

Alaska State Legislature

Representative Jim Whitaker
House of Representatives
District 31



Session
Capitol Building, Room 411
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: (907) 465-3004
Fax: (907) 465-2070

Interim
119 N. Cushman St. Suite 213
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: (907) 452-1088
Fax: (907) 452-1146

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HB151

William R. Wood Fairbanks International Airport

House bill 151 will rename the Fairbanks International Airport, the William R. Wood Fairbanks International Airport.

In 1973, Dr. Wood retired as the President of the University of Alaska after thirteen years of service. One of two University of Alaska presidents who decided to stay in state, Dr. Wood opened an office in Fairbanks where international, state, local, and academic ideas and plans were given birth and manifested as parks, plazas, hospitals, and industrial and agricultural growth.

It is important to remember that Dr. Wood was not only an educator, but also a poet, a thinker, an advocate for economic development, and an advocate for individual responsibility and self-reliance. He also understood the requisite relationship between successful self-reliant individuals and a robust, prosperous community.

Dr. Wood inspired thousands of individuals around the world through his deeds and dedication for this place we call home. He also leaves a legacy of Alaskans and Fairbanksans who consider him a regional and local hero. This from a man who asked no more of life than to leave his community and state a little better than he found it. He succeeded.

By renaming the Fairbanks International Airport as the William R. Wood Fairbanks International Airport, we will hopefully inspire future generations of Alaskans to ponder and aspire to Dr. Wood's simple yet magnificent legacy; to ask nothing more of life than to leave our state, our home, just a little better than we found it.