

# Sponsor Statement

## HB 77

### **“An Act allowing certain motor vehicles to be operated while unattended”**

This bill is in response to an January 29, 2003 Anchorage Daily News article headline, “Starting car from afar is just the (\$40) ticket.” The article describes how a lady received a traffic ticket for starting her “unattended” car with a remote starter. The violation described in the newspaper article is based on 1978 Anchorage Municipal Code.

However, current state law (Alaska State Statute 28.05.01) *also* prohibits allowing “certain motor vehicles to be running while unattended.” This state prohibition is obsolete. It is “Model T crank-your-engine” law in a remote starter age.

Legislative research dated February 18, 2003 indicates that, in 2002, approximately 1,000,000 remote car starters were sold nationwide, and that sales have increased some 10% to 15% annually. Additionally GM has announced plans to offer remote starters as factory options on certain 2004 automobile models (which will probably spur optional remote starters to be offered by other automobile manufacturers). According to six dealers in Anchorage, 11,000 were sold in 2002; according to three dealers in Fairbanks, 4,400 were sold there in 2002. This probably represents only 40% to 50% of statewide remote starter sales. It is claimed that Alaska has one of the highest per capita install rates in the nation.

*The number of remote starters currently in use in Alaska is unknown. However, a conservative estimate would probably be at least 10 to 15% of our Alaska vehicles.*

Due to extremely cold climates in several areas of Alaska, it has long been common practice for drivers to leave automobiles running unattended, while business is conducted indoors nearby. Failure to leave an automobile running would not only be uncomfortable when returning to a cold car, it is also likely the car could not be started. Allowance in the law needs to be made for Alaska weather conditions.

HB 77 will repair the current obsolete law, and permit an automobile to have its engine running, so long as the vehicle is locked, and is not occupied by a child under 14 or a disabled person.

Your support on [HB 77](#) is respectfully requested.