



Senator Cathy Giessel

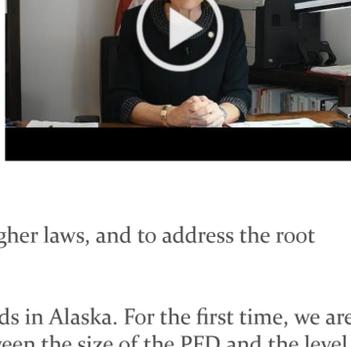
District N

Northeast Anchorage, Anchorage Hillside, Indian, Bird, Girdwood and Portage

April 3, 2019

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

A major priority for our Senate Majority is to communicate and listen to you, our constituents and neighbors. We have asked for feedback, and Alaskans responded to us. Decreasing state spending remains a high priority to folks, followed by supporting education through funding. Public safety remains high on your minds, as it certainly is for us and our families.



Related to crime, Alaskans want tougher laws, and to address the root causes.

The topic of the PFD is on most minds in Alaska. For the first time, we are understanding the relationship between the size of the PFD and the level of services from government. Feedback in constituent meetings, testimony, and email to us has been clear: Alaskans want a PFD, but not to a level that impacts the quality of essential services.

The Senate Majority completely agrees crime must be addressed. We are working diligently through all four of the Governor's crime bills. We are hoping that the House will join us in making corrections needed to previous laws that were passed.

The Senate Finance committee reviewed the Permanent Fund, the endowment model through a Percent of Market Value (POMV) policy, and how a split of those funds could be divided between funding budget shortfalls and ensuring Alaskans today and tomorrow receive a PFD. (See the section in this newsletter that shows the work done.) The Senate doesn't want government to eat the entire POMV funds, and risk losing the PFD and the Permanent Fund itself.

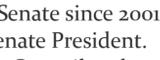
A spending cap is the most effective way to put a fence around the POMV funds. The Governor has proposed putting the spending cap in the Constitution and the Senate committees are reviewing that carefully.

In this week's newsletter you'll find:

- Senator Spotlight with Senator Stevens
- Board of Nursing Extension Bill Passes the Senate
- Senate Approves Renewal of Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program
- Permanent Fund Dividend Calculation Discussion
- Senate Finance
- Anchorage North and South Runway Project Update
- Community Council Regarding Seward Hwy.
- State Forestry Burn Permits Required
- Constituents in the Capitol

Best regards,
Cathy

[Click here to email me.](#)

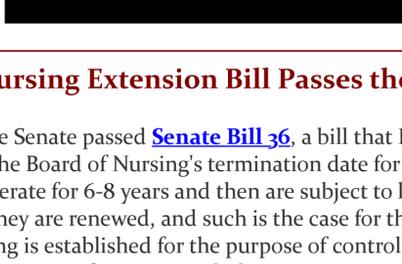


Senator Spotlight

Senator Gary Stevens joined me for this week's Senator Spotlight. Senator Stevens from Kodiak has served in both the House and Senate since 2001.

He was a previous Majority Leader, Rules Chair, and Senate President.

Senator Stevens serves as the chair of the Legislative Council and Education committees, and sits on the Health and Social Services committee.



Board of Nursing Extension Bill Passes the Senate

On Monday, the Senate passed [Senate Bill 36](#), a bill that I sponsored that would extend the Board of Nursing's termination date for 6 years. Most state boards operate for 6-8 years and then are subject to legislative review before they are renewed, and such is the case for this board. The Board of Nursing is established for the purpose of controlling and regulating the practice of nursing, including APRNs, nurse anesthetists, registered nurses, LPNs, and CNAs.

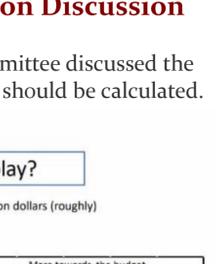
The bill now moves to the House for consideration.

Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program

Last Wednesday, March 27th, the Senate unanimously approved [Senate Bill 37](#), which is a bill I sponsored to renew the Alaska immunization program in the Department of Health and Social Services.

The program was established in 2014 and monitors, purchases, and distributes all childhood vaccines and select adult vaccines to Alaska providers. This allows all Alaskans to have universal access to vaccines. By 2018, the program covered more than 333,000 Alaskans.

