

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

1500 W Benson Boulevard  
Anchorage AK 99503  
907-269-0181



State Capitol  
Juneau AK 99801-1182  
907-465-4843  
800-892-4843

**North to the Future**

## **Senator Cathy Giessel**

**Senate District N**

### **Sponsor Statement**

#### **SB 50 Increase Studded Tire User Fee**

Alaska's road system is critical for our Alaskan families, businesses, and jobs: children travel on them to school, workers commute on them to work, businesses use them to transport the countless products on which we all depend, regardless of weather and seasons. The effectiveness, and safety, of our road system affects every single Alaskan.

Every year, we deal with road ruts, which pose significant dangers to Alaskans. The major contribution to these ruts are studded tires used during the winter. The ruts are most prominent on high traffic, high-speed roads, corresponding to where the most serious accidents occur every year.

Rutting from studded tires is dangerous and expensive: the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOTPF) estimates that road repair due to rutting for a two-lane stretch of road costs 1 million dollars per mile.

Though many northern states have banned studded tires, Alaska has no such law. Thanks to new technologies, there are winter tires free of studs that are nearly as effective for stopping without inflicting damage on our roads and highways.

Alaskans justifiably demand better, safer roads for their families, businesses, and jobs. Maintenance comes at a cost. We also must recognize that driving with studded tires is a choice, and one that comes at a cost for all of us who share our roads.

Senate Bill 50 proposes to increase the fee applied to the purchase of all new studded tires sold within the state of Alaska, including through online retailers. The bill directs all the money generated from the fee increase to go to the ADOTPF specifically to repair damaged roads across the state. Citizens would truly be paying for a service they have decided is important, while still choosing to use their method of travelling our shared roadways.

Our state's fiscal challenges are forcing Alaskans to do business differently, and more effectively. This bill strikes a balance that maintains essential public services while preserving Alaskans' ability to choose what is best for their vehicles. I respectfully ask you to support Senate Bill 50.

**Chair Senate Resources Committee**  
[Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov)