



House Speaker Bryce Edgmon's *Legislative Update*



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House Passes Early K-12 Funding, Moving Closer to On-Time Budgets



House Finance Co-Chair Paul Seaton's bill to early-fund Education separate from the Operating Budget passed the House on Thursday evening in a 33 to 3 vote.

HB 287, which is co-sponsored by the entire Alaska House Majority Coalition, also included a provision requiring a separate vote to take the funding from the Constitutional Budget Reserve (CBR). Unfortunately, this provision, which required three quarters of the House to vote in favor, failed to pass, with 20 voting in favor and 16 opposed.



The bill now goes to the Senate, where I'm sure the funding source will continue to be debated. The CBR funding is not automatically replaced with General Funds. For funding to be restored, the Senate will need to add it to the bill. They could either use the CBR, or they could identify another fund source. From our House Majority Coalition's perspective, funding the bill with the CBR is better than using another alternative, the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve Account (ERA), since it's beneficial to keep the ERA funds invested in ways that yield higher returns than CBR investments.

Without Senate action, K-12 Education and student transportation costs are \$1.2 billion short of full funding.

Members of the Bristol Bay Partnership with Speaker Edgmon on Tuesday. L to R: BB Housing Authority Board Member John Heyano, Housing Authority Executive Director Brenda Akelkok, and Bristol Bay Native Association CEO Ralph Andersen.

In the meantime, with the bill's passage in the House, we are moving closer to getting our budget work done on time, which is a major goal for many lawmakers this session.

Strong Yes Vote on House Floor for Bill to Continue Assistance to Our Elders

On the same evening that the House passed the Education bill, we also gave a thumbs up to extending the Senior Benefits program to 2022.

For most lawmakers, including me, this program is a fundamental obligation we owe to Alaska's seniors, who spent their lives helping to transform Alaska into a great state.

Introduced by House Majority Coalition member Scott Kawasaki (D-Fairbanks), HB 236 helps low-income elders afford their most basic necessities, such as prescription medications, groceries, utility bills, and rent.

Not surprisingly, support in the House for HB 236 was strong, with the bill passing 35 to 1.

BIG EVENT COMING UP NEXT WEEK

SAVE THE DATE! DEDICATION & RECEPTION



House Speaker Bryce Edgmon
and the Alaska Federation of Natives
invite you to a ceremony naming the House Finance Committee Room
in honor of the late Senator Al "Sikiagruk" Adams

The dedication will be immediately followed by a reception
in the Terry Miller Legislative Office Building Gym

Dedication of Senator Al Adams Committee Room
February 13, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.
Alaska State Capitol Building, Room 519, 5th Floor
Juneau, Alaska

Reception following Dedication
5:00-6:30 p.m.
Terry Miller Legislative Office Building
533 Main Street, directly behind the Capitol Building

Reception co-sponsored by the Alaska Federation of Natives
and the Alaska Native Village Corporation Association



HB 267—a Tool for Local-Government Revenues—Making Progress

On Thursday, my bill that will allow municipalities access to information the state collects on hunting and sport fishing activities in their localities, successfully moved from the House Community & Regional Affairs Committee.

Access to this information is important to municipalities—such as HD 37’s Lake & Peninsula Borough—that levy modest taxes on professional guiding operations within their boundaries. The munis would only be allowed access to the hunting and fishing records if it is for the purpose of verifying taxes payable to them. The better compliance with the local taxes that this bill encourages may yield tens of thousands in increased revenues for some local governments.

Municipal officials would be required to keep all such information strictly confidential. This is important to guides, many of whom closely guard their “hot spots” for successful hunting and fishing. They can rest assured that local officials would face Class A Misdemeanor charges if they were to fail to keep the records secret.

In recent years the fiscal crisis has forced the state to push greater costs to local governments. The revenues our communities raise on their own are becoming more and more important. The least the state can do is provide a tool like this that helps them make sure they are receiving the fees required under their local ordinances.

