



# **33rd Alaska Legislature Accomplishments**

**Alaska Senate Majority**



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the 33rd Alaska State Legislature draws to a close, the Alaska Senate Majority reflects on the journey we've embarked upon together. It has been a period defined by unique challenges and collaborative efforts to address our state's most critical needs.

Our decision to form a bipartisan coalition was not just politically sound, but a testament to our commitment to prioritize Alaska's interests above all else. With eight Republicans and nine Democrats coming together, we focused on crucial issues such as education funding, employee recruitment and retention, and ensuring stable energy sources and prices for all Alaskans.



Guided by a diverse leadership team and strong support from dedicated caucus members from every part of the state, the Senate tackled these challenges head-on. Through dedication and teamwork, we achieved significant milestones. We stabilized the state's budget without depleting our savings, protected the permanent fund without overdrawing the earnings, and transferred \$1 billion into the Permanent Fund to inflation-proof the corpus to ensure the fund's solvency for years to come. The Senate also advanced legislation to bolster Alaska's economy and business opportunities, established a Seafood Industry Task Force to support Alaska fishermen, processors, and communities through historic industry challenges, provided crucial support to our public safety and first responders, and expanded medical services, among many other objectives.

Through rigorous legislative deliberations and dialogue with our counterparts in the House of Representatives and the Office of the Governor, the Senate sponsored a series of bold initiatives that would significantly enhance the lives of Alaskans. Notably, among these efforts were education funding and policy changes that would improve student outcomes and increase the state's Base Student Allocation (BSA) by a historic \$680 per student.

Additionally, we prioritized the restoration of a dependable pension system, ensuring the security of our invaluable educators, public safety personnel, firefighters, and dedicated public servants. Furthermore, recognizing the paramount importance of energy sustainability, we spearheaded initiatives to incentivize Cook Inlet gas production, thereby fortifying energy reserves crucial for the railbelt. While some of these major proposals did not make it past the finish line, they brought attention to many of the state's shortfalls, raising awareness of the need, and have motivated us to continue to work on behalf of Alaskans without partisan divides.

I am proud of the accomplishments we've achieved together over the past two legislative sessions. During the remainder of the 33rd Alaska State Legislature, we will build upon our efforts to collaborate with stakeholders, advocates, and the public at large. With renewed commitment and determination, we will continue toward building a stronger, healthier state for all Alaskans.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. L.', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

# Legislation

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## Establishing June 19, Juneteenth, as a state Holiday

*Sponsored by: Sen Elvi Gray-Jackson*

In 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, proclaiming the Civil War had ended and that any enslaved people were now free. This day became known as Juneteenth, a day in which we celebrate the emancipation of previously enslaved peoples in America. [Senate Bill 22](#) establishes June 19, Juneteenth, as a state holiday.

Each year on June 19, people of all races join one another in fellowship to honor those who gave so much for America and educate themselves about the struggles toward liberation for Black Americans. In 2001, then-Representative and former State Senator Lesil McGuire, R-Anchorage, passed House Bill 100, recognizing the third Saturday of June as Juneteenth Day. Senate Bill 22 built upon that prior work to bring about more recognition and understanding of Juneteenth.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Dunbar, Kawasaki, Wielechowski, Tobin, Kiehl, Claman, Stevens*

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## Twelve Month Supply of Birth Control

*Sponsored by: Sen. Löki Tobin*

[Senate Bill 27](#) aims to address Alaska's unique challenges in accessing contraceptives due to its geography and infrastructure limitations, exacerbated by the recent pandemic. Recognizing the importance of consistent access to contraceptives in preventing unintended pregnancies and adverse health effects, the bill mandates health insurers, including Medicaid, to cover various forms of contraceptives and associated medical services. This includes prescriptions, long-acting reversible contraceptives, and emergency contraceptives, with a requirement to dispense a 12-month supply at a time. By improving access to family planning options, the bill empowers individuals to manage their reproductive health needs effectively. It also addresses cost concerns, as providing a one-year supply reduces the need for follow-up visits and mitigates long-term expenses associated with unintended pregnancies. Supporting SB 27 not only enhances healthcare flexibility for Alaskans but also empowers families to take control of their future reproductive choices.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Claman, Dunbar, Kawasaki, Kiehl, Gray-Jackson, Giessel*

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## Reestablishing the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas in Alaska

*Sponsored by: Sen James Kaufman*

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas (CACFA) was first established in 1981, shortly after Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) governing all federal public lands in the state. Under the balanced compromise Congress crafted in ANILCA, 104+ million acres (nearly a quarter of the state) were set aside in permanent federal ownership as conservation system units (e.g., parks, preserves, wildlife refuges, wilderness areas) while at the same time created unique provisions enabling Alaskan's to maintain their traditions, accommodate the social and economic needs of

the state, provide a range of land-use and land access rights, safeguard opportunities for responsible resource development, and facilitate continued improvements in transportation and utility infrastructure.

In 2021, the Commission expired and was not renewed. [Senate Bill 34](#) reestablishes the Commission as an independent and impartial source of information and center for advocacy on Statehood, ANCSA, and AN-ILCA issues that impact Alaskans which is made up of 10 public members, one Senator, and one Representative who represents “the diversity of users and uses of federal land in the state.”

