

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## Senator David Wilson

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### Senate Bill 55

*"An Act relating to judges of the court of appeals; and providing for an effective date."*

Senate Bill 55 provides a solution to the backlog of cases at the Court of Appeals. Since 2014, more criminal appeals are being filed than are being decided. This has led to a mounting backlog that is increasingly difficult to resolve. The Court of Appeals is composed of three judges. These judges work diligently and maintain a heavy workload, but unheard cases just keep accumulating. A long delay before criminal appeals are decided is not acceptable for crime victims, the general public, attorneys, or defendants.

Senate Bill 55 enables the Court of Appeals to hear cases in a timely manner. This legislation would grant the Chief Justice authority to appoint an individual to act as a Court of Appeals judge at the pleasure of the supreme court for no longer than three years to address the backlog.

As we focus on public safety, it is essential that we also equip the courts to hear cases as they are brought forth. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.