

HB 45

The Second Verse to the “Alaska Flag Song”

This legislation would allow for the gift of a second verse to be recognized and adopted as part of the official state song.

“Alaska’s Flag” written by Marie Drake and composed by Elinor Dusenbury was adopted as the official state song in 1956, and was gifted to the University of Alaska in April 1960. Carol Beery Davis wrote the second verse to the state song and gifted the words to the University of Alaska Foundation in February 1987.

In order to understand the special significance of this verse, one must learn a little about its author, Carol Beery Davis, former poet laureate of Alaska. As well as being an oral historian, Carol’s contribution to art, music and literature were prolific during the 70 years she lived in Juneau. At the time Carol composed the verse, her husband, Trevor was the only living member of the original selection committee for the design of Alaska’s flag, which picked Benny Benson’s North Star and Big Dipper. Carol wrote dozens of books about Alaska, including, “The Alaska Flag Song” book, which was credited for making the Alaska Flag Song so widely known. As well, Carol was a true and beloved pioneer whose contributions have outlasted her charmed life. Penned during her 95th year, the 2nd verse was her final gift:

“a Native lad chose the Dipper’s stars for Alaska’s flag
that there be no bars among our cultures.

Be it known through the years, the Natives’ past has grown to share life’s
treasures hand in hand, to keep Alaska our great land!

We love the northern, midnight sky, the mountains, lakes and streams nearby.
The great North Star with its steady light will guide all cultures clear and bright,
with nature’s flag to Alaskans dear, the simple flag of the last frontier.“

With respect, the time has come to recognize the contributions of all Alaskans, whether it was our sourdoughs who dreamed of gold in the streams nearby or a Native lad whose simple stars without bars remind us how Alaskans live and live together.

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