

SPONSOR STATEMENT
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 3
**Proposing amendments to the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature relating to
committee meetings; and providing for an effective date**

House concurrent Resolution 3 would amend the Uniform Rules of the Alaska State Legislature to permit legislative committees to meet between regular sessions and to take action on any legislative matter under its jurisdiction. Currently, the committees can meet and take testimony but cannot move legislation out of committee to the next committee of referral.

HCR 3 designates a standing, special, or joint committees which acts between legislative sessions as a subcommittee of the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council is the entity that serves as a "Board of Directors" for the Legislature and conducts certain legislative business between sessions.

HCR 3 would permit legislative committee members to participate in these meetings via teleconference methods and allow the member so participating to direct the committee chair as to the member's recommendation on the committee report. Currently the Iowa Senate, Nevada Senate, North Dakota Senate and House, and Oregon House may authorize committees to use voting by teleconference. The Iowa Senate and Maine House permit voting by telephone.

Interim committee action will enable the legislature to work more efficiently by making better use of time. It will also allow committee meetings greater flexibility to meet around the state. This creates increased opportunities for public participation. In addition, if the public ever acts to shorten the session length, this rule change will dovetail with that concept of legislative reform.

This change in rules will facilitate shorter sessions (saving money and encouraging more people to run for office) and allow more public participation in the legislative process.

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