



May 2020

## Revak Report

Dear Friends,

Spring is here and the days are getting longer – a time of renewal and the hope of better things to come. The last few months have been a time of reflection as we quarantine with our families and loved ones. I know that many people are out of work, many businesses have shut their doors, and our children are home from school and will have an unexpected longer summer vacation.

The legislature has been working with the Governor to ensure the \$1 billion in federal CARES Act funding reaches communities and small businesses in hopes of helping many through the economic impacts caused by COVID-19. In the last few months, many Alaskans have already been able to take advantage of the Paycheck Protection Program, Small Business Administration loans, and unemployment benefits. This newsletter includes new and updated COVID-19 constituent resources that may be of interest to you.

The times we are living in are unprecedented and it is impossible to understand the gravity of the impact this pandemic has had on each one of you. Many have reached out and my office stands ready to offer any assistance we can provide. I'm honored to serve and represent Senate District M. Please [email me](#), call my office at 907-465-3879, or visit us anytime to share your thoughts and concerns.

Blessings,

## WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

This Friday, May 15th, turn your eyes to the skies in Anchorage and Southcentral Alaska as pilots from JBBER conduct flyovers to honor and salute all those serving on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19. Thank you to the many healthcare workers and first responders who have tirelessly met this challenge day-in and day-out for the last few months. Our state and community is blessed by your services and grateful during this most difficult time.

**MAY 15**  
LATE MORNING/EARLY AFTERNOON  
Wasilla - Palmer - Valdez  
Cordova - Juneau - Ketchikan - Sitka

**WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER**  
#AMERICASTRONG

**HH-60/HC-130J "SALUTE TO AK" FLYOVER**

**OVER-ALL FLIGHT PLAN**

EAGLE RIVER	1200
KNW BRIDGE	1202
MATSU REGIONAL	1212
PALMER	1214
WASILLA	1220

Times are an estimate and subject to change. Expect the HH60G and HC-130J overhead within +/- 10 minutes of the times above.

## Hmong-American Veterans Day ~ May 15th

This year the Alaska Legislature honored the Hmong-Americans that so bravely fought along side our American military during the Vietnam War by establishing May 15th of each year as Hmong-American Veterans Day. The Hmong people were recruited by the American Central Intelligence Agency to help and fight alongside U.S. soldiers in the fight against communism. Over 30,000 Hmong soldiers perished and thousands were forced to flee to refugee camps. After the war the United States government promised the Hmong veterans citizenship and veteran status after the war.

## Nurses Appreciation Week May 6th ~ 12th

Given the unprecedented times we are living in with the global coronavirus pandemic, nurses deserve special appreciation. Nurses are the foundation of our healthcare system as they listen to patients concerns, worries, and expressions of pain and hope. The caring and comforting approach that nurses provide to patients and their loved ones during uncertain and often tragic times is invaluable. I will never forget the myriad of Nurses who were there for me when I was severely wounded in Iraq and those who were there to give me hope and strength during my lengthy recovery process.

While on a normal day the work nurses do is bound to be stressful, the added coronavirus situation has likely added to that tenfold. The worry they have to endure about being exposed and bringing the virus back to family and/or not having contact with their family at all during these times, I'm sure is very difficult to deal with.

I extend my thanks and gratitude for all you do.

## National Police Week May 10th ~ 15th

The men and women of Alaska's police force increasingly provide a vital public service and for generations members of this elite group have shown courage, bravery, perseverance, and commitment to those they serve and defend, while enduring long shifts in dangerous and unpredictable circumstances; we honor the more than 60 Alaska police officers that have been killed in the line of duty. These officers and their families have our deepest gratitude and respect as we remember their heroic devotion and sacrifice.

Thank you for protecting and serving our state and communities.

## COVID-19 Constituent Resources

### Unemployment Benefits

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development has been overwhelmed with many Alaskans trying to file claims for unemployment insurance benefits. Below is a letter my office received from Commissioner Ledbetter as they work through many of the technical difficulties. If you are now unemployed due to COVID-19 the department recommends filing your claim using the MyAlaska website in an effort to keep the telephone lines open. Currently self employed, independent contractors, gig economy workers are now eligible for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and can apply online. My office is available to help any constituent that needs assistance working with the department.

May 8, 2020

Senator Josh Revak  
Alaska State Capitol #125  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Revak,

*In challenging times like these it is the everyday heroes who perform the critical work needed to assist our fellow Alaskans. Our team at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development has risen to the challenges of COVID-19 and is focused on getting financial resources out to impacted Alaskans. Despite the challenges of an aging IT system that at times tests this resolve, I am pleased to report that excellent progress is being made on all fronts.*

*Since March, \$164 million in payments have been sent out to approximately 54,000 Alaskans. Over 70,000 applications have been submitted, of which approximately 15,000 are self-employed applicants filing for the first time. In March after the CARES Act was signed into law with coverage for the self-employed, we anticipated 4 to 6 weeks to full implementation of the new Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program (PUA). We are on target to meet this goal. A new online application for PUA went live last week, and we are running test payments on the system now. Small business owners, gig-economy workers and independent contractors who have experienced the economic downturn of COVID-19 will begin receiving payments soon.*

*The PUA program requires income certification of 2019 income. Before applications can be processed, this important step must be completed. Please advise constituents to email those documents to dol.pua@alaska.gov and put "PUA Wage Proof" in the subject line. It is important for the new PUA applicants to file weekly certifications, in the same manner as traditional filers.*

*As of May 3, Alaskans who have exhausted regular UI benefits, will be eligible for up to 13 weeks of extended benefits. Those qualifying will be notified by mail of their eligibility. Extended benefits will precede Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), a new program of the CARES Act, which will provide an extra 13 weeks of eligibility beyond the Extended Benefit period.*

