

# Alaska State Legislature

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## **REPRESENTATIVE Paul Seaton**

District 35

### **HB 322**

#### **Sponsor Statement**

*“An Act requiring a municipal initiative or municipal referendum to be submitted to the voters at the next regular election occurring not sooner than 60 days after certification of the initiative or referendum petition.”*

House Bill 322 was introduced specifically to help cash-strapped local governments avoid costly special initiative elections and referendums. Upon being petitioned by local residents, current law forces municipalities to hold initiative elections and referendums within 75 days. Normally, local governments hold annual elections each October, which includes voting on local ordinances, special initiatives and local officials. Having a special election within 75 days of certification of a petition, places an onerous and costly burden upon local governments.

Under HB 322, local municipalities would be allowed to hold initiative elections and referendums on the following municipal election, thus saving time and money for local governments. For smaller communities, the average cost of a special initiative election totals more than \$35,000, which doesn't account for additional volunteers and additional workloads placed on municipal employees. For bonding or other special initiatives that are time sensitive, any local governing assembly can vote to hold a special election.

HB 322 streamlines the special initiative and referendum process by allowing local governments to cut costs and hold special elections during the annual election cycle.