

House Speaker Bryce Edgmon's *Legislative Update*



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Legislature Passes Early Funding for K-12 Education



On Wednesday this week the House voted to concur with changes made in the Senate to the Education early funding bill we sent over to them in February. This means school districts across the state can better plan for the coming year and also avoid the frustration and turmoil of teacher lay-off notices that would have had to go out if funding were still pending.

While the Senate version of the bill funds Education for FY19 at the same level as this year, discussions regarding an increase are not over. Last Saturday, the House also passed HB 339, which would raise the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$100, resulting in a statewide increment of \$25 million. That bill was heard in the Senate Education Committee just yesterday.



Also, a second provision in the Senate's version of HB 287 would add \$30 million to education spending in FY 20. However, that increment would be one-time-only, and it would also be contingent on the House passing a version of a Permanent Fund restructuring bill.

So, the Legislature continues to weigh these alternatives, as well as options that might meet in the middle somewhere. One way or another, increasing our investment in our children's futures is still a hot topic at the Capitol.

The Operating Budget Conference Committee at work this week.

Productive Negotiations for Adjournment On-Going

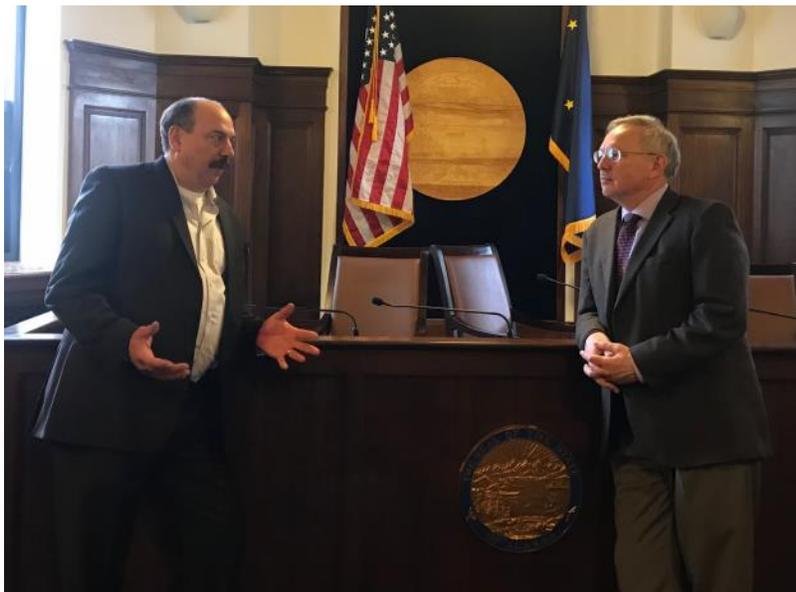
The Conference Committee tasked with working out compromises to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the Operating Budget (HB 285) is making steady progress, having met twice this week to settle budgeting details in several categories. Their negotiations are continuing, with their next meeting said to include discussion of items in the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Law.

This week's work in the Conference Committee combined with the Legislature's forward movement on K-12 Education have given me a healthy sense of progress toward adjournment. Productive talks on a variety of important measures continue, and although sometimes it seems that there are as many points of view as there are members of the Legislature, I believe we are all equally motivated to bring the session to a good conclusion soon.

Farewell, Bobbie



Last Friday we bid farewell to our bright and helpful intern Bobbie McNeley, who will graduate from UAF next month and then turn to plans for her post-graduate education. Bobbie comes from Nelson Lagoon and staffed the Edgmon office under the auspices of the UA Senator Ted Stevens Legislative Internship Program. The Juneau office L to R: Tyra Smith-MacKinnon, Tim Clark, Bobbie, Speaker Edgmon, and Amory Lelake.



Speaker Edgmon chats with his cousin, Eric Peterson, of Anchorage, during his recent visit to the Capitol.

On Deck Next Week...

Working hard
toward
adjournment.

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