



Senator Cathy Giessel

District N

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

January 29, 2019

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

In today's video, I will be talking about the Governor's crime bills, work of the Senate this coming week, and the Senate's online poll.



The results of the online poll will be complete this coming week and I'll include it in next week's newsletter. Thank you to all who took the time to respond to the short poll questions.

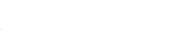
In this newsletter, you will find...

- 2020 Census
- Governor Dunleavy's State of the State Address
- Earthquake Assistance
- Resources Committee
- Finance Committee
- Marijuana, Mental Illness and Violence
- Opioid topic
- Constituents in the Capitol

Best regards,

Cathy

[Click here to email me.](#)



Making Alaska Count in the 2020 Census

Last week the Foraker Group gave a presentation about the importance of making every Alaskan count in the 2020 Census. Why is this important? Because every Alaskan counted equates to valuable federal dollars coming into our state. In fact, \$675 billion of Census-based federal funding is distributed each year across the 50 states. Undercounted states, like Alaska, end up not getting their fair share of funding, so in 2020 you will see a concerted effort, particularly in rural areas, to reach out and make sure Alaskans are filling out their census forms. Below is a link to the presentation:

[Click here to watch the Census 2020 Lunch and Learn video.](#)

State of the State Address



On January 22nd, Governor Dunleavy gave the annual State of the State address to the Senate and the House in a joint session. The Governor focused on the budget, crime, and public safety.

[Click here to watch the State of the State Address.](#)

Deadline to Apply for Earthquake Assistance

The deadline to apply for individual assistance for damage caused by the earthquake has been extended to **February 28th**. The State Individual Disaster Assistance Hotline: 1-855-445-7131

Online Registration:

ReadyAlaska.Gov

You will receive an email confirmation when you have successfully submitted your application.

Applicants needing an interpreter, have a representative call 1-855-445-7131.

Applicants with hearing disabilities can call TTY 1-855-445-7131

TAKE PICTURES OF DAMAGE BEFORE CLEANING UP AND KEEP RECEIPTS FROM ANY COST INCURRED!

Disaster assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, or economic status.

Senate Resources Hearings

On Wednesday, January 23rd, the Senate Resources committee considered the Governor's appointee to the Department of Natural Resources, Commissioner Designee Corri Feige.

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

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

On Friday, January 25th, the committee heard from Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Designee Jason Brune.

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

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

Senate Finance Hearings

On Wednesday, January 23rd, the Senate Finance Committee met to hear an overview of the Governor's budget development process by Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Donna Arduin. Director Arduin is working to put together a proposal for next year's budget, which will be available on February 13th.

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

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

On Thursday, January 24th, the committee heard an overview and update from the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission from Commissioner Cathy Foerster, and Commissioner Dan Seamount.

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

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

Governor's Supplemental (Additional) Spending

On Monday, January 28, 2019, the Governor put out these two supplemental budgets ([SB 38](#) and [SB 39](#)).

Supplemental budgets add more money for sudden needs during the fiscal year.

The bills include earthquake recovery funds as well as these items:

- A \$5 million transfer of unused funds from the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC) back to the General Fund.
- Final loan payments for the Whittier Tunnel Project, reducing the State's debt obligation.
- Increased funding to maintain and renovate trooper housing in rural Alaska and a 7.5% salary increase for Alaska State Trooper retention and recruitment efforts.
- State aid for costs of school construction

The Senate Finance Committee will be reviewing these Supplemental bills this week, links to the hearings will be sent out in the next newsletter.

Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence

I've had serious concerns about the commercialization of marijuana. This article, as well as other clinical research, has important information for folks to consider.

[Click here to read the article, "Marijuana, Mental Illness, and Violence" by Alex Berenson.](#)

Opioid Prescription Issues

I've received numerous emails and phone calls from Alaskan patients and

physicians who have encountered barriers to receiving appropriate and carefully-managed pain care. After making inquiries into this, I am grateful to the Board of Pharmacy for the clarifying communication to Alaska pharmacists. To be fair, I know that pharmacists are diligent professionals who were acting with integrity.



The Board simply clarified how "recommendations" should be viewed.

[Click here to view the letter.](#)

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:



Senator Giessel with Margi Dashevsky, Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) Program Coordinator.

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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