March 6, 2020

We saw the sun and blue sky for the first time in weeks yesterday in Juneau. A reminder that spring, and the 90 day statutory deadline for session ending, isn’t too far off. We’re moving fast down here but here are some items from this past week that might interest you.

- The Federal Communications Commission recently announced a new broadband expansion opportunity for rural areas. The Rural Tribal Priority Window is a “unique opportunity for Tribes in rural areas to directly access unassigned spectrum over their Tribal lands, subject to buildout requirements.” The program allows tribal governments to receive bandwidth free of cost, bandwidth that can be used for things like broadband internet connection and other communication needs. The application window remains open through August 2, 2020. Any federally recognized tribe, or consortia of tribes and/or Native Villages are eligible. This is an exciting opportunity that I hope will benefit the district. I’d encourage anyone with questions to get in touch with my office. You can also watch an overview of the program here and read more about the program on the FCC’s website here, and a Juneau Empire overview here.
I’m tracking HB127 by Rep. Spohnholz (D – Anchorage) closely as I think it could bring benefit to the district. HB127 allows dental hygienists to perform basic oral care in areas that are traditionally underserved by dentists. Hygienists would receive an Advanced Practice Permit after meeting education, experience and licensure requirements, including four thousand hours of practice under the supervision of a dentist. **Expansion of basic oral care services across the state will benefit many Alaskans.** You can find a list of the underserved areas and clinics that may qualify under the bill [here](#) and you can watch a hearing on the bill [here](#).

I’m excited to report that HB221, the bill sponsored by the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs to **provide for state recognition of federally recognized tribes is very nearly ready for a full vote of the House.** The bill was introduced by the Committee at the end of January and was recently moved out of the House Community and Regional Affairs Committee. The bill now sits in the House Rules Committee where it awaits its moment on floor of the House. You can catch the Community and Regional Affairs hearing [here](#) and find the presentation [here](#).

Reliable and affordable energy is an issue for almost every community across Alaska except for Anchorage. I believe we must be open to all ideas and options which is why I’m monitoring SB194 by the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee. SB194 builds on work by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R – Alaska) to help bring micro nuclear reactors into use. **The bill does not authorize use of any reactors, but simply lays the groundwork for the future should advanced nuclear reactors become viable in Alaska.** You can watch the presentation [here](#) and review a presentation by UAF’s Alaska Center for Energy and Power [here](#).

No doubt you’ve been hearing about the Coronavirus or COVID-19 that’s spreading across the globe. There are no cases currently in Alaska but our Pacific Northwest neighbor, Washington State, appears to be an epicenter for the virus. Doctors and public health officials **say the single most effective thing you can do to prevent the spread of the virus is to wash your hands often.** You can find a host of information about the virus on the State of Alaska’s Department of Health and Social Services COVID-19 website [here](#). You can also watch a briefing by the Chief Medical Officer for the State, Dr. Anne Zink, given to all legislators this past week [here](#).

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

All the best,

[Signature]

*Meeting with Marilyn Casteel from the Dillingham Shelter and Eileen Arnold from the Bethel Shelter*

*St. Paul City Manager Philip Zavadil and Mayor, Jacob Merculief stopped by for a visit*

*House Pages wear many hats around the building and Griffin is always up to the task*
PS: A HUGE congratulations to KUCB our Aleutians Public Radio station for making their Lost Villages Documentary available for national distribution service on PBS. And a thank you to Ounalashka Corporation for donating funds to distribute the film.

“It's going to millions of households in the United States,” said Adams. "Just the volume of viewers who now have access to this program, it's much, much more expansive than anything we've done before."

"Tanadgusim Adan Chiilulix: Revisiting the Lost Villages of the Aleutian Islands" is the story of Unangax̂ survivors of World War II and the communities they were forced to abandon. You can watch an online version here.

On Deck Next Week…

Monday, March 9
House Education – 8:00 AM
HB 153 – Pre-K Elementary Programs/Funding
HB 204 – Pre-K Elementary Education Programs/Funding;
Reading
House Finance – 9:30 AM
HB 159 – Medical Education Program
HB 185 – Registration of Boats: Exemption
House Resources – 1:00 PM
HB 240 – Regulate PFAS Use; Fire/Water Safety
HB 151 – Electric Reliability Organizations
HB 138 – National Resource Water Designation
House Finance – 1:30 PM
HB 259 – Supplemental PFD for 2019 Recipients

House Labor & Commerce – 3:15 PM
HB 235 – Alaska Workforce Investment Board: Allocations
HB 301 – Electrician & Plumber Apprenticeships
SB 52 – Alcoholic Beverage Control; Alcohol Regulations

