

# Alaska State Legislature

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## Representative Jay Ramras House District 10

*Co-Chair, House Resources Committee • Co-Chair, Economic Development Tourism & Trade • Member, House State Affairs • Member, Joint Armed Services Committee*

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## **Bill To Reform the Initiative, Referendum & Recall Process**

(JUNEAU) – Using his experience from this past summer, Representative Jay Ramras (R-Fairbanks) introduced legislation to reform the initiative, referendum, and recall process. House Bill 438 was introduced on Wednesday, adding language to existing statutes, which would tighten the requirements for circulators, ensuring that they not be registered to vote in any other states.

HB 438 will put into law that petition circulators can only be paid those monies authorized under statute, and that circulators cannot “double dip” at the trough by also collecting administrative fees.

“I spent a lot of time working on the 90 Day Legislative Session Initiative, including working with circulators, the Division of Elections, and the citizens of Alaska. In addition to what I learned from the public, I also found out that the newly instigated statutes remained vague on specific issues that are addressed in this bill,” Representative Ramras said.

HB 438 will establish penalties for both sponsors who pay circulators and circulators who receive compensation, which are not permitted under statute. Training offered by the Division of Elections will now be mandatory for sponsors who will be responsible for instructing circulators as to the law. Sponsors will also be allowed to submit up to 2000 signatures for pre-qualification prior to filing the petition, which will help assure that rural Alaska is as relevant to the process as urban Alaska. “There is a lot more to direct-democracy than standing outside Walmarts or Home Depots in Anchorage and Fairbanks, signatures should be collected by Alaskans, all over the State of Alaska, and not just in urban centers where the populace makes signatures easily to gather. There is a lot we can do to improve this process.”

HB 438 will have its first hearing in House State Affairs.

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