*We have received many inquiries from employers concerned about getting employees back to work given the financial resources of the combined federal/state program. In the absence of good cause, employees refusing to go back to work will be ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits. Employers who experience this situation are encouraged to report to the department at uifraud@alaska.gov. When emailing, the employer should include business name, contact information, a brief description of the activity and the individual's name and last four digits of the social security number.*

*Many have also inquired about the health of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. The current balance of the Fund is \$477.5 million with a projected balance as of September 2020 of \$330 million.*

*In closing, I wish to thank you for your assistance in helping to field calls and referrals to the Department. This coordination has been very helpful to my team, and we appreciate your efforts.*

Sincerely,  
Dr. Tamika L. Ledbetter  
Commissioner

To apply for unemployment benefits please click on the picture below.

## Municipality of Anchorage Provides Funds for Grants for Small Businesses & Non-Profits

**Applications open for Municipality's Small Business Grant Pilot Program**

**ANCHORAGE** — The Municipality of Anchorage dedicated \$1 million for grants to small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19. Too many small businesses and nonprofits are bearing the cost of responding to the public health crisis, and this fund will provide some support as Anchorage moves through these incredibly challenging times. The Municipality is partnering with Cook Inlet Lending Center (CILC) to process and distribute small business and nonprofit stabilization funds. The application period opens today, May 12, and closes at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22, 2020.

Up to 120 small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19 will receive a grant to help with expenses including payroll, employee benefits, rent, utilities, taxes, and paying vendors. Businesses and nonprofits with two to seven employees are eligible to receive a grant of \$10,000. Sole proprietorships are eligible for a \$5,000 grant. This is a pilot program to better understand the level of need for Anchorage small businesses and nonprofits, and could be expanded at a later date if additional funding is available.

Eligible small businesses and nonprofits are those that:

- had less than \$1 million in gross revenue in 2019;
- had no more than seven total full-time or part-time employees at any one time in 2019;
- have a location in the Municipality of Anchorage; and
- have not received or have a pending application for federal COVID-19 relief funding.

Franchises, payday lenders, pawn shops, bingo halls, pull tab businesses, and businesses legally restricted to patrons over age 18 or 21 are not eligible to apply. Sole proprietors must make 75% of their annual gross income from the business to be eligible. Up to 20% of the funding will go to sole proprietorships, and another 20% to eligible nonprofits.

"I heard and saw too many local businesses and nonprofits that were unable to get federal relief funds. Because we are all in this together, they should have support as we move through these difficult times. This program helps fill the gap and give us a better sense of the need that exists in the community," said Mayor Ethan Berkowitz.

"The Municipality is poised to begin providing critical financial assistance to overlooked businesses and small nonprofits that provide essential services in our communities. Cook Inlet Lending Center is eager to help get these resources out to the organizations that need them," added Gabe Layman, the Chief Operating Officer for Cook Inlet Housing Authority.

Applications and more information can be found at the [Cook Inlet Lending Center website](#). Applications can be submitted online, via email to [reliefgrant@cookinletlending.com](mailto:reliefgrant@cookinletlending.com), or mailed to 3600 Spenard Road, Suite 100, Anchorage, AK 99508. Applications will be available in Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, Samoan, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian, Chinese Mandarin, and Arabic.

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Media contact: Ira Slomski-Pritz, (907) 444-5356, [ira.slomski-pritz@anchorageak.gov](mailto:ira.slomski-pritz@anchorageak.gov)

## Small Business Administration Information

[Alaska List of Participating Lenders](#)

For local assistance with the Small Business Administration (SBA) - click on the picture below to contact the Alaska District SBA Office.

## Alaska Legal Services Corp

Alaska Legal Services Corp (ALSC) has compiled a list of legal resources and guidance to help Alaskans that have questions and concerns as a result of the impacts of COVID-19. Below is the email ALSC sent my office

ALSC has been working hard to alleviate some of the stresses Alaskans are experiencing by compiling legal resources in one easy-to-navigate self-help website: [AlaskaLawHelp.org](#) AlaskaLawHelp provides guidance and answers to many frequently asked questions pertaining to civil legal issues and COVID-19. The resource bank covers a wide-range of topics specific to COVID-19 including: housing, domestic violence, unemployment, health, worker rights, debts, scams, public benefits, and stimulus checks.

This legal resource page has answers to the frequently asked questions that we are getting everyday on our hotline, for instance [How do I modify a rental agreement if I can't pay my rent?](#) It also has [forms](#) and [instructions](#).

With COVID-19 legal rights changing daily, [AlaskaLawHelp.org](#) is updated regularly with new resources, articles, and court documents. ALSC will also be posting links to new resources as they are added on ALSC's Facebook and Twitter pages.

ALSC has forms and instructions if you are experiencing [financial hardship](#).

## Ways to Help Those In Need

The health and economic impacts of COVID-19 have touched many lives throughout the Anchorage area and state. A recent [article](#) indicated the demands at local food pantries have grown since the spread of COVID-19. The Food Bank of Alaska provides ways to [volunteer](#) and [donate](#). In addition, the website includes a meal and food distribution [calendar](#) with locations throughout the Anchorage and Mat-Su.



Our mailing address is:  
Session: State Capitol, Room 125, Juneau, AK 99801  
Interim: 1500 West Benson, Room 410, Anchorage, AK 99503

[Sen.Joshua.Revak@akleg.gov](mailto:Sen.Joshua.Revak@akleg.gov) | [Senate District M](#) | 907-465-3879 | [Website](#)

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