



Interim Report
By
Senator Gary Stevens

Hello again. There are less than two months until legislators head to Juneau for the first session of the Thirty-first Alaska State Legislature, which begins on Tuesday, January 15th. With a new governor taking office on Monday, December 3rd, there will be many new faces leading the state's departments and agencies. Additionally, the Senate will welcome five new members to our twenty-member body, three of whom were previously in the House of Representatives. The House will have ten first-year legislators in its forty-member body, and one member returning to the legislature after several years out-of-office.

2019 also marks my 19th year in the Legislature. It has been an honor and privilege to represent you in the Capitol, and I greatly appreciate the trust you have placed in me over the years.

FY '20 Budget

The budget will again drive the debate in Juneau in 2019. Governor-elect Dunleavy's proposed Fiscal Year 2020 budget is due by Saturday, December 15th, and is anticipated to be very lean. The governor-elect is highly unlikely to propose a broad-based tax or use of funds from the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve to balance the budget, so proposed funding cuts to many departments are expected.

The governor's budget, of course, will serve as a starting point for the legislature, with much work and deliberation ahead before it is finalized. I will work diligently with my House counterparts from District 31 and 32 to ensure Senate District P is well-represented in the budget process.

I will update you on the proposed budget in the next *Interim Report*. Your thoughts on the budget and the other matters coming before the legislature are always welcome.

New Committee Assignments

In the Thirty-first Legislature, I will again serve as Chair of the Senate Education Committee. I know the committee will keep busy over the next two years as we considers a myriad of bills and resolutions.

I have also been appointed to serve as Chair of the Legislative Council (Leg Council), a role which I held in the Twenty-ninth Legislature. Leg Council is a joint-committee of Senate and House members that governs the Legislature's internal business and meets throughout the year.

I expect additional appointments to other standing committee and budget subcommittees in the near future.

Assistance with State Agencies

My offices are available throughout the year to assist you with issues involving state agencies.

Call us in Kodiak at (907) 486-4925.

You can reach us in Homer at (907) 235-0690.

My State Capitol office in Juneau can be reached at (907) 465-4925, or toll free at 1-800-821-4925.

E-mail me at Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov

My interim address is:

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(Please note that we are unable to assist you with legal matters. If you have a case involving a lawsuit or pending litigation and need help finding an attorney, I recommend contacting the Alaska Bar Association at www.alaskabar.org.)

Legislative Information Offices

The Legislative Information Offices (LIOs) are a great source for following bills, participating in teleconferences, offering testimony on legislation and contacting lawmakers throughout the session. You can also pick up a Permanent Fund Dividend application.

The Cordova LIO can be reached at (907) 424-5461

The Homer LIO can be reached at (907) 235-7878.

The Kenai LIO can be reached at (907) 283-2030.

The Kodiak LIO can be reached at (907) 486-8116.

Help with the Federal Government

Alaska's Congressional Delegation can assist you with matters involving the federal government, and all have offices in-state.

Congressman Don Young's Anchorage office can be reached at (866) 990-5979.

Senator Dan Sullivan's Anchorage Office can be reached at (907) 271-5915.

Senator Lisa Murkowski's Anchorage office can be reached at (877) 829-6030.

Thank you again to our local media for their assistance in sharing this information, and to you for reading this month's column.