

Legislative Update

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Senator Click Bishop

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Greetings from Juneau!

Two weeks of the legislative session have already passed, and the three big issues that lawmakers expect to tackle this year are:

1. The budget
2. Permanent fund dividends
3. Criminal justice reform

Governor Dunleavy last week rolled out legislation to address the last two items. As for the budget, we expect to get his revised spending plan by **February 13** – Day 30 of the session. Because the state fiscal gap is projected to be about \$1.6 billion for Fiscal Year 2020, the governor’s updated budget is expected to have major cuts.

The first weeks of the session were dedicated to hearings on state finances and the governor’s nominees to head agencies. The Senate Finance co-chairman, late last week, appointed members to agency budget subcommittees and assigned me as chair of three – the departments of environmental conservation, natural resources, and labor.

PFD Education Raffle

The deadline to file for this year’s Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend is **March 31, 2019**. If you haven’t done so already, file online at www.pfd.alaska.gov. While there, consider participating in something new this year: A PFD Education Raffle. Proceeds go to education.



The legislature created the PFD Education Raffle last year as a fun and voluntary way to raise money for a good cause: supporting Alaska students in the classroom. This new approach was designed to help solve the state’s fiscal problems and address concerns about education funding. Money raised through the raffle will complement, not supplement, state support for education.

Those 18 years old or older, filing for themselves, can choose to donate money from their PFDs to public education.

Donations are made in \$100 increments. For every \$100, you can buy 1 entry into the Education Raffle. For \$200, you get 2 entries; for \$500, you get 5 entries; and so on.

- 50% of all donations go to education
- 25% of all donations go into a new education endowment fund
- 25% of all donations are placed in the raffle fund

Four prizes are paid out annually.

- 1st prize is 8% of the raffle fund
- 2nd prize is 4%
- 3rd prize is 2%
- 4th prize is 1%

The remaining 85% of the fund will stay put and help generate money for future prizes.

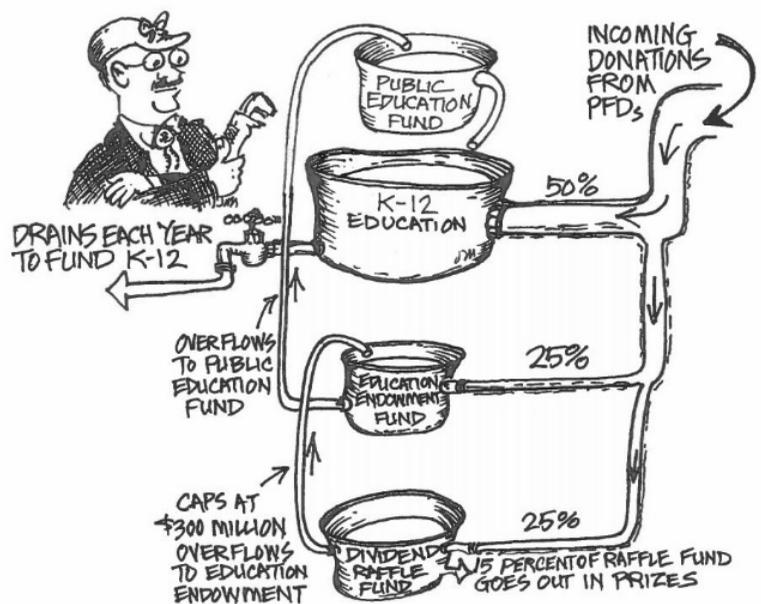
An example of how much you could win

If the PFD Education Raffle has 5,100 contributions this year, it would end up with a total of **\$510,000** in the kitty. Of that, **\$255,000** would go to education, **\$127,500** would go into a fund for future education support, and **\$127,500** would go into the Education Raffle as prize money. Under this scenario, here’s how the four prizes would break down:

- 1st prize: \$10,200
- 2nd prize: \$5,100
- 3rd prize: \$2,550
- 4th prize: \$1,275

The remaining **\$108,375** would stay in the raffle fund where it would help the purse grow and be used for future prizes.

The diagram on the right is another way to look at the PFD Education Raffle. It was drawn by John Manly, a talented guy whom I have the good fortune to have in my office. Do you recognize that guy with the monkey wrench?



How to follow the legislature

There are many ways to track what’s going on in the legislature. Gavel Alaska covers floor sessions, committee hearings, press conferences, and more on TV **and** online. If you live in an area without TV coverage but have Internet service, go to Gavel Alaska’s website at www.360north.org.

The legislature’s own website also provides live TV coverage of events as well as hearing and floor calendars, information on bills, and more. To see it, go here: www.akleg.gov. If you have a smartphone, download the Alaska Legislature app.

If you have questions on anything, need help, or want to tell me what you think, feel free to contact me at the phone numbers or email or snail-mail addresses above.