Tuesday, March 10
House Community & Regional Affairs – 8:00 AM
HB 174 – Minimum Age to Possess Nicotine/Ecig Product
House Tribal Affairs – 8:00 AM
HB 287 – Village Public Safety Officer Grants
House Finance – 9:30 AM
HB 24 – Limited Teacher Certificates; Languages
HB 155 – Alaska Performance Scholarship; Eligibility
HB 181 – Public Schools: Mental Health Education
Legislative Council – 9:00 AM
Ranked Choice Voting Initiative Hearing
House Fisheries – 11:00 AM
HB 247 – Sport Fishing Enhancement Surcharge
Consideration of Governor’s Appointees: Board of Fisheries, Fishermen’s Fund Advisory & Appeals Council
House Transportation – 1:00 PM
HB 253 – Sale, Transfer, or Disposal of Ferries
SB 115 – Motor Fuel Tax; Ev Reg. Fee
Ho:ose Finance – 1:30 PM
HB 300 – Permanent Fund: Appropriations From Earnings Reserve
HB 306 – PFD/GF Appropriations; Earnings Reserve

House State Affairs – 3:00 PM
HB 233 – Electronic Display of Requirement Documents
HB 264 – Proof of Insurance; Unsatisfied Judgments
HB 250 – Voter Registration Age
HB 307 – Expanding Prisoner Access to Computers
HB 285 – Alaska Coordinate System of 2022
HB 228 – Sex Offender Registry; Notice to Victims

House Health & Social Services – 3:00 PM
HB 183 – Alaska Psychiatric Institute
HB 86 – Mental Health Hospital; Contracts/Bids

Wednesday, March 11
House Education – 8:00 AM
HB 153 – Pre-K Elementary Programs/Funding
HB 237 – Appropriation: Early Literacy Programs

House Finance – 9:30 AM
HB 127 – Dental Hygienist Advanced Practitioner Permit
HB 182 – Sexual Assault Examination Kits: Testing
HB 30 – Workers’ Compensation: Death; Permanent Partial Impairment
HB 197 – Extend Seismic Hazards Safety Commission
HB 223 – Naming Vietnam Helicopter Pilots’ Memorial Bridge

House Judiciary – 1:00 PM
Consideration of Governor’s Appointees
HB 290 – Alternative to Arrest: Mental Health Centers
HB 287 – Village Public Safety Officers

House Resources – 1:00 PM
HB 138 – National Resource Water Designation
HB 151 – Electric Reliability Organizations

House Finance – 1:30 PM
HB 300 – Permanent Fund: Appropriations From Earnings Reserve
HB 306 – PFD/GF Appropriations; Earnings Reserve

House Labor & Commerce – 3:15 PM
SB 52 – Alcoholic Beverage Control; Alcohol Regulations
HB 94 – Electronic Smoking Products Excise Tax

Thursday, March 12
House Tribal Affairs – 8:00 AM
HJR 29 – Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945

House Finance – 9:30 AM
HB 268 – Municipal Bond Bank: UA, Loan and Bond Limits

House Fisheries – 10:00 AM
Confirmation of Governor’s Appointees: Board of Fish, Fisherman’s Fund Advisory & Appeals Council
HB 247 – Sport Fishing Enhancement Surcharge

House Transportation – 1:00 PM
SB 115 – Motor Fuel Tax; Ev Reg. Fee
HB 273 – Abandoned Vehicles; Private Property

House Finance – 1:30 PM
HB 300 – Permanent Fund: Appropriations From Earnings Reserve
HB 306 – PFD/GF Appropriations; Earnings Reserve

House Health & Social Services – 3:00 PM
HB 305 – Mandatory Reporters to OCS; Judges

Rep. Stutes (R – Kodiak) and I like to remind ourselves to keep up a sense of humor

Speaking on a panel at the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference
Consideration of Governor’s Appointees: Mental Health Trust Authority Board, State Medical Board

**House State Affairs – 3:00 PM**
- **HB 190** – PFD Allowable Absences
- **HB 307** – Expanding Prisoner Access to Computers
- **HJR 31** – Constitutional Amendment: Permanent Fund; POMV; Earnings

**Friday, March 13**

**House Finance – 9:30 AM**
- **HB 235** – Alaska Workforce Investment Board: Allocations

**House Judiciary – 1:00 PM**
- **HB 290** – Alternative to Arrest: Mental Health Centers
- **HB 287** – Village Public Safety Officers

**House Resources – 1:00 PM**
- **HB 240** – Regulate PFAS Use; Fire/Water Safety
- **HB 218** – Salt Water Fishing: Operators/Guides

**House Finance – 1:30 PM**
- **HB 300** – Permanent Fund: Appropriations From Earnings Reserve
- **HB 306** – PFD/GF Appropriations; Earnings Reserve

**House Labor & Commerce – 3:15 PM**
- **HB 91** – Naturopaths: Licensing; Practice
- **HB 301** – Electrician & Plumber Apprenticeships
- **HB 27** – Regulation of Flame Retardant Chemicals
- **HB 146** – Motor Vehicle Dealers: Application; Insurance