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Senate Honors Fairbanks Civic Leader

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska Senate honored a former University of Alaska president and state civic leader when it passed a bill renaming the Fairbanks International Airport.

William R. Wood arrived in Alaska to serve as the university's fourth president in 1960. In his 13 years on the job, he guided the University of Alaska through major expansions, and was the University of Alaska Fairbanks Nanooks' "Number-One Fan" for the remainder of his life. Along with his wife, Dr. Wood established the Wood Nanook Talent Grant Endowment for future UAF students.

As mayor and as a leader in the community, Dr. Wood helped make Fairbanks a better place to be than when he arrived. He founded Festival Fairbanks and the Fairbanks Industrial Development Corporation and is credited as the driving force behind the Golden Heart Plaza and the Centennial Bridge.

Dr. Wood was very active in Rotary International, serving as his club's president, and District 5010 governor. He received the "Service Above Self Award," Rotary's highest honor, and was named Alaskan of the Year in 1985.

Senate Bill 119, sponsored by Sen. Gary Wilken (R-Fairbanks) renames the Fairbanks International Airport the William R. Wood Fairbanks International Airport.

"I hope that every time Alaskans and our state's visitors pass through the airport, they will be reminded not only of Dr. Wood's contributions to our past, but his vision for our future," said Wilken. "It's a fitting honor for someone who gave so much to our community."

"Communities only build their airport once every 100 years, and I'd suggest the good Lord only builds a Bill Wood every 100 years," said Wilken.

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