

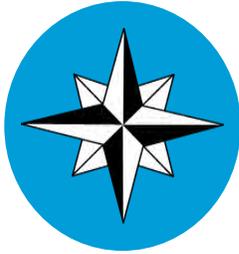
Representative Louise Stutes

Volume 1, Issue 1

House District 32

Serving Kodiak, Cordova, and Yakutat

(907) 465-3271 Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Greetings from Juneau!

I am honored to return as your representative and appreciate the faith you have placed in me. I am very optimistic that we will reach a fiscal solution for Alaska that is fair to you, my constituents. Please contact me with any ideas, questions, or concerns. I would love to hear from you!

First and foremost on the minds of most Alaskans is solving the State's budget deficit, which is expected to be over \$3 billion. Governor Walker is proposing a fiscal plan this year dubbed "The New Sustainable Alaska Plan."

The plan calls for a combination of:

- Spending Reductions
- Sustainable use of the Permanent Fund earnings
- Modest tax increases
- Oil and gas tax credit reform

For more details visit www.gov.alaska.gov. These decisions affect all of us and **YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT; learn the facts and raise your voice**. Please contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments at (907) 465-3271 or Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov.

The Governor's plan is a jumping off point and similar to that of the Alaska House Majority Coalition, of which I am proud to be a member. This group of likeminded folks includes Republicans, Democrats, and Independents from all over Alaska who are united behind one cause: getting our state back on track!

The coalition's plan will seek to be fair and not overly burden certain segments of Alaskans over others.

Personal Legislation:

House Bill 87 "Conflict of Interest: Board Fisheries/Game" - is a bill I sponsored that changes the way that the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game function. Currently, Board members are required to divulge a conflict of interest if they or their families have a financial interest in the subject being deliberated on. The conflicted member can then no longer offer their input and cannot vote on the matter at hand.

This bill allows the conflicted member to offer input, while still not allowing them to vote. Allowing members with expertise in particular fields to deliberate will help the Board make better informed decisions and lead to stronger fisheries management statewide.

My Staff:



Local Kodiak resident, Pam Murray, will be returning again this year to staff my office in the district.

My veteran staffer, Reid Harris, is back as the point man on fisheries issues.

I have added two members to my office team this year:



I am very proud to have longtime Kodiak resident Cliff Zawacki as our intern this year. After 24 years of service with the Coast Guard, Cliff retired in 2007 from Air Station Kodiak as a Structural Mechanic Chief Petty Officer. He is finishing up his BLA in History and Political Science and is looking forward to bringing his experience with the legislature back to Kodiak to once again give back to the community.



I am also pleased to bring some more legislative and fisheries experience to my staff with the addition of Matt Gruening. Matt has seven years of legislative experience and will serve as my House Transportation Committee Aide. He grew up in the remote community of Warm Springs Bay, Alaska and has been the owner/operator of the F/V North Boy, a 39 foot gillnetter out of Juneau, for the last 8 years. He has over 25 years of experience seining, longlining, power trolling, gillnetting, and herring pounding. He also comes from a long line of politically active Alaskans. He is the son of former State Representative Clark Gruening, who was instrumental in the formulation of the Permanent Fund, as well as the great-grandson of former Governor and U.S. Senator Ernest Gruening.

Personal Legislation:

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House Bill 88 “Board of Fisheries Membership”- is a bill I introduced that would change the composition of the Board of Fisheries from seven to nine members.

The additional two members will benefit the Board by adding more diversity of interest, greater breadth of knowledge, and more points of view.

Committee News:

Healthy fisheries are vital to Kodiak, Cordova, and Yakutat and **I am very pleased to return as Chair of the Fisheries Committee.** This is a great opportunity for our district because we can encourage fisheries policies that benefit our region. Please contact Reid Harris, my fisheries aide, at (907) 465-4087 for any ideas, questions, or concerns related to fisheries.

Marine and air transportation issues are particularly important to our coastal communities and **I am also excited to be Co-Chair of the House Transportation Committee.** Please Contact Matt Gruening, my transportation aide, at (907) 465-3271 for transportation related issues.



House Fisheries:

On Tuesday, January 31st, House Fisheries heard House Bill 14 “*Legislative Approval for Bristol Bay Sulfide Mine,*” sponsored by Representative Andy Josephson (D-District 17). This bill would require legislative approval for any large-scale metal sulfide mine in the Bristol Bay watershed. The Pebble Project is a contentious issue and the committee heard from a number of testifiers on both sides of the issue. This bill was held in committee.

On Thursday, February 2nd, House Fisheries heard House Bill 56 “*Commercial Fishing Loans,*” Sponsored by Representative Dan Ortiz (I-District 36). This bill increases the aggregate amount a borrower may hold unpaid from \$300,000 to \$400,000. The committee spent an hour questioning the sponsor and the Department of Community and Economic Development’s Division of Investments then followed up with testimony from a number of fishermen who were in support of the bill. Unfortunately the committee ran out of time and the bill was held.

Tuesday, Feb 7th, House Bill 88 “Board of Fisheries Membership.”-this bill was heard and held.

Thursday, Feb 9th, House Bill 87 “Conflict of Interest: Board Fisheries/Game.”-this bill was heard and held.

House Fisheries Next Week:

Tuesday, Feb 14th, House Bill 87-Public Testimony 10 a.m.

Please contact the Juneau Legislative Information Office at (907) 465-4648 for information on how to testify on the bill.

Thursday, Feb 16th, Presentation on Proposed Limited Entry Permit Cap by the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Please contact Reid Harris in my office at (907) 465-4087 for more information.

House Transportation:

On Tuesday, January 31st, House Transportation heard House Bill 60 *“Motor Fuel Tax; Transportation Maintenance Fund,”* sponsored by the Rules Committee at the request of the Governor. This bill would raise the tax rates on the four categories of fuel that are currently taxed under AS 43.40.010, which include motor fuel for ground transportation, aviation gasoline, jet fuel, and motor fuel used in watercrafts. It also would allow the legislature to use the proceeds from the taxes for maintaining water and harbor, airport, and highway infrastructure.

I am not thrilled about this bill, but it is part of the Governor’s comprehensive plan. If it makes it through the Transportation Committee, I want to be sure that proceeds from marine fuel taxes go back into our harbors and port facilities so that commercial fishermen and recreational users see a direct benefit as a result of increased taxes.

Tuesday, Feb 7th, House Bill 60 *“Motor Fuel Tax; Transportation Maintenance Fund”-Public Testimony*

Thursday, Feb 9th, House Bill 60 *“Motor Fuel Tax; Transportation Maintenance Fund”-Industry Testimony*

I regret that this newsletter is coming out after public testimony was heard on the bill, but I encourage you to submit testimony to my Transportation Committee Aide, Matt Gruening, at matthew.gruening@akleg.gov or call me at 465-3271. I want to hear your input. Your testimony will be added to the official record and distributed to committee members.

House Transportation Next Week:

Tuesday, Feb 14th, House Bill 60 *“Motor Fuel Tax; Transportation Maintenance Fund”-Committee Questions to the Office of Management and Budget*

Thursday, Feb 16th, House Bill 60 *“Motor Fuel Tax; Transportation Maintenance Fund”*

Thank you for listening and please reach out to me with any of your thoughts and ideas at (907) 465-3271 or Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov. I would love to hear from you!

Sincerely,



Louise Stutes

State House Representative for District 32

Serving Kodiak, Cordova, and Yakutat

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