is no majority opinion about the public desire for legislators to work longer sessions because of the change in legislators' compensation calculation from long-term per diem to salary (q.34), but 73 percent say the fact that the 90-day session was enacted by an initiative would have no effect on their willingness to change the session length (q.36). Sixty-seven percent of responding Representatives when combining all factors prefer the legislative session to be a 120-day structure.

Recommendations

Consistent with the above findings, the House subcommittee recommends that the Legislative Council introduce legislation to return legislative session duration to the constitutional specification of "...no later than one hundred and twenty consecutive calendar days from the date it convenes...."

If Legislative Council chooses to not follow the above recommendation, it should note that the survey polled respondents on three other measures the Legislature might take to improve a 90-day session. These results show that 65 percent of the responding Representatives support decreasing the length of time allowed to the Governor to submit budget amendments from 45 to 30 days. Twenty-two percent support a limit on the number of bills sponsored or co-sponsored, and 13 percent endorse a limit on the number of legislative citations an individual legislator can introduce (q.39). Five separate suggestions for uniform rule changes by individual Representatives are listed in the comment section (q.37).



Representative Paul Seaton, House Subcommittee Chair

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senate District P
714 W 4th Ave
Suite 200
Anchorage Alaska 99501-2133




State Capitol
Juneau AK 99801-1182
907-465-4843
Fax: 907-465-3871
800-892-3871

Cathy Giessel
Senator

MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Wielechowski, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

From: Cathy Giessel 

Date: January 31, 2011

Re: Senate State Affairs Committee
SB 18 Duration of Regular Legislative Sessions

Please include the attached email testimony regarding the length of legislative session in the committee packets for the next scheduled hearing of SB 18.

Thank you.

oppose

Sen. Cathy Giessel

From: Jerad McClure [jeradlainak@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2011 11:39 PM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: SB 18

Hi Senator Giessel,

Just a quick note to let you know that I oppose the lengthening of the legislative session (SB 18) beyond any parameter of the current 90 day format. I believe that the legislature should actually attempt to finish its business according to the law and adjourn before the 90 days are up. What the Senate did last year, adjourning after the deadline, was disrespectful (among other things) to the people who they represent.

Thanks for your time and public service,

Jerad McClure

against

Sen. Cathy Giessel

From: Aspelund, Shawn A [Shawn.Aspelund@bp.com]
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2011 11:05 AM
To: Sen. Cathy Giessel
Subject: 90 days

Cathy,

I vote to stay at 90 here's why:

All who go to Juneau feel they "have" to make laws for respect of their peers and to be re-elected. The bigger and hairier the better. We have a bunch of laws difficult to enforce already. Taking up more unimportant laws because we have the time, does not address the pressing concerns of Alaska's socio and economic future.

An extra 30 days may lend itself to an "I have lots of time" mind-set. With the 90, you all have to stay high on the performance curve. If we do extend another 30 days, I would suggest delaying the start of the session for 2 weeks and require each of you to hold open forums, (with security), in your areas and where we are, to hear from your constituents. As it is, you are fresh off the campaign trail with an ear full of your supporters but little from the "people". How can you effectively represent the average without discussions and time to contemplate? Without that you may be lead to act on issues from people with wants rather than the needs of the State?

Thanks again for your personal commitment to serve the people of Alaska.

Shawn A. Aspelund
Training Specialist
Org Capability
BP Exploration (Alaska)

~~Phone: 907-561-4500~~

against

From: Robert Bakic [<mailto:rsbakic@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 7:28 AM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Subject: Re: Contact Info

One of my concerns is that legislators are wasting valuable time on frivolous bills that have absolutely no impact on the direction our State is heading. It's as if they are in lala land and completely oblivious to the problems facing Alaska. Ninety days is plenty of time if the legislature cuts out the crap and gets down to work.

Bob Bakic

February 9, 2011

The Honorable Catherine A. Giessel
Alaska Senate
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Giessel:

Below are my thoughts on this issue.

I do not support a bill to extend the state legislative session.

A proud member of National Write Your Congressman.

Sincerely,

April Hodges

From: Robert Bakic [<mailto:rsbakic@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 7:28 AM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Subject: Re: Contact Info

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Bob Bakic

From: Aspelund, Shawn A [<mailto:Shawn.Aspelund@bp.com>]

Sent: Monday, January 31, 2011 11:05 AM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Subject: 90 days

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Thanks again for your personal commitment to serve the people of Alaska.

Shawn A. Aspelund

Training Specialist

Org Capability

BP Exploration (Alaska)

From: Jerad McClure [<mailto:jeradlainak@gmail.com>]

Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2011 11:39 PM

To: Sen. Cathy Giessel

Subject: SB 18

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Thanks for your time and public service,

Jerad McClure

10140 Hillcrest Lane
Eagle River, AK
907-726-0834

January 26, 2011

To: Chair Senate State Affairs

Testimony to Senate State Affairs regarding SB 18 (Extending the Term of the Legislature)

I oppose extending the length of the legislative session. I understand the proponents believe that adding back the additional 30 days would somehow improve the legislative process. The record belies that assumption. The actual work of the legislature is traditionally delayed until the end of the session. The proponents of this legislation have offered nothing to change the status quo.

Time to hold a hearing is available. Legislative hearings can be held outside of the session. Legislators now earn an annual salary plus per diem for the days they work.

Nothing in this proposed legislation will stop individual legislators from simply killing bills. Individual legislators have granted themselves defacto veto power over legislation with absolutely no explanation required.

Nothing in the proposed legislation will expedite the resolution of bills that are not of a critical nature or have minimal impact on the citizens. Nothing in this bill will expand BASIS information regarding legislation so that we citizens can see exactly how many bills have been defeated, withdrawn, combined with similar bills or have been pending before specific committees for extended periods of time. Nothing in this legislation will stop the new tactic of not being able to act because studies won't be available for months.

No, you do not additional time to do what you do now. I oppose SB18. Thank you.

Mr. Lynn Willis (Representing Self)



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Copy Express
Elgee Rehfeld & Mertz
Exxon Mobil
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Hecla Greens Creek Mining
Goldbelt, Inc.
Huna Totem
Shattuck & Grummett
Taku Oil
True North FCU
UAS
Wells Fargo Bank of Alaska
Wostmann and Associates

February 8, 2011

Alaska State Legislature
Senator Gary Stevens
State Capitol Room 111
Juneau AK, 99801

RE:SB18

Dear Senator Stevens,

It is my pleasure to tell you what a great job your aide Tim Lamkin did last week at chamber lunch presenting information on SB18 extending the second session of the Legislature back to 120 days.

I have represented the Juneau Chamber of Commerce as well as served on the Marine Transportation Advisory Board for the past 6 years. I have had the honor of visiting many legislators during this time regarding issues important to my community as well as all other communities served by the Alaska Marine Highway.

Before the legislative sessions were shortened to 90 days I could call on not only my delegation but legislators from around the state and felt confident that they would have time to hear what I had to say.

Since the change from 120 to 90 days I seldom go directly to any of my legislators during session. If I do I must be prepared to chase them down the hall or if I get lucky I might get 5 minutes of their time. Legislators and their staff seem to be racing from one meeting to the next. I can only imagine how difficult this must be for folks traveling to Juneau to see their legislators especially when I know legislators want to spend time with their constituents.

In conclusion, we whole heartedly support SB18 and hope that at least one year of each session is extended to 120 days. The ideal would be to revert back to 120 days every year.

Thank you so much for your service to the State of Alaska.

Respectfully,

Cathie Roemmich, CEO
Juneau Chamber of Commerce