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REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL

Sponsor Statement HB 161

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Salary & Exemption of Certain Mental Health Trust Authority

HB 161 does two things. It places employees of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (the Trust) in the exempt service and it establishes a minimum salary for the Long Term Care Ombudsman.

HB 161 was introduced as a companion bill to SB 112 sponsored by Senator Lyda Green. The bill addresses concerns expressed by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority about their ability to function efficiently as a state corporation.

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority's employees, unlike employees of other state boards, commissions and authorities, are not in exempt service under AS 39.25.110(11). Because of the fiduciary responsibility of the Trust for the management of assets of the Trust, employees of the Trust are expected to perform at the highest level of competency. Employees perform at the highest levels of competency, since their actions.

This legislation also establishes a minimum salary for the Long Term Care Ombudsman at a Range 21. Establishing a minimum salary of the Long Term Care Ombudsman will help ensure that a qualified individual can be hired for this crucial position.