



SENATOR JERRY WARD
ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SPONSOR STATEMENT FOR SJR 11

Providing Constitutional Protection for the Permanent Fund Dividend Program

SJR 11 proposes amendments to the Constitution of the State of Alaska to guarantee the permanent fund dividend program, to provide for inflation proofing, and to require a vote of the people before changing the statutory formula for distribution that existed on January 1, 2001

The Alaska Constitution protects the principal of the Permanent Fund, but the earnings of the fund have no constitutional protection. The next step in taking the wishes of the people seriously is to protect the earnings as well as the principal and to guarantee inflation proofing. SJR 11 will, by constitutional amendment, guarantee the dividend program as it has successfully functioned for 19 years and provide for inflation proofing. The adoption of SJR 11 would mean that the dividend program and inflation-proofing program would no longer be at the mercy of the legislature and the Governor.

SJR 11 would require a vote of the people to make any changes to the dividend program. It would also require a vote of the people to make any changes to the way the Permanent Fund is inflation-proofed.