November 4, 2019

Alaska Public Interest Research Group
Veri di Suvero
Executive Director
308 G Street, Suite 202
Anchorage, AK 99501

RE: Regulation changes in 9 AAC 52 of the Alaska Administrative Code, dealing with the Executive Branch Ethics Act (AS 39.52.010 - 39.52.960)

On behalf of the Alaska Public Interest Research Group, we are sending our abject opposition to two proposed regulations relating to the Executive Branch Ethics Act (the Act), 9 AAC 52.

The Alaska Public Interest Research Group (AKPIRG), founded in 1974, is Alaska’s only non-profit consumer advocacy organization. We advocate in the public’s interest and against special interests controlling public office.

According to Daniel Wayne, Legislative Counsel, these proposed changes are directly in opposition to the public interest, and are unconstitutional.

A few poignant examples include:
- This would protections to some state employees and not others (differential treatment)
- Conflict of interests between the Attorney General and Governor’s office (e.g. the legislative branch and executive branch) would endanger the State’s separation of powers
- Representation by the AG’s office would provide a private benefit (personal representation) on the public’s dime. This is explicitly, legally not a ‘public purpose’
- This funding could be used for a partisan political purpose.

Due to these above reasons as well as other concerns outlined in the brief written by Daniel Wayne, Legislative Counsel underline that these changes would harm the constitutional separations between both legislative and executive branch as well as Alaska’s citizens, and it will erode confidence in the State’s separation of powers and allow the public to pay for private interests. We strongly urge the Department of Law to reject these changes.

Sincerely,

Veri di Suvero
Executive Director