



SENATOR JOHN COGHILL
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For Immediate Release: March 13, 2019

Bill Introduced to Repeal Rules Restricting Speech, Legislative Process

JUNEAU – Today, a bill was introduced in the Alaska Senate to repeal provisions of a new law found to be too restrictive of Alaska’s citizen legislature.

[Senate Bill 89](#), sponsored by the Senate Rules Committee, repeals provisions of a [law passed in 2018](#) intended to strengthen the ethics rules governing the legislature. Under certain circumstances, however, it was discovered that the provisions went too far, barring members of the public from speaking with their representatives and undermining Alaska’s citizen legislature.

“We have a duty to protect Alaskans’ fundamental rights and the legislative process,” said Senator John Coghill, R-North Pole, chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. “This bill narrowly targets provisions of a law enacted last year that conflicted with the First Amendment and created uncertainty around the legislative process.”

As the state senator representing the district encompassing Alaska’s largest airport, aviation issues are critical to Senate Majority Leader Mia Costello, R-Anchorage. The existing rules, however, prevent her from sponsoring legislation or even speaking with constituents on issues related to aviation because her family member works as a commercial pilot.

“We need to make sure our laws allow us to effectively represent the friends and neighbors who sent us here,” said Sen. Costello. “As a pilot, and as someone who represents a district with the state’s largest airport, my constituents count on me to be their voice and ensure we have sensible laws on the books governing aviation. Currently, I am unable to do that.”

SB 89 was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

For more information, contact Senate Majority Communications Director [Daniel McDonald](#) at (907) 465-4066.

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