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**Senator Tom Wagoner**  
**Kenai/Soldotna**

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## **Wagoner Bill Supports Rights of Private Land Owners** **Bill Will End “Doctrine of Adverse Possession”**

**(Juneau)** – Sen. Tom Wagoner (R-Kenai/Soldotna) is taking on a legal doctrine, which was first put into law roughly 800 years ago.

The “Doctrine of Adverse Possession” first came on the scene during the “Middle Ages.” With its enactment anyone, including squatters, could receive title to property simply because they lived on the property, regardless who the legal property owner was. It is a doctrine the State of Alaska still employs and Wagoner says it is time for a change.

“Our law, right now, allows a person who has no claim of ownership to squat on someone else’s property and as a result of their illegal trespass the squatter could actually secure title to the property they are squatting on,” said Wagoner. “That is simply legal thievery – to me that is offensive and it needs to stop.”

If [Senate Bill 93](#) passes the Legislature and is signed by the governor it would repeal the Doctrine of Adverse Possession and give private property owner more security in knowing that their land will not be taken away from them summarily. The adverse possession doctrine in Alaska does not apply to state lands; it only applies to private land ownership, which Wagoner says includes Native lands and maybe even University and Mental Health lands.

“In Alaska especially, many people buy large parcels of land, often that land is very remote and this doctrine puts undue hardships upon those landowners to police their property,” said Wagoner. “This bill simply accords equal dignity and protection to private land ownership, already afforded to the government.”

Senate Bill 93 has been referred to the Senate’s Labor and Commerce and Judiciary committees.

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