

Sponsor Statement for HB 196

Right of Action for Legal Separation

An Act establishing a right of action for a legal separation;
and amending Rule 42(a), Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure.

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Contact: Representative Fred Dyson's office at (907) 465-2199

For many troubled marriages, a Legal Separation would be very valuable while the individuals work on their own issues and relationships separately. Legal Separation allows the marriage partners to separate their property and financial affairs and establish custody, without the final step of a divorce.

In a relationship with one partner having problems with substance abuse, crime, domestic violence etc., an interim status, such as this Legal Separation, allows for a protective status for the victimized spouse while time indicates if the troubled partner will get on top of his/her problem.

For many Alaskans, religious values make divorce a very unattractive alternative, but a legal separation provides for the partners to protect their assets.

HB 196 adds a section of law that defines and sets the guidelines for Legal Separation.

At this time 17 other states allow for "Legal Separation".