

REPRESENTATIVE
Colleen Sullivan-Leonard
House District 7

Rep.Colleen.Sullivan-Leonard@akleg.gov



REPRESENTATIVE
GEORGE RAUSCHER
House District 9

Rep.George.Rauscher@akleg.gov

House Bill 185 Sponsor Statement

House Bill 185 calls for the Alaska State Legislature to convene for regular sessions in the Municipality of Anchorage, at the Legislative Information Office. The relocation of the legislative session to Anchorage is in the best interest of Alaska and a vast majority of the state's population. This bill does not seek to relocate the capital city nor does it seek to move other State departments located in Juneau.

By relocating legislative sessions to Anchorage, the legislature will address several important elements: Foundation, Access, Transparency, and Economics:

Foundation – The Alaska Constitution (Article 1, Section 2) states that: “All political power is inherent in the people. All government originates with the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the people as a whole.”

Access – The people of Alaska deserve access to their legislators. They need to be able to see and know what is happening in the legislature. Relocation to Anchorage will provide a greater number of Alaskans with access to the legislative process and a more rounded understanding of the issues.

Transparency – The people should be able to interact with their representatives. Watching Gavel to Gavel, local news, and other prepared or edited sound bites is not transparency. It is not the same as being there.

Economics – Over a period of ten years the legislature will save a considerable amount of money which will offset the initial costs. Through the reduction of per diem payments, moving costs, and travel. An important aspect of savings should include appropriate and timely renovations of the newly purchased Anchorage LIO; renovations could include two chambers and appropriate floor plans/offices for legislators and staff to be ready for 2019.

The Southcentral Alaska area (Anchorage, Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su) represents more than half the population of Alaska – approximately 460,000 people. Including Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, and other communities on the road system brings the number of Alaskans who would be able to drive to the legislature in a single day to about 500,000. In essence, moving the Legislature to Anchorage will provide two-thirds of the Alaska's population direct access to the legislative process.

The Southcentral region is home to 11 Senators and 22 Representatives and countless legislative staff. Relocation will result in lower per diem, and savings in annual moving cost to convene and adjourn each year.

We invite open discussion and urge you to support this legislation.