

Alaska State Legislature Reps. Crawford, Croft & Guttenberg

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New Campaign Finance Initiative Restricts Soft Money

Sponsors re-file petition and close soft money loophole.

ANCHORAGE – Representatives Harry Crawford, Eric Croft, and David Guttenberg re-filed their initiatives on Campaign Finance Reform and the Election of U.S. Senators today, with changes including a new provision restricting soft money donations to political parties in the campaign finance reform initiative.

The Attorney General's office noted technical difficulties with the original petitions. Rather than fight this decision in court, the sponsors decided to re-file both petitions. "We decided to see this not as a problem but as an opportunity to improve the initiatives," said Representative Croft.

The campaign finance reform initiative was originally filed on the 6th of August. Six days later later, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued its decision in Jacobus v. State of Alaska, upholding Alaska's law limiting soft money contributions to political parties. The newly filed initiative reflects this decision. Unlimited soft money contributions allow the richest individuals or corporations to dominate the political parties. "We are happy to close this much abused loophole," said Rep. Guttenberg, "this is a landmark decision, and an important reform for the people of Alaska."

The sponsors also made technical changes to the initiative requiring a special election rather than an appointment to fill a U.S. Senate vacancy to address the overlapping of various special election provisions and to fully repeal the old law on appointments.

"As long as the Lt. Governor's office continues to be expeditious about approving the initiative application, I am confident we can get the requisite signatures in the time allowed," said Representative Harry Crawford.

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