[Click here to read the full press release.](#)



Permanent Fund Dividend Calculation Discussion

On Wednesday last week, the Senate Finance committee discussed the Permanent Fund Dividend, and how the dividend should be calculated.

What is the PFD and Budget Interplay?

A basic guideline: For every \$500 PFD check, it costs the state \$324 million dollars (roughly)

	More towards the Dividend					More towards the budget					
Split %:	0/0	90/10	80/20	70/30	60/40	50/50	60/40	70/30	80/20	90/10	0/0
(Deficit)/ Surplus (billion)	-\$2.32B	-\$2.03B	-\$1.73B	-\$1.45B	-\$1.15B	-\$861M	-\$568M	-\$274M	\$19M	\$312M	\$609M
PFD Check Amount	\$4,686	\$4,218	\$3,749	\$3,280	\$2,812	\$2,343	\$1,875	\$1,406	\$937	\$469	\$0

Break even: It appears the state could pay about a \$1000 check with flat funding.

Caution: More cuts may not necessarily mean a bigger dividend because the state should consider past underfunding of capital, eg: leaky school roofs, damaged bridges, aging infrastructure.

[Click here for the full presentation.](#)

[Click here to watch a recording of the presentation \(beginning at 9:57am\).](#)

Senate Finance

Wednesday, March 27th: [SB 55](#) Temporary Appointments to Court of Appeals and [SB 61](#) Commercial Fisherman's Fund: Vessel Owner Claims, and Discussion on the Permanent Fund Dividend Calculation.

[Click here to watch a recording of the hearing.](#)

[Click here for a link to the documents from the hearing.](#)

Thursday, March 28th: Department of Natural Resources: Permitting Leases and Land Conveyances, and [SB 54](#) Alaska Railroad Corp. Land Transfers

[Click here to watch a recording of the hearing.](#)

[Click here for a link to the documents from the hearing.](#)

Friday, March 29th: [SB 43](#) Extend Big Game Commercial Services Board

[Click here to watch a recording of the hearing.](#)

[Click here for a link to the documents from the hearing.](#)

Monday, April 1st: [SB 16](#) Alcohol Licensing: Fairs, Theaters, Concerts and [SB 61](#) Commercial Fisherman's Fund

[Click here to watch a recording of the hearing.](#)

[Click here for a link to the documents from the hearing.](#)

Tuesday, April 2nd: Alaska Retirement Board Update

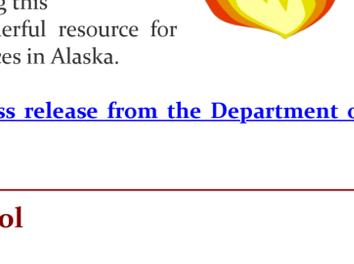
[Click here to watch a recording of the hearing.](#)

[Click here for a link to the documents from the hearing.](#)

Anchorage North/South Runway Project Update

The Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport North/South Runway Renewal project will begin the final phase of construction beginning this month.

The project will require a full runway closure April through October, allowing construction to occur 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.



During construction, air traffic will be shifted to the East/West Runways, which will create a temporary increase in air traffic noise over the city. Airport operations and noise levels will return to normal upon completion of the project.

[Click here for more information and updates on the project.](#)

Community Council Meeting - Seward Highway

On **April 18th**, representatives from the Seward Highway - O'Malley to Dimond project team will be giving a brief update at the Huffman-O'Malley Community Council meeting at **7:00pm**.

For more information on the Seward Highway: O'Malley Road to Dimond Boulevard project, you can visit www.sewardhighway.info or email O2D@dowl.com

State Forestry Burn Permits Required

Beginning on April 1st, residents are required to obtain a new burn permit for the season. **Burn permits are required for burning debris in the open or in burn barrels in areas under state wildland fire protection.**

Burn permits are free at state forestry offices and most local fire departments. They can also be downloaded and printed by visiting this [website](#). This website is a wonderful resource for learning about safe burning practices in Alaska.



[Click here to read the full press release from the Department of Natural Resources.](#)

Constituents in the Capitol

It's always a pleasure to visit with constituents while I am here in Juneau. I appreciate the time and effort it takes to visit us during the legislative session. Here's who stopped by my office this past week:

Wil Sundberg (center) from Alchemy Orthotics and Prosthetics

It's a pleasure to serve and represent the wonderful people of district N!

I look forward to hearing your ideas, suggestions and comments.

[To email me, click here.](#)

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