

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Co-Chair:

Resources

Vice Chair:

Joint Armed Services Committee

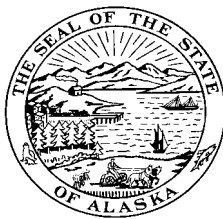
Member:

Military and Veterans Affairs Committee

Labor and Commerce Committee

Economic Development, Trade, &

Tourism Committee



Session:

Alaska State Capitol

Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Phone: (907) 465-3783

Fax: (907) 465-2293

Toll Free (877) 460-3783

Interim:

716 West 4th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99501-2133

Phone: (907) 269-0174

Fax: (907) 269-0177

REPRESENTATIVE NANCY DAHLSTROM

ELMENDORF AFB • FORT RICHARDSON • BIRCHWOOD • FIRE LAKE • GOVERNMENT HILL • MULDOON

Representative_Nancy_Dahlstrom@legis.state.ak.us

SPONSOR STATEMENT

HOUSE BILL 496

Youth Vote Ambassador Program

[House Bill 496](#) presents us with a unique opportunity to enliven the interest of young people in the political process and in their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

The intent of this bill is threefold:

- To increase awareness and interest in voting among Alaska's young people,
- To allow for meaningful student involvement in elections; and
- To relieve the shortage of election workers.

Youth Vote Ambassadors, high school students 16 years and older would assist at the polls as part of elections boards. These Ambassadors would be appointed and trained by an election supervisor and supervised by an elections board chairperson.

Currently, 74% of states have laws that allow for Election Day workers under 18 years of age. In Alaska, legislation is necessary to create the Young Vote Ambassadors Program since current law requires members of the election board be qualified voters.

In an attempt to reverse the 25-year decline in voter participation among those within the 18-24 age group, HB 496 plants the seed of civic responsibility at an early age and encourages more young people to become action in the political process.

This legislation also amends the qualifications for appointment to a precinct election board by removing the requirement that the appointee must be registered to vote in that precinct. This changes allows a qualified voter anywhere in the state to serve on any precinct's election board. This provides more flexibility to the election supervisors as they seek qualified individuals to serve in this important function.

I greatly appreciate the committee's favorable support of this legislation. Thank you.