



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE SPONSOR STATEMENT

Sponsor: Representative Norman Rokeberg
Current Version: CSHB 23(STA)
Contact: Heather Nobrega
Date: March 28, 2006

Title: An Act relating to construction of a legislative hall; and repealing provisions relating to relocating the capital, the legislature or any of the present functions of state government.

Alaskans deserve and need a new Capitol Building, or at least, a new legislative hall, they can be proud of as a symbol of our state. It should be functional, user and citizen friendly, and architecturally beautiful. The structure should be a statement of freedom, democracy and the Alaskan way of life.

HB 23 creates fair and equitable competition for the construction of a new legislative hall for Alaska.

This legislation permits the Alaska Legislative Council to develop specifications and solicit proposals for a new legislative hall. The bill allows proposals from borough or unified municipalities with at least 30,000 residents, which would include Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna, Fairbanks, Fairbanks North Star Borough, Juneau, and Kenai Peninsula Borough.

The current capitol building was finished in 1931. While efforts have been made to update the building, there is only so much that can be done to address its major problems. These problems include: corridors and other features which do not meet the current fire and safety building codes; limited ingress and egress for the disabled; lack of amenities such as parking and a public lounge; antiquated heating and ventilation systems; inadequate wiring for electrical and telecommunication services; and insufficient office, chamber, and committee space. The Capitol Building has outlived its usefulness as a legislative hall, and it is time to have a modern, functional building.

Upon making a selection, the Legislative council will be responsible for carrying out the terms of the proposal, and for the operation and maintenance of the building. The rent would be set at \$1 per year. The new building will be completed and ready for occupancy by June 30, 2008.

I do believe that this is the only way to break the decades long political stalemate to build a new legislative hall in Alaska.