

# *City of Dillingham*

## House District 37 / Senate District S

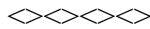
~ 2/26/2021 ~  
( Day 39 )

### *32<sup>nd</sup> Alaska State Legislature ~ 1<sup>st</sup> Session*

## **FEBRUARY 2021 – LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

*Cliff Stone / City Lobbyist*

*~ House Member has COVID – Most business cancelled ~*

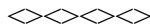


I learned of a House member testing positive for COVID-19 yesterday. The representative's name has now been released. His name is Mike Cronk, a Republican representing Tok, Alaska. This revelation has led to most House business to come to a grinding stop as a precautionary step. The Senate president asserted that the Senate is conducting business, although I noted that most Senate hearings had been cancelled for today (Friday-Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>.)

The day before, Governor Dunleavy tested positive for COVID-19 and is suffering mild symptoms. It was revealed that late last week, both of these gentlemen had attended the same event in Palmer. Both are now in quarantine.

The other big news this month was the fact that the House finally elected a permanent speaker for this session. Rep. Louis Stutes, a Republican from Kodiak was selected to lead the House by a 21-19 vote on Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>, the 24<sup>th</sup> day of this session. Prior to this action, Rep. Stutes had joined a coalition bloc of 16 Democrats and 3 independents leaving a 20-20 split in the House. As reported in the news, several were nominated for Speaker, but each time the vote was 20-20. (Those members were: Bart LeBon, Laddie Shaw, and Neal Foster) Finally on Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> Rep. Josiah Patkotak of Utqiagvik was selected as the temporary speaker. Rep. Kelly Merrick of Eagle River ultimately broke the tie vote when she sided with Stutes. Louise Stutes will be a good, fair speaker. She's formerly a Kodiak businesswoman. I've probably known her for over 40 years.

I also wanted to note the passing of Katie Hurley. She served one term in the House, but perhaps more importantly she was the Chief Clerk to the Constitutional Convention, an assistant to then Territorial Governor Ernest Gruening, and Secretary to both the Territorial Senate and the State Senate. I had the distinct pleasure to have met Ms. Hurley several years ago when she was in her 70's. Even then she was energetic and had a certain charisma about her. She was a lady through and through.



### **BILLS OF INTEREST**

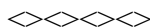
The following bills are highlighted as items of interest for your community. I will follow these more closely as the session proceeds. The House has introduced 116 bills to date and various resolutions. The latest count for the Senate is 94 bills and a variety of resolutions. See "Budget Bills" highlighted later in this report. As in the past, if you see a bill that you want tracked, I will be happy to do so and report accordingly.

**HB 1** – Audit of CARES Act Funds  
**HB 4** – COVID-19 related  
**HB 37** – Income Tax, PF, and ERA  
**HB 55** – PERS related/Peace officers and Firefighters  
**HB 56** – Power Cost Equalization (PCE)

**HB 73 / SB 53** – PF Advisory Vote  
**HB 75 / SB 55** – Employer Contributions to PERS  
**HB 76** – Extending the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency

**SR 2** – COVID-19 Emergency Declaration  
**SB 6** – PERS/TRS Retirement Incentives  
**SB 37** – PERS/TRS Retirement Plans  
**SB 56** – Extending the COVID-19 Disaster Emergency

Be sure to check out the latest Legislative Updates from the Alaska Municipal League (AML). I try not to repeat any information that is presented there. It is an excellent source of the bills and topic matters that are important to towns and villages all across Alaska. If you haven't registered for Legislative Updates for AML Members meetings, you may be able to [use this link for Zoom](#); or dial in by calling +1 253 215 8782 - Meeting ID: 881 8150 7680 Passcode: 449972.



