



# House Speaker Bryce Edgmon's *Legislative Update*



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## Communities, Businesses, and Organizations Across the State Call for Stability and Sustainability



On any given day in the Speaker's office I might meet with as many as 10 different business associations, local governments, organizations, or individuals—people involved in fisheries or trucking, tourism or tribal councils, oil & gas or education. More and more, these Alaskans are bringing me the same simple message: "We need to return stability and sustainability to our economy, and it has to happen as soon as possible."



The state's fiscal crisis has lasted too long, and the longer it remains unsolved, the more it sidelines Alaska's progress. For too many of our cities, towns, villages, and schools, as well as businesses large and small, planning has become all but impossible. Investments have been put on hold or put Outside. It's as though the future has been put on the back burner.

Appropriately, Alaskans are calling for action with increasing urgency. Last Thursday I received the following statement from the Alaska Federation of Natives:

*At its quarterly board meeting yesterday, the board of directors of the Alaska Federation of Natives, the state's largest statewide Native organization, fortified its position on the state's fiscal crisis. AFN strongly urges the Alaska State Legislature to pass a comprehensive solution to the state fiscal crisis in the 30th Legislative Session. As part of a comprehensive solution AFN supports the creation of an income tax, but adamantly opposes any regressive taxes, such as a sales tax, that would unfairly burden rural Alaska.*

On Wednesday Rep. Dave Guttenberg (D-Fairbanks), at left, joined me for a meeting with Aleut Corporation CEO Thomas Mack, second from right, and Doyon Limited CEO Aaron Schutt.

*"The Walker administration, along with many Alaskan economists, has repeatedly stressed the urgency of a fiscal solution this year," said Julie Kitka, AFN President. "We join the governor in demanding that our*

*(Continued on page 2)*

legislators get the job done now and not push it down the line where the crisis will cripple our state's economy."

*AFN recognizes that a fair solution spreads the burden among all Alaskans while maintaining the state's constitutional obligations and responsibilities to its citizens. No single fix on its own will eliminate the huge budget deficit, and each impacts the economy and groups of people differently. A sustainable budget going forward should include new revenues such as an income tax, smart restructuring of the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve while ensuring continued dividends, and precise budget cuts that don't disproportionately impact our rural Alaska communities.*

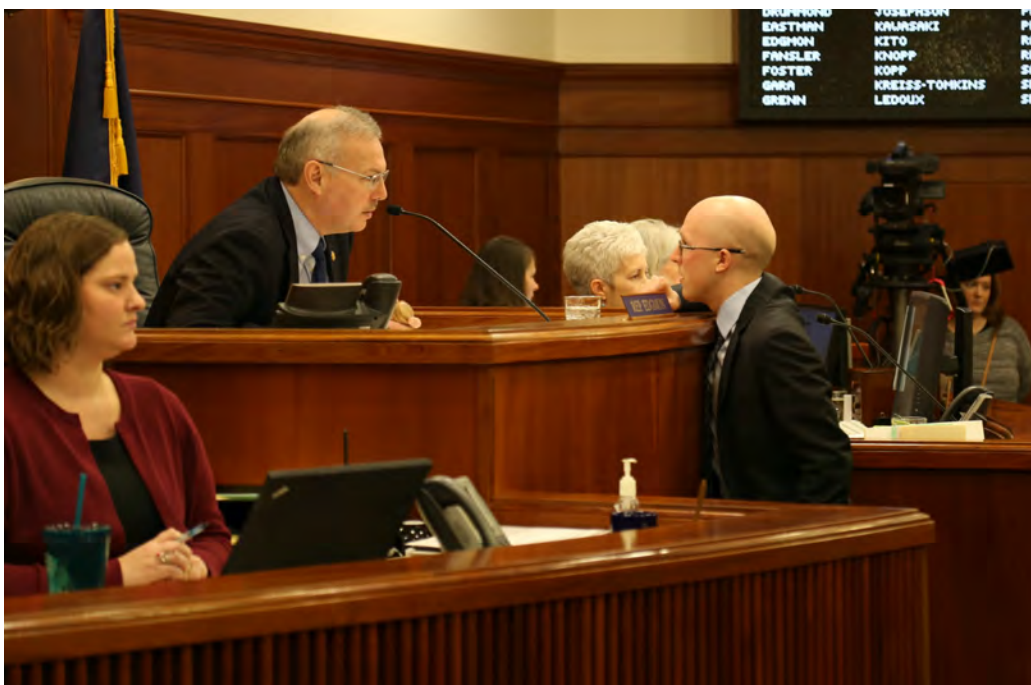
When it comes to my goals for this legislative session, I could hardly have said it better myself. The cornerstone bills put forward by the House Majority Coalition include:

HB 115, which restructures the Earnings Reserve Account in a way that helps pay for essential services while protecting PFDs, growing the Permanent Fund, and raising new revenues through a modest income tax that still leaves us among the lowest-taxed states in the Union.

