



Senator Mia Costello Alaska State Legislature



May 16, 2019

Dear friends and neighbors,

The regular session has ended and the Senate passed the budget (19-1), the crime package (20-0) and a full dividend. However, we were unable to get support from the House, so the governor has called us back.

Thank you to the many of you who have reached out to my office and expressed your thoughts on the issues facing our state. I appreciate you reaching out and I welcome you to do so anytime on any issue.

Most of the calls and emails I received are related to crime and the permanent fund dividend. The Senate unanimously voted to repeal Senate Bill 91 and replace it with stronger sentences for crimes, especially for drug and sex related crimes. This bill will keep repeat offenders off the streets, increase deterrents for property crimes, and restore justice to victims. Prosecutors and law enforcement will finally have tools to tackle crime and protect Alaskan citizens.

The Senate has also passed the operating budget with reductions from last year and fully-funded the Permanent Fund Dividend. But, as I've shared earlier in the note, because the House has not yet completed the operating budget or concurred with the Senate on the crime package, the governor has called the legislature in for a special session to finish these tasks.

As we buckle down to work with all parties to get these critical tasks over the finish line, please continue to reach out with your thoughts and suggestions. Your passion and commitment to make our state a better place helps me continue to do the same.

Sincerely,



For the last month and half, I have been granted the privilege of the floor to speak on "Voice of a Victim." During that time, I've been relaying personal stories of Alaskans who have been affected by crime.

My goal has been to elevate the conversation from statistics and statutes and put a human dimension on the consequences of the crime epidemic currently gripping our state.

Mia's bill to governor's desk for signing

Yesterday, my bill SB 75 passed the House 36-0, after passing the Senate 19-0. SB 75 will lower the age requirement to obtain your commercial driver's license from 19 to 18, aligning us with most other states in the nation.

This commonsense change will increase our pool of commercial drivers at a time when the state is facing a shortage, as well as provide career options for our young people coming out of high school who aren't seeking higher education.

Having passed both houses with broad bi-partisan support, SB 75 will now go to the governor's desk for his signature. I appreciate all of the stakeholders who worked with me to get this over the finish line.



Meeting with the troops: Mia talks with Alaska service members moments before taking part in the Joint Armed Services Committee of which she is a member.



Recognizing Alaska's young swimmers: Mia presents a legislative citation to the Dimond High School Swim and Dive Team to recognize their State Championship.



On the floor: Mia finishes a speech on "Voice of a Victim," relaying a personal story of an Alaskan affected by crime.



Honoring Alaska's high school athletes and coaches: Mia was proud to welcome the incoming class of the High School Hall of Fame, of which she is a member. Legislative citations were presented to each inductee.



Helping military spouses: Mia hears a bill in the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee that would help spouses of active duty service members practice their trade without extensive wait times for license approval.

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Anchorage Office | 907-269-0117
Juneau Office | 907-465-4968

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Sen Mia Costello @MiaCostelloAK @MiaCostelloAK Sen.Mia.Costello@akleg.gov