



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Senator Bill Wielechowski

Serving East Anchorage

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Hans Zigmund
Director, Division of Finance
Department of Administration
PO Box 110204
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Director Zigmund:

I am writing to express my disappointment with your division's failure to meet the requirements of the Alaska Online Checkbook Act (Chapter 68, SLA 2022) and to request that your division work to come into compliance with this act as soon as possible.

As you know, this act required the Department of Administration to launch an easily searchable website to make state financial information readily available to the public by October 1, 2023. While I would have preferred an earlier implementation date, your division assured me that this date was necessary to provide enough time to develop the website. During the committee process, I worked with your division and other agencies to make changes to the bill to make collecting and publishing the data as efficient as possible.

The fiscal note you submitted, and the Legislature fully funded, provided \$65,000 annually in base budget operating funds and \$250,000 in capital funding to implement this bill. The capital funding was to provide for "outward-facing presentation software, server capacity, design expertise, and contractor assistance with interface design, programming, and reporting" while the ongoing operating funding was to provide for "server capacity and software licenses." Given the state's challenging fiscal situation, the Legislature is loath to pass bills with positive fiscal notes, but this bill passed both bodies unanimously because of the importance of improving transparency.

The Alaska Online Checkbook Act was written to improve Alaska's financial transparency by making information about state income, expenditures, fund balances, Permanent Fund royalty deposits, and contractors available in a web-based format that is readily searchable. The new website your division created appears to only have the same expenditure data that was available to download from the previous "Alaska Checkbook Online" website. While it is an improvement to be able to search on an online application rather than having to download Excel spreadsheets, this application does not work reliably on mobile devices and is lacking the information on state income, fund balances, and royalty

deposits required by the act. It also appears that the website does not provide expenditure data for state corporations as required by the act. Despite the capital funding for “outward-facing presentation software” and “design expertise,” the website your division created merely presents spreadsheets through a web application.

I am requesting that your division bring the new website into compliance with the Alaska Online Checkbook Act as soon as possible. Please provide me with a timeline for when the additional data required by the act will be made available online and details on how the appropriations from the fiscal note are being used.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Wielechowski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in "Wielechowski".

Senator Bill Wielechowski