HB 267’s next stop is House Resources, where it is scheduled to be heard on Friday, the 16th, at 1:00 p.m.

Alaska Native Health Board Meets in Juneau



Speaker Edgmon discussed issues and priorities with members of the Alaska Native Health Board on Wednesday. Their number included Dillingham’s Robert Clark, of the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, who is pictured to the left of Rep. Edgmon.

Friends in High Places:
Edgmon Office UAF Intern Bobbie McNeley Making the Rounds in Juneau



Bobbie pictured with Speaker Edgmon and Alaska Supreme Court Chief Justice Craig Stowers, who addressed the full Legislature on Tuesday.

Bobbie chatting with Governor Bill Walker during a reception for interns at his residence on Wednesday. Also pictured, at far right, is UA President Jim Johnsen.



On Deck Next Week...

Monday

(H)EDUCATION Standing Committee*
Feb 12 Monday 8:00 AM
Informational Hearing: The Need to Increase the BSA: Consequences if Funding is not Adjusted

(S)EDUCATION Standing Committee*
12 Monday 8:00 AM
SB 171 CHILD ABUSE; TRAINING PROGRAMS; BREE'S LAW

(H)RESOURCES Standing Committee*
Feb 12 Monday 1:00 PM
HB 322 OIL SPILLS/
POLLUTION; PENALTIES; PREVENTION
Presentation: Contaminated Alaska Native Corporation Lands by Representatives from the Alaska Native Village Corp. Assoc.

(S)MISCELLANEOUS MEETING
Feb 12 Monday 1:00 PM
School District Legislative Fly-In
Informal Q & A Session Regarding Alaska's Public School System

Tuesday

(H)COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS Standing Committee*
Feb 13 Tuesday 8:00 AM
HB 264 SHOPPING BAG FEES & RECYCLING

HJR 30 URGE U.S. SUPPORT OF REFUGEES

(H)FISH & GAME Finance Subcommittee*
Feb 13 Tuesday 10:00 AM
Div. of Sport Fishing

(H)FISHERIES Special Committee*
Feb 13 Tuesday 11:00 AM
HB 272 TANGLE LAKES STATE GAME REFUGE; HB 149 BOARDS OF FISHERIES AND GAME MEETINGS

Wednesday

(S)UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
Feb 14 Wednesday 7:45 AM
Review of the Governor's FY19 Budget Proposal

(H)NATURAL RESOURCES
Feb 14 Wednesday 12:00 PM
Food Security with Arthur Keys

(H)LABOR & COMMERCE
Feb 14 Wednesday 3:15 PM
HB 277 BROADBAND INTERNET: NEUTRALITY/REGULATION

Thursday

(H)FISHERIES Special Committee*
Feb 15 Thursday 11:00 AM
Presentation on the Permitting Process by DNR
(H)COMMERCE, COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEV Finance Subcommittee*

Feb 15 Thursday 11:30 AM
Review Governor's Budget Amendments

(H)TRANSPORTATION
Feb 15 Thursday 1:15 PM
Presentation: The Alaska Marine Highway System Reform Initiative

Friday

(H)EDUCATION
Feb 16 Friday 8:00 AM
"An Act relating to the base student allocation; and providing for an effective date."
HB 233 EDUCATION TAX CREDITS; SUNSET; REPEALS

(H)RESOURCES Standing Committee*
Feb 16 Friday 1:00 PM
HB 267 RELEASE HUNTING/FISHING RECORDS TO MUNIS
Presentation: Pebble Mine Status Update by General Mark Hamilton, Exec. Vice President of External Affairs, Pebble Partnership

(H)FINANCE Standing Committee*
Feb 16 Friday 1:30 PM
HB 284 APPROP: CAPITAL BUDGET
HB 285 APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET
HB 286 APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET/LOANS/FUNDS
HB 321 APPROP: SUPPLEMENTAL OP.; FUND; AMENDING
Budget Amendments by Pat Pitney, Director of OMB

Keep in Contact

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