

Alaska State Legislature



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Governor Signs Small Business Awareness Bill

(ANCHORAGE) – Earlier today, Governor Murkowski signed House Bill 33 into law at the State Chamber of Commerce Luncheon in Anchorage. HB 33, sponsored by Representative Kevin Meyer (R-Anchorage) requires certain state agencies to consider the potential negative impact of regulation on small businesses and to consider less burdensome alternatives.

More than half of all Alaskans work for a small business and in the past few years' small businesses have added most of the new jobs in Alaska's economy. "Small business is the dynamo that powers our economy and every dollar a small business puts towards complying with cumbersome government regulations is a dollar that cannot be spent expanding the business, providing benefits or hiring new employees," said Representative Meyer. "I sponsored HB 33 because I see smarter regulations as an economic development tool and strongly feel that we can add an awareness of the needs of small businesses to the regulatory process without compromising the health, safety or welfare of the public."

HB 33 was based on model legislation provided by the Federal Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy. More than 25 states have adopted similar legislation, nicknamed "regulatory flexibility laws" after the Federal Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980. Small Business Administration (SBA) head Hector Barreto was in Anchorage today to attend the bill signing. The SBA estimates that the Federal law saved small businesses more than \$10 billion in compliance costs last year. "HB 33 levels the playing field for small business," said Administrator Barreto. "This legislation gives small business a seat at the table. It encourages agencies and departments to understand the impact that regulations will have on small businesses *before* they institute them. We're not saying that departments can't introduce new regulations, we're simply asking that they consider the impact prior to doing so."

President of the State Chamber of Commerce Wayne Stevens commented on HB 33: "The chamber worked diligently with Representative Meyer and helped create the smart legislation that will hopefully leave lasting positive effects on Alaska's businesses. HB 33 requires the state, during the creation of a new regulation, to draft an economic effect statement and to list all affected businesses. Creating business awareness during the regulatory process will ultimately create better regulations allowing for a better business climate," said Mr. Stevens.

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