

Alaska State Legislature

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Representative Hugh Fate

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Fate Proposes Selling State Land to Alaskans **HB 232 Would Open 2.5-Acre Remote Cabin Sites to Residents**

(JUNEAU) – Rep. Hugh “Bud” Fate (R-Fairbanks) introduced legislation today that would allow every Alaskan to stake out and purchase a 2.5-acre remote recreational cabin site.

Fate said he introduced House Bill 232 in an effort to open up more of Alaska’s outdoors for citizens to enjoy, to bring more land onto public tax rolls and to help stimulate the state economy by encouraging trade in building materials, transportation, real estate and other services.

“There are so many people in the state that have come up to me and said, ‘Gee, I wish I could get a place on a lake or a river,’” Fate said. “But they can’t. There is almost no place where a private citizen can actually get a piece of property that they can call their own. This bill is intended to try to make that possible.”

Under HB 232, each adult Alaskan could select and stake out no more than 2.5 acres of unencumbered state land that was not part of any current or anticipated state, federal or Native land selection. They would then select from a state-approved list of surveyors to have the parcel surveyed and its boundaries certified, pay the surveying and recording fees, and then pay the assessed fair-market price to the state within two years to win fee simple title to the land.

The bill includes limits on the amount of lake or river frontage allowed in each parcel, and provides that, while family members would be free to stake adjacent land, no one individual could own more than one parcel at a time under this program.

HB 232 would satisfy Alaskans’ hunger for personal land; promote more settlement in more areas of the state, bring in more property taxes where sites were inside taxing districts and bring in new revenue to the state through land sales at market prices, Fate said.

Past state land disposal efforts have not been widely successful in part because they limited the land available to certain areas, took more than seven years to transfer ownership, and in many cases offered unattractive land, Fate said. HB 232 would leave the choice to individuals, but would also expect them to bear the costs.

“Everybody I have talked to so far has said they really like this bill,” Fate said. “I would expect that many people will take advantage of this bill, should it pass and the governor sign it into law.”

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