

Sheffield signs Alaska Research Policy Act into law

FAIRBANKS — Governor Bill Sheffield signed into law the Alaska Research Policy Act, an objective he'd placed among his priorities in his State of the State address in January.

"Alaska is a unique state in many ways," said the Governor. "Its position at high latitudes, its climate, its bounty of natural resources, all combine to make Alaska a place in need of its own scientific research policy."

Submitted on February 21, House bill 693 called for the establishment of an Alaska research policy, an essential feature of which would be the creation of a science and engineering advisory commission.

"The modern world has been shaped intellectually and physically by science and engineering," Said Sheffield. "The role of science and

engineering in a developing region, including Alaska, cannot be overstated. It is the purpose of HB 693 to provide a plan for basic and applied research for the state."

There will be five members of the advisory commission to be appointed by the Governor; one will be an academic engaged in research in the areas of the physical, biological, health, environmental, social, or behavioral sciences. Another is to be appointed from those who further the welfare of the human and physical environment. A third is to be appointed from state departments with research needs, and a fourth member will represent the needs and interests of private industry. The fifth member is the senior science advisor who serves as chairman and director of the commission.