

ALASKA SENATE

Session:
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-2327



Interim:
119 N. Cushman, Suite 201
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
(907) 456-8161

Senator Pete Kelly

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Contact: Sen. Pete Kelly, 465-2327

Kelly Bill Would Increase Teacher Pool

(JUNEAU) – Sen. Pete Kelly (R-Fairbanks) introduced a bill in the Senate on Tuesday that would allow school districts more flexibility in dealing with the statewide teacher shortage.

Kelly's bill, Senate Bill 86, would allow people with a bachelor's degree to teach in the subject matter of their degree. It would also allow those with a bachelor's degree and five years work experience to teach in the subject matter of their experience.

"I've heard from numerous school districts around the state that there is a teacher shortage in Alaska," said Kelly. "My idea is to expand the universe of people we can hire as teachers. There are a lot of people out there with degrees and experience in different areas that are perfectly capable of teaching at the high school level. This bill allows them into the classroom where their knowledge and experience is sorely needed."

"I've talked to a number of people who are involved in other professions who have a great desire to teach," said Kelly. "What I'd like to do is take those people who have so much to offer and bring them into the classroom. I think that if we do this we will have motivated, educated people who really want to be in the profession."

SB 86 would expand the options for placement to include those who are experts in a particular area, and are hired specifically to teach in that area of expertise. Provisions in the bill require subject matter teachers to adhere to the same security requirements as certified teachers. It only allows subject matter teachers in secondary education.

SB 86 was referred first to the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee.

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Comments from Sen. Kelly are available on the Majority Actuality Line, 800-478-6540.