



Alaska State Legislature

Senate Majority Web: www.akrepublicans.org

Sponsor: Senator Thomas Wagoner

Current Version: SB 55

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Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 55

Short Title: AGRICULTURAL LAND

Summary:

- Gives the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources the authority to transfer the remaining interest in specific state lands to the owner of the agricultural rights to that land.
- Requires the owner of the agricultural rights to pay the fair market value for the remaining interest in the land.

Benefits:

- Provides the owner of the agricultural rights for a piece of land with a means to purchase the remaining rights to their property.

Background:

- The impetus for this legislation comes from a situation in Hope in which a family received agricultural rights to 15 acres of land as compensation for land claimed by the 1964 earthquake. The Ross Miller family started homesteading in 1943, and in the early fifties leased 15 acres of adjoining property from the Forest Service for pasture land. When they lost 18 of their 27 acres to the earthquake, the Millers received only one acre of land through the earthquake exchange program. The State later determined this was unjust, and that the Millers were entitled to the 15 leased acres. In 1978, the state conveyed to the Millers the agricultural rights for this land and would like to be able to sell them the remaining rights, but without SB 55, the commissioner does not have the authority to do so.