



# Senator Cathy Giessel

## District N

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

March 26, 2019

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Thanks to all of you who attended the Constituent meeting on March 23rd, and who have offered suggested solutions for the budget via email and phone calls.



Many Senate members have been to constituent meetings and town halls. We are hearing you and deliberating how to come to a balanced solution. The bus of State has been driving toward the cliff for the past several years. The Senate has made efforts every year to reduce spending, but we haven't been able to convince our House colleagues in the past.

So now the bus of State is at the edge of the cliff. We must make cuts this year that will not be comfortable but are necessary. It will happen again next year as well. This is reality. The Senate is working with the Senate Minority and all the House members to create a glide path, rather than a crash landing.

I meet regularly with Senator Begich, the Minority Leader. We are having frank and open conversations about the challenges the State faces and how we can work together to solve them.

Thank you for your patience as these issues are debated. I appreciate your efforts to keep the conversation with me and your fellow Alaskans respectful. At the end of every day, we are all Alaskans with hopes for a better future.

In this week's newsletter you'll find:

- Senator Spotlight with Senator Micciche
- Senate Finance Hearings
- Earthquake Disaster Funding Approved by Senate
- Supreme Court Rules in Favor of John Sturgeon
- House Finance Takes Public Testimony on Budget
- PFD Filing Deadline this Sunday
- Seward's Day

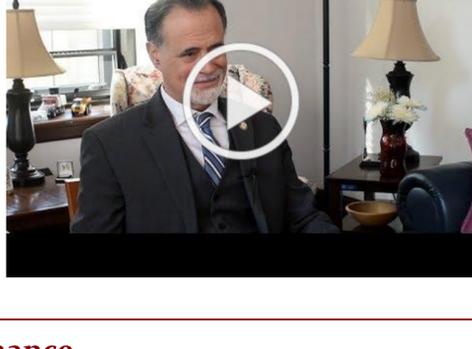
Kind regards,  
Cathy

[Click here to email me.](#)



## Senator Spotlight

Senator Peter Micciche from Soldotna joined me for this week's Senator Spotlight. Senator Micciche began in the Senate in 2013 and currently sits on the Finance, Resources, Judiciary and Transportation committees.



## Senate Finance

### Port of Anchorage Update

On Thursday, March 21st, the Senate Finance committee heard a presentation on the Port of Anchorage.

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

### Severance Tax

On Friday, March 22nd, the committee heard from the Department of Revenue Tax Division.

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

### WWAMI Program Overview

The WWAMI Program is a multi-state medical education program among five northwestern states including Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho, and the University of Washington School of Medicine. On Monday, March 25th, the committee heard an overview of Alaska's WWAMI program.

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

### K-12 Education Funding Considerations

Today the Senate Finance committee heard from the Department of Education & Early Development regarding K-12 education funding.

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

## Earthquake Disaster Relief Funding Approved

On Monday, March 25th, the Senate unanimously approved a \$133.4 million supplemental budget to assist communities that were impacted by the November 30th, 2018 earthquake. Senate Bill 38, which was requested by Governor Dunleavy, provides funds for road and building construction repairs. The bill is now on its way to the Alaska House of Representatives for consideration.



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

## Supreme Court Rules in Favor of John Sturgeon

Today the United States Supreme Court made a unanimous decision in favor of John Sturgeon, who was cited in 2007 for using a hovercraft on the Nation River in the Yukon Charley Preserve while moose hunting.

The case hinged on whether Congress gave the National Park Service the right to control access to the State's navigable waters within federal conservation units. The Supreme Court overturned the Ninth Circuit Court decision and ensures that Alaskans can continue using state-owned navigable waterways within federal lands in Alaska for legal purposes such as recreation, economic development, hunting, and fishing.

[Click here to read the full press release from the Alaska Senate Majority.](#)

## House Finance Committee Public Testimony on Budget

Last week the House Finance committee began taking public testimony on the Governor's proposed budget. The committee announced that it would be traveling around the state for a series of public hearings, which are typically held at the Alaska State Capitol in Juneau during legislative session.

Committee meetings were held in [Juneau](#), [Ketchikan](#), [Mat-Su](#), [Bethel](#), [Kenai](#), [Anchorage](#), [Sitka](#), and [Fairbanks](#).

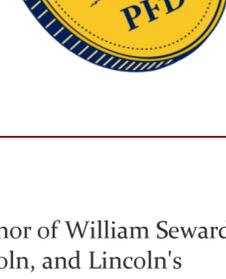
This week on Thursday, the committee will adopt a new Committee Substitute (CS) on the Governor's budget bill and hear an overview of the CS by Director of the Legislative Finance Division, David Teal. You can tune into those hearings by visiting the [Alaska State Legislature website](#), or [360 North](#).

## PFD Filing Deadline is Sunday

Don't forget that the deadline to apply for the Permanent Fund Dividend is **Sunday, March 31st**.

Online applications can be filed up to 11:59pm, and office locations are open until 4:00pm to accept paper applications Monday-Friday. Mailed applications must be postmarked no later than March 31st to be considered timely.

You can apply for the PFD online at [pfd.alaska.gov](http://pfd.alaska.gov).



## Seward's Day

On Monday, Alaska celebrated Seward's Day in honor of William Seward, the former Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln, and Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson. Seward played a key role in the 1867 purchase of Alaska from Russia.

**ALASKA STATE SENATE**  
Thirty-First Legislature  
First Session

**William Seward**, the former United States Secretary of State who was instrumental in the purchase of Alaska, delivered an address to an overflow crowd at the Lutheran Church in Sitka 150 years ago this August.  
*(Alaska Historical Society)*

<i>Monday</i> <b>March 25<sup>th</sup></b> <b>2019</b>	<i>Seward's Day</i>	<b>LEGISLATIVE DAY</b> <b>70</b>
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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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