

Alaska State Legislature
House of Representatives

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Representative Sharon Cissna
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Sponsor Statement – HB 31

Appropriation for UAA Consortium Library

At the present time, the Consortium Library - consisting of the University of Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Pacific University - is overcrowded and half the size recommended by the Association of College and Research Libraries. Expansion of the library is essential for continued national accreditation.

The core function of this project is to create a Library of the 21st Century on the Anchorage campus. We are transitioning to an "information-based economy". For the University, this means that there must be an expansion of electronic information sources. We are in a unique position to design the library around an electronic infrastructure to support current and predicted information technologies. This is a crucial requirement for adequately educated workers in a competitive market.

It is an interesting fact that the electronic media explosion has not diminished the explosion of print materials. The number of pages of print journals and print books continues to grow, and the rate of growth is unabated. The new structure must accommodate a large and growing traditional collection at the same time it supports the revolution in information technology. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, continue to rely on these resources. Any major university needs adequate library resources, and, in Alaska, the Consortium Library will fulfill that need.

The library is the primary location on campus where students study, and they will continue to use it for this purpose. In addition, the UAA Consortium Library also serves many Alaskans who never take classes here. Guest library cards are popular in the community, and the library sends interlibrary loan materials throughout the state and to outside libraries as well. The UAA library operates the most active interlibrary loan program in Alaska. The new library will be a hub for Distance Education and Telemedicine.