

State of Alaska  
**Department of Law**

**Gregg D. Renkes**  
Attorney General  
P.O. Box 110300  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
**NEWS RELEASE**



Press Contact: Theresa Woelk

907-465-6711  
FAX: 907-465-2075  
[www.law.state.ak.us](http://www.law.state.ak.us)

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**Democratic lawmakers threaten to sue state over Senate  
vacancy initiative review**

(Juneau, AK) – The Attorney General’s office received a letter today from Anchorage based Aschenbrenner Law Offices, Inc. on behalf of Democratic Representatives Eric Croft, Harry T. Crawford, and David S. Guttenberg threatening to sue the Department of Law if it does not complete or abandon the review of their initiative by 5 p.m. on Monday, October 6.

Peter J. Aschenbrenner states in the letter that he has been; “instructed to take legal action in state or federal court as the circumstances warrant and to seek immediate judicial relief from prolonged and unwarranted review by your office.”

The three lawmakers are members of “Trust the People”, which is a group that sponsored an initiative to change the procedure for filling a vacancy in the U.S. Senate.

Contrary to the assertions in its letter, the group originally submitted the proposed initiative to Lieutenant Governor Loren Leman in August, but voluntarily withdrew it after it was found to be deficient in many respects. The application was filed a second time for final review on September 5.

A member of the Department of Law has been in touch with the group regarding the review process during this time. The review is ongoing and will be completed as soon as reasonably possible.

The role of the Attorney General’s office in the review process is to determine whether or not the initiative includes subjects that cannot be enacted by initiative.

“Threatened law suits will not change the way we review this initiative,” Attorney General Gregg Renkes stated. “We are reviewing this initiative fairly and thoroughly as the statutes and courts have directed us to do – as we do every other initiative.”

“Our review must include whether or not this is a proper subject for the initiative process,” he continued. “Answering that question raises serious constitutional issues. We are diligently working on the review as prudently and quickly as possible.”

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