The Operating Budget that the House Finance Committee will finalize next week reduces spending as carefully as possible to safeguard the education of our kids, the security of our communities, and development of our economies.

HB 111, the Oil & Gas tax credit bill, that further cuts state spending by scaling back unsustainable tax credit payments to oil companies on the North Slope. By making the program sustainable, this gives certainty to industry while continuing to incentivize exploration and development.

The point of all these measures is to close the \$3 billion fiscal gap once and for all and restore strength and resiliency to our state. Transitioning Alaska to more diversified and stable sources of revenue promises enormous long-term benefits. After decades on "the boom and bust rollercoaster," Alaska communities and businesses will finally enjoy the kind of stability and sustainability that leads to lasting prosperity.



Speaker Edgmon on the House Floor conferring with Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins (D-Sitka).

**SAVE THE DATE!**

JOIN SPEAKER EDGMON AT A  
COMMUNITY MEETING ON  
SATURDAY, MARCH 18TH,  
2:00 P.M.  
AT THE DILLINGHAM LIO



Last week Unalaska Mayor Frank Kelty dropped off a beautiful panorama of Dutch Harbor/Unalaska. Here it is, being hung in the office.



## On Deck Next Week...

(H)RESOURCES Standing Committee  
Mar 06 **Monday** 1:00 PM  
HB 133 OIL & GAS: TAXES; CREDITS; GROSS  
VALUE  
HB 111 OIL & GAS PRODUCTION  
TAX;PAYMENTS;CREDITS

(H)FINANCE Standing Committee  
Mar 06 **Monday** 1:30 PM HOUSE  
HB 49 EXTEND BOARD OF DIRECT-ENTRY  
MIDWIVES  
HB 56 COMMERCIAL FISHING LOANS  
HB 81 AK ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOANS: ELI-  
GIBILITY  
HB 106 CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUND

(S)RESOURCES Standing Committee  
Mar 06 **Monday** 3:30 PM  
Consideration of Governor's Appointees: Board  
of Game:  
- Ted Spraker  
- Lawrence Van Daele  
Big Game Commercial Services Board:  
- Adam Trombley  
Public Testimony on Appointees

(H)RESOURCES Standing Committee  
Mar 06 **Monday** 6:30 PM

HB 111 OIL & GAS PRODUCTION  
TAX;PAYMENTS;CREDITS  
(H)FISHERIES Special Committee  
Mar 07 **Tuesday** 10:00 AM  
HB 76 MARICULTURE REVOLVING LOAN  
FUND  
HB 128 SHELLFISH ENHANCE. PROJECTS;  
HATCHERIES

(H)ARCTIC POLICY, ECONOMIC DEV  
Mar 07 **Tuesday** 11:30 AM  
Presentation on Arctic Council  
by Nils Andreassen, Institute of the North

(H)MISCELLANEOUS MEETING  
Mar 07 **Tuesday** 12:00 PM  
Lunch & Learn: Arctic Council Sustainable  
Development Working Group Activities, Find-  
ings, & Future Projects by Roberta Burns,  
Chair

(H)ARCTIC POLICY, ECONOMIC DEV.  
Mar 07 **Tuesday** 1:00 PM  
Presentations by:  
- Fran Ulmer, US Arctic Research Commis-  
sion  
- Nome Mayor Richard Benneville; Joy  
Baker, Nome Port Director; Michael Orr &  
Thomas Okleasik, Sitnasuak Native Corp

(H)HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES  
Mar 07 **Tuesday** 3:00 PM  
Presentation: Substance Abuse Treatment  
System in AK by Kate Burkhart, Exec. Dir., AK

Mental Health Board and AK Board on Alco-  
holism & Drug Abuse and Tom Chard, Exec.  
Dir., AK Behavioral Health Assoc.  
\*+ HB 138 MARCH: SOBRIETY AWARENESS  
MONTH

(S)HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES Standing  
Committee  
Mar 08 **Wednesday** 1:30 PM  
Presentation: Alaska Opioid Policy Task Force

(H)FISHERIES Special Committee  
Mar 09 **Thursday** 10:00 AM  
Presentation: Bycatch

(H)MISCELLANEOUS MEETING  
Mar 09 **Thursday** 12:00 PM  
Brown Bag Lunch & Learn: Outstanding Na-  
tional  
Resource Waters by Dept. of Environmental  
Conservation  
Sponsored by Rep. Edgmon

(H)STATE AFFAIRS Standing Committee  
Mar 09 **Thursday** 3:00 PM  
HB 82 RESTRICTED OFF HWY DRIVER'S LI-  
CENSE

(H)RESOURCES Standing Committee\*  
Mar 10 **Friday** 1:00 PM  
Confirmation Hearings: AK Oil & Gas Conser-  
vation Commission  
HB 111 OIL & GAS PRODUCTION  
TAX;PAYMENTS;CREDITS

## Keep in Contact

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