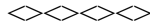
## **BUDGET BILLS 2021**

For a handy reference, below are the budget-type bills that have been introduced so far this year. They will be considered through out this first session. Currently the first six of these bills are being considered in the respective Finance Committees. Other bills have been assigned to various other committees. The finance subcommittee's work is in full swing. *Please note that HB 93 and its companion SB 74 as drafted by the governor, does not contain any monies for your breakwater or harbor projects. The only avenue to have these projects inserted into the bills for consideration is up to your representatives – Senator Hoffman and Rep. Edgmon.*

- **HB 68 / SB 48 – Supplemental Appropriations (FY21)**
- **HB 69 / SB 49 – FY22 Operating Budget**
- **HB 70 / SB 50 – FY22 Capital Budget with reappropriations and making supplemental appropriations**
- **HB 71 / SB 51 – FY22 Mental Health Budget**
- **HB 84 / SB 68 – FY22 Supplemental, Reappropriations, and Appropriations from the CBR**
- **HB 72 / SB 52 – Appropriation from the ERA for payment of the PFD**
- **HB 37 – Income Tax, PF Earnings Reserves**
- **HB 57 – CBR Sweep Provisions**
- **HB 67 – K-12 Appropriation for Academic Recovery from COVID-19**
- **HB 93 / SB 74 – G.O. Bonds: State Infrastructure Projects**
- **HJR 1 – Constitutional Amendment: Permanent Fund, POMV, and Earnings**
- **HJR 6 / SJR 5 – Constitutional Amendment: Budget Reserve Appropriation Limit**
- **HJR 7 / SJR 6 – Constitutional Amendment: Permanent Fund and PFD's**
- **HJR 8 / SJR 7 – Constitutional Amendment: State Tax Voter Approval**
- **HJR 10 – Constitutional Amendment: Permanent Fund and ERA**

### *Create Your Own Budget for the State of Alaska*

Commonwealth North has created an **online tool** that allows Alaskans to modify most aspects of Alaska's budget, so revenues match up with expenses. As many of you know, Alaska is at a budget crossroads, and difficult decisions must be made to preserve essential services and ensure Alaska remains a vibrant and successful place to live, work and play. While the tool isn't perfect, I think users will gain a deeper insight into our state budget and get an idea how budget cuts, taxes and investments in state services impact our bottom line. In case the link above doesn't work: <https://www.akbudget.com/>



## **COVID-19**

Earlier this month the governor issued a statement regarding the COVID-19 Disaster Declaration. He asserted that his administration was fully prepared to manage the rollout and distribution of the vaccine in lieu of the absence of a declaration. House Speaker Stutes has indicated that the extension for the disaster declaration is a high priority for that body.

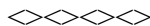
On Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> he released the COVID-19 Transition Plan. This can be found at: <https://gov.alaska.gov/newsroom/2021/02/14/dunleavy-administration-releases-covid-19-transition-plan/> Within this plan are four new Health Advisories. As most of you know, Alaska's numbers for deaths and hospitalizations are some of the lowest in the nation. Alaska is ranked number one of all 50 states for the percentage of people given at least one dose and also number one for the second dose.

The following state resources can be helpful for getting the vaccine. Use Alaska's PrepMod website to book online or use the Vaccine Providers List to call the providers in your community directly. For scheduling or information about COVID-19 vaccine in Alaska: [www.covidvax.alaska.gov](http://www.covidvax.alaska.gov) If you need assistance to book your appointment, call Vaccine Scheduling Call Center at 907-646-3322.

A handy reference tool that everyone can access is the state's "Vaccine Updates" signup at the following: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDHSS/signup/16046>

As I posted in my December report, if you or anybody in the community suspects they've been a target of fraudulent information or requests regarding COVID-19 vaccines, they should **notify the Medicare Information Office at [hss.medicare@alaska.gov](mailto:hss.medicare@alaska.gov) via email or call 1-800-478-6065 immediately!**

**REMEMBER – COVID VACCINES are FREE.**



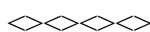
## **GOVERNOR'S CORNER** <http://gov.alaska.gov>

***Handy phone numbers for Governor's offices: Anchorage: 907-269-7450 and Juneau: 907-465-3500***

As I reported in January, the governor had appointed Ed Sniffen as the new Attorney General (AG) for the state. About 10 days later, Sniffen removed himself from consideration and stated his intent to leave state service. Governor Dunleavy then named Deputy AG Treg Taylor as Alaska's new AG.

