



## HOUSE PASSES OPERATING BUDGET

This Tuesday, the House began consideration of amendments to the operating budget on the House floor. After two full days of debate on amendments, on Thursday the House passed the operating budget by a vote of 24-15. While the final House budget was similar to the one passed by House Finance, several floor amendments added additional resources to the Department of Law, restored 50% of the funds for School Bond Debt Reimbursement, and funded the health inspector position which enable the one existing and two emerging dairies in the state to continue operations.

I am proud of this budget, and I am grateful to our caucus for coming together to make difficult choices about what to cut and what to keep. We have done our best to identify cuts that Alaskans can bear without breaking, while defending essential state services and our most efficient investments of state resources in education, health, safety, and infrastructure.

This budget is far from final. Continue making your voices heard, reach out to the Governor and members of Senate Finance to voice your support for the programs most essential to your community. I appreciate everyone who weighed in and helped the House produce the budget we passed on Thursday, and promise that we will do our best to pass a budget in line with Alaskans' values.

## CONSIDERATION OF GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENTS

On Wednesday next week, the House and Senate will meet in joint session to consider the Governor's nominees to lead departments and sit on a variety of State Boards and Commissions. These positions are important in a variety of ways and those who serve in them are vested with significant power and responsibility to act in the best interest of Alaskans on everything from managing State Troopers and VPSOs to setting fisheries policy.

Because of the importance of these rolls, while the Governor makes the initial selection, permanent placement in these positions requires the support of a majority of legislators. Over the past two months, the legislature has held numerous hearings to vet many of these candidates, while others have only recently been appointed and will have confirmation hearings in the days before the joint session. *(Board of Fish nominees will have a hearing before the House Resources and Fisheries committees on Monday evening at 6:30, which will include time for public testimony)*

I think the Governor has selected strong candidates to fill some of the positions but am not so certain about others. I look forward to a robust discussion on the nominees before us.

## 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ALASKA FOLK FESTIVAL

This week Juneau celebrated the Alaska Folk Festival, with nightly performances at Centennial Hall and in a variety of establishments in downtown Juneau. On Tuesday, Representative Edgmon joined a few of his colleagues on the main stage at Centennial Hall for some non partisan collaboration.



*Left: Speaker Edgmon (I-Dillingham) plays mandolin during a set with Sarah Sledge, Representative Matt Claman (D-Anchorage), and Senator Tom Begich (D-Anchorage)*

*Right: Speaker Edgmon on stage between Representative Dave Talerico (R-Healy) on the guitar, and Representative Adam Wool (D-Fairbanks) on the drums.*





*Representative Kriess-Tomkins (D-Sitka) (far left) brought the current crop of 'Alaska Fellows' by for a quick visit this week. The [Alaska Fellows Program](#) was founded by Rep. Kriess-Tomkins to pair dynamic college graduates from Alaska and abroad with exciting Alaska organizations.*

## ON DECK FOR NEXT WEEK

### JOINT SESSION

On Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> the House and Senate will meet in joint session to consider the Governor's appointments to lead departments and sit on state boards. The joint session will begin in the late morning and continue through the afternoon.

### HOUSE COMMITTEES

For a full list of bills with public testimony opportunities, visit <http://akleg.gov/pages/testify.php>. To sign-up for public testimony, contact your [local LIO](#), or call 907-465-4648.

#### **Monday, April 15**

8:00 AM	Education	Presentation: Why is Education so Costly in Alaska
6:30 PM	Fisheries & Resources	Governor's Appointees: Board of Fisheries – <b>Public Testimony</b>

#### **Tuesday, April 16**

9:00 AM	Finance	HB 38: Capital Budget Presentation: Legislative Finance Fiscal Plan Review by David Teal
10:00 AM	Fisheries	HB 116: Aquatic Farming & Hatchery Site Leases HR 8: International Year of the Salmon
11:00 AM	Energy	Presentation: All Alaska Energy Project by Meera Kohler
11:00 AM	Arctic Policy	Presentation: Nome Arctic Access Port
3:00 PM	State Affairs	Governor's Appointees HB 51: Probation, Parole, Sentences, Credits HB 50: Arrest, Release, Sentencing, Probation

#### **Thursday, April 18**

8:00 AM	Comm. & Reg. Affairs	Presentation: Status of Industrial Hemp Industry in Alaska
9:00 AM	Finance	Presentation: Criminal Justice Reform Update by Quinlan Steiner
1:00 PM	Transportation	HJR 14: Urging Support for Nome Deep-Draft Port
3:00 PM	Health & Soc. Svcs.	HB 96: Pioneers' Home Rates SB 37: Renewal of Vaccine Assessment Program
3:00 PM	State Affairs	HB 110: Vehicles/Boats: Transfer on Death Title HB 115: Absentee Voting HB 20: Sexual Assault Examination Kits

## SENATE COMMITTEES

The Senate now has the Operating Budget, which will very likely consume much of their attention over the coming week. While all of the meetings and their focus haven't been scheduled yet, you can follow along with the upcoming schedule, presentations, and archived video of past Senate Finance meetings on the [Senate Finance Committee page](#) on the Legislature's website.

### **Monday, April 15**

9:00 AM	Education	Governor's Appointees: Professional Teaching Practices Commission SB 64: Repeal School Bond Debt Reimbursement SB 79: Education Transformation Act (Virtual Education)
3:30 PM	Resources	SB 91: Nuyakuk River: Hydroelectric Site – <b>Public Testimony</b>

### **Tuesday, April 16**

9:00 AM	Education	SB 6: Pre-Elementary Programs
3:30 PM	Comm. & Reg. Affairs	SB 46: Teachers & Public Employee Retirement Plans
3:30 PM	State Affairs	SB 32: Crimes, Sentencing, Mental Illness, Evidence

### **Thursday, April 18**

9:00 AM	Finance	
1:30 PM	State Affairs	SB 75: Commercial Vehicle Licensing Requirements SB 97: Art in Public Buildings and Facilities SB 32: Crimes, Sentencing, Mental Illness, Evidence