February 14, 2020

Happy Valentine’s Day! The fourth week of session is wrapping up and with the week ending, we are seeing budgets close out in the House and the schedule get more crowded. Here are some things you might be interested in checking out, and don’t forget to look over the “On Deck” to see what’s coming up next week.

- The **House Finance Transportation Subcommittee** held its meeting last night to consider amendments to the transportation operating budget. The committee approved an **increase in the AMHS budget to the tune of $18.7 million**. This isn’t a full recovery from the $43 million cut made to the system last year, but we have been assured the system can reach more than 300 weeks of service if that appropriation is approved by the senate and signed by the governor. We look forward to making the case for the ferries and returning some normalcy to our transportation system. You can watch the hearing for yourself [here](#).

- The **House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs** heard an overview of **Alaska Tribal Health Compacting**. Tribes have compacted for healthcare with the federal government since 1994. That compact has been referred to as the most successful compact in the history of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. Even in the face of severe underfunding, tribal leaders continue to find
innovative ways to deliver high quality healthcare to Alaska Natives across the state. You can find that hearing and presentation here.

• The House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs will continue work next Tuesday, February 18th on Rep. Kopp’s (R - Anchorage) bill that would provide for long-deserved state recognition of federally recognized tribes. There is much work to do in recognizing tribal contributions and I believe this is a first step in that direction. You can watch that hearing on Feb. 18th at 8:00am by heading to www.360North.org

• The House Judiciary Committee heard from Representative Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins (D – Sitka) about his resolution HJR15 which would put a question to the people of Alaska asking whether they would support lowering the budget veto threshold to 2/3. Alaska is the only state in the Union with a ¾ vote majority threshold to override a governor’s budget veto. Last year’s budget battles laid bare how far apart our differences can drive us, and many are working to prevent a repeat of that. I’m watching this resolution as it moves through the process and will update you on its progress. You can find the most recent hearing here, and more information on the resolution here.

• The House Finance Committee heard Senator Hoffman’s (D – Bethel) bill to increase broadband speeds in every school across the state. Some years ago, the Alaska Legislature passed a bill with funding to bring internet speeds up to 10mbps in every school. Senator Hoffman’s bill, SB74, would raise internet speeds in Alaska schools to 25mbps. This would be a game changer for Alaska students, especially in rural parts of our state. Access to high-quality educational programs that are largely delivered via internet is a key to future success. Our students should have the same opportunity to be prepared for the future just like students in Anchorage or Juneau.

• All department budgets are expected to be closed out by next week in the House. Stay tuned for updates as the budget begins its process in the House Finance Committee and for opportunities to testify about the programs important to you.

Please don’t hesitate to get in touch with any issues or concerns and remember, I work for you.

All the best,

[Signature]

Getting Happy Valentine’s Day greetings from local pre-school students

Attending the New Stuyahok Class of 2019 Graduation on May 18, 2019

Rep. Neal Foster and former Rep. Ivan Ivan

Met with a delegation from the Pribilof Islands to discuss legislation on Funter Bay
Office Phone: 907-465-4451 or toll free at 800-898-4451

PS I’m so happy to be receiving pictures back from the district. Please keep them coming! Showing off D37 to the Capitol is a bright spot down here.

On Deck Next Week...

Next week **House Finance** is scheduled to meet
Monday – Friday 1:30 PM
The committee’s main focus will be on **HB 205** (Operating Budget) and **HB 206** (Mental Health Budget), there will be public testimony this week on the budget.

**Monday, February 17**
House Education – 8:00 AM
**HB 181** – Public Schools: Mental Health Education
Joint Education Committee – 9:00 AM
Presentation: State Board of Education Annual
House Resources – 1:00 PM
**HB 138** – National Resource Water Designation
House Judiciary – 1:00 PM
**HB 201** – Defense of Public Officer: Ethics Complaint
House Labor and Commerce – 3:15 PM
**HB 24** – Limited Teacher Certificates; Languages

**Tuesday, February 18**
House Tribal Affairs – 8:00 AM
Presentation: Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact by Natasha Singh, Tanana Chiefs Conference
**HB 221** – State Recognition of Tribes
House Transportation – 1:00 PM
Consideration of Governor’s Appointees: Board of Marine Pilots
House State Affairs – 3:00 PM
**SB 144** – Establish June 7 as Walter Harper Day
**HB 74** – Repeal Ocean Rangers Program
**HB 239** – Establish State Lottery Boards/Lotteries
House Health & Social Services – 3:00 PM
Improving Public Health with Comprehensive Sex Education

**Wednesday, February 19**
House & Senate Joint Session 11:00 AM
US Senator Lisa Murkowski
House Education – 8:00 AM
**HB 155** – Alaska Performance Scholarship; Eligibility
House Resources – 1:00 PM
**HB 203** – Transportation of Live Crab
**HB 137** – Limit Nonresident Taking of Big Game
House Labor & Commerce – 3:15
**HB 91** – Naturopaths: Licensing; Practice
**SB 106** – Homeowner/Renter Insurance Renewal

Great to meet with Seth Clavette, a Close-Up student from Dillingham

Shaking hands with retiring Justice Craig Stowers of the Alaska Supreme Court
HB 113 – Military Family Employment Preference
House Finance – 5:00 PM
HB 205 Public Testimony on the Operating and Mental Health Budget (844) 586-9085

Thursday, February 20
Joint House State Affairs & House Tribal Affairs
Presentation: REAL ID Implementation
House & Senate Joint Session 11:00 AM
House Fisheries – 11 AM
HB 218 - Salt Water Fishing: Operators/Guides
HB 247 – Sport Fishing Enhancement Surcharge
House Transportation – 1:00 PM
<Pending Introduction & Referral> Alaska Marine Highway System Corporation
Joint House Health & Social Services and Labor & Commerce – 3:00 PM
Presentation – Presentation: Alaska Healthcare Transformation Project & HB 229
House State Affairs – 3:00 PM
SB 144 – Establish June 7 as Walter Harper Day
HB 148 – Marriage Witness
HB 225 – Prostitution/Trafficking; Vacate Conviction
House Finance – 5:00 PM
HB 205 Public Testimony on the Operating and Mental Health Budget (844) 586-9085

Friday, February 21
House Judiciary – 1:00 PM
HB 124 – Electronic Documents and Notarization
House Resources – 1:00 PM
HB 203 – Transportation of Live Crab
House Labor & Commerce – 3:15
HB 113 – Military Family Employment Preference
HB 24 – Limited Teacher Certificates; Languages
HB 229 – Health Information/Database/Public Corporation
HB 235 – Alaska Workforce Investment Board: Allocations
House Finance – 5:00 PM
HB 205 Public Testimony on the Operating and Mental Health Budget (844) 586-9085