The governor also accepted the resignation of Amanda Price as the commissioner of the Alaska Department of Public Safety (DPS). He went on to appoint long time former DPS employee Kelly Howell to temporarily serve on special assignment as the head of DPS until a new commissioner is found.

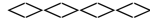
First Lady Rose Dunleavy has opened the nomination period for the 2021 First Lady's Volunteer Awards. This period closes on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Contact the governor's office to submit a nomination, as the weblink for submissions appears to be broken.



## IMPORTANT DATES

### **March 31<sup>st</sup> – 2021 PFD Filing **Deadline****

*Note: U.S. Senators Murkowski and Sullivan have not yet scheduled their yearly remarks before the Legislature. If this event is scheduled, I will let you know as soon as possible.*



## TESTIFYING

If you are planning to testify on any particular bill or subject matter, check the committee calendar the day of or the day before the scheduled hearing as sometimes a bill is rescheduled or cancelled at the last minute. You should also be able to ascertain if they are even accepting public testimony on any particular day. If you can't attend a hearing at your local LIO you can participate by using the following numbers.

The **toll-free number** can only be used if you have had prior approval to call in from the appropriate committee chair. That number will be distributed upon your request and subsequent approval.

**In Juneau the number is: (907) 463-5009.**

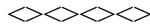
Go to: <http://www.akleg.gov/basis/start.asp> for a complete description of a bill that is up in committee. Fiscal notes and other documents that the legislative office has posted in regards to that particular bill should also be available. Type in the appropriate bill/resolution number in the space provided.

*Remember – Bills that have already been heard or previous scheduled in committee can come back before that body without prior notification.*

**Live on the Web** [ [www.360north.org](http://www.360north.org) ]

Most committee hearings can be seen and heard on Gavel Alaska/360 North on the web or look for Cable Channel-18 in Juneau. You can also access schedules, various programs, and online archives from the website above. *Note: With COVID-19 restrictions, Gavel Alaska may not be broadcasting as normal.*

*You might have to go to the following website: [www.alaskalegislature.TV](http://www.alaskalegislature.TV)*



## WEBSITES OF INTEREST

**! COVID-19 ~ Information ! / <https://covid19.alaska.gov>**

In Alaska, a COVID-19 Help Line has been set up at **211** or dial: 1-800-478-2221

**During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Capitol is closed to the public. To reach your legislator, please find Senate contact information [here](#) and House of Representatives contact information [here](#). For the latest COVID-19 information, please visit the [Alaska Department of Health & Social Services](#).**

Schools can get more help at: [aksmartstart2020@alaska.gov](mailto:aksmartstart2020@alaska.gov)

\* U.S. REAL ID Compliant license – deadline extended to October 1, 2021.

- <http://doa.alaska.gov/dmv/>

**Online Public Notices for Alaska** <https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/default.aspx>

**2021 Alaska Legislature Publications List** <http://akleg.gov/publications.php>

**2021 1<sup>st</sup> Session Staff Contacts** <http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/Legislator-Staff-List.pdf>

**2021 Legislators by District** <http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/Legislators-by-District.pdf>

**2021 House/Senate Committees**      <http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/commlist.pdf>  
**2021 Senate Finance Subcommittee**   <http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/SFINSubcmte21.pdf>  
**2021 Legislature Photo Sheet**        <http://akleg.gov/docs/pdf/Legislator-Photo-Sheet.pdf>

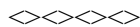
**Representative Bryce Edgmon: 907-465-4451 // Senator Lyman Hoffman: 907-465-4453**

**Congressional Delegation websites**

<http://murkowski.senate.gov/public>      [www.sullivan.senate.gov](http://www.sullivan.senate.gov)      <http://donyoung.house.gov>

<b>DC Phone Nr</b>	<b>DC Phone Nr</b>	<b>DC Phone Nr</b>
Murkowski: 202-224-6665	Sullivan: 202-224-3004	Young: 202-225-5765

<b>Anchorage Phone Nr</b>	<b>Anchorage Phone Nr</b>	<b>Anchorage Phone Nr</b>
Murkowski: 907-271-3735	Sullivan: 907-271-5915	Young: 907-271-5978



~ End Report ~

*Enjoy your family and friends while staying safe and strong!    ~ Cliff*