



Representative Harriet Drummond

Sponsor Statement
House Bill 221
"Workforce & Ed Related Statistics Program"

House Bill 221 will help Alaska prepare to best allocate and utilize increasingly scarce resources available for education and workforce training by clarifying the authority of the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) to receive and analyze existing data from state entities through a statewide workforce and education related statistics program. This system, currently known as the Outcomes Database, will be known as the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).

This bill also adds a new subsection to the statute governing information obtained by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, specifically allowing them to share information on mandatory wage data reporting with ACPE.

House Bill 221 requires that the records be kept securely, de-identified, and that no personally identifiable information be shared with the federal government.

The ability for the Legislature to look at workforce and education data completely and over the long term is essential to identifying which education and training programs are, and are not, doing the job of preparing Alaskans for the workforce.

Alaska has many career opportunities for those seeking both vocational and university education. House Bill 221 will help give students the opportunity to identify fields lacking qualified employees so they can train for the best jobs, and it will help employers identify programs producing Alaska residents who are best prepared to fill positions that might otherwise go to out of state applicants.

Prudent budgeting is essential to surviving times of financial hardship, and by ensuring policy-makers can analyze the impact of education programs on the Alaska workforce, House Bill 221 will provide the opportunity for the Legislature to receive data needed to best allocate educational and training resources where they will do the most good over the long term. This bill will incur no additional costs to the state. It is the smart thing to do as we work adapt to Alaska's fiscal challenges.