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## Direct Healthcare Agreements

*Sponsored by: Sen David Wilson*

[Senate Bill 45](#) streamlines access to healthcare for Alaskans by introducing Direct Health Care Agreements (DHCAs) between patients and healthcare providers. These agreements involve patients paying a flat, periodic fee for routine visits and access to their provider, without involving third-party insurers. By cutting out insurance bureaucracy, DHCAs reduce administrative burdens for doctors, allowing them to spend more time with patients. While DHCAs can complement existing insurance plans, they are not insurance themselves and should not be regulated as such. The bill seeks to clarify the legal status of DHCAs, ensuring they are excluded from insurance regulations, thus enhancing public access to affordable, high-quality healthcare.

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## Establishing March as Brain Injury Awareness Month

*Sponsored by: Sen Löki Tobin*

Brain injuries can bring a lifetime of secondary health conditions, including persistent concussion symptoms, post-traumatic stress injury, physical impairment, and developmental delays. It’s estimated that 3.2 to 5 million Americans live with long-term disabilities due to brain injuries, and Alaska has one of the highest rates of traumatic brain injuries in the nation. The Brain Injury Association of America reports that every 9 seconds, someone in the U.S. sustains a brain injury. The Department of Defense reports that over 430,000 service members have sustained traumatic brain injuries since 2000.

[Senate Bill 46](#) designates March as Brain Injury Awareness Month in Alaska to increase public awareness of the prevalence of brain injuries and highlight ways to prevent them.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Merrick, Bishop*

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## Involuntary Commitment

*Sponsored by: Sen Matt Claman*

[Senate Bill 53](#) enhances involuntary commitment laws in Alaska, allowing for up to a two-year involuntary commitment for individuals who have been found incompetent to stand trial for serious crimes like felony offenses against persons or arson, have a history of such crimes, and present a danger to themselves, others, or the public. This bill was motivated by an incident in 2022, where a man found incompetent to stand trial attacked a woman at a library. Senate Bill 53 mandates that the Department of Law file for involuntary commitment for individuals deemed incompetent for trial on dangerous crimes, shifting them from the criminal to the civil system to improve public safety. It also permits two-year commitments for those with a history of serious crimes and previous involuntary holds, while allowing them to petition for early discharge if they can

prove they are no longer dangerous.

Additionally, the bill includes provisions for notifying victims about civil commitment hearings and outcomes, reduces the number of required mental health evaluators for the insanity defense from two to one, and stipulates that courts must provide detailed findings when ordering competency exams. This legislation also responds to recent court decisions to ensure compliance with existing disability rights requirements.

Senate Bill 53 passed as an amendment to House Bill 66.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson*

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## **Alaska Performance Scholarships**

*Sponsored by: Sen Forrest Dunbar*

[Senate Bill 56](#) enhances access to post-secondary education in Alaska by revising the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS). The APS, a merit-based scholarship for high-achieving Alaskan students, currently requires a minimum GPA, qualifying entrance exam score, and specific courses. Concerns over declining APS usage and eligibility prompted a study revealing a brain drain and workforce shortages. The bill incorporates recommendations from the study to address these issues, including allowing career technical education courses, extending eligibility timeframes, increasing award amounts, simplifying qualification criteria, and enhancing awareness among students. Additionally, it provides flexibility for non-traditional students and mandates the creation of a GPA equivalent rating system. These changes aim to retain talent in Alaska, bolster the workforce, and encourage enrollment in Alaska schools.

Changes to the Alaska Performance Scholarship were passed in House Bill 148.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson, Bishop*

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## **PFAS Use Prohibition**

*Sponsored by: Sen Jesse Kiehl*

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) pose significant health risks, including low birth weight, thyroid disease, and cancer, even at minimal concentrations, while persisting in the environment for years. Alaska has recognized PFAS as hazardous, leading to [Senate Bill 67](#), which bans PFAS foams except where federal law overrides, aiming to safeguard public health and prevent pollution by mandating safe disposal of small PFAS foam quantities. However, exemptions are granted for oil and gas operations facing intense fire threats until viable non-PFAS alternatives are approved by the State Fire Marshal.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, Giessel, Claman, Kawasaki, Tobin, Stevens, Wielechowski*

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## **Online Public Notices**

*Sponsored by: Senate Resources*

[Senate Bill 68](#) proposes changes to public notice requirements regarding land and water usages, offering an option to use the Alaska Online Public Notice System instead of traditional newspaper postings. While other notice requirements remain unchanged, this shift aims to modernize the process, potentially saving applicants

money and ensuring equal access to notices for all Alaskans. The online system, accessible to most residents at no cost, preserves notices permanently and streamlines permit processing by eliminating coordination with newspapers. The bill encourages public engagement with the online system and underscores the state's commitment to leveraging technology for efficient and inclusive public communication.

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## Physical Therapist Compact

*Sponsored by:* **Senator David Wilson**

Since the 1950s, the proliferation of licensed occupations has grown from five percent to twenty-five percent of the workforce, posing significant challenges in navigating state licensing requirements. To mitigate these challenges, states and professions have turned to occupational licensure interstate compacts, such as the Interstate Physical Therapy Compact (PTC). These compacts establish reciprocal professional licensing practices among states while upholding service quality and state sovereignty. The PTC, enacted in 2017 and adopted by 34 states, allows eligible physical therapists and assistants to obtain compact privileges in member states, ensuring healthcare availability at the highest standard. Compacts, functioning as state-based solutions, enable states to retain policy control over interstate matters and preserve their authority without federal intervention. [Senate Bill 74](#) establishes Alaska in this compact and is crucial for promoting interstate physical therapy practice and safeguarding state sovereignty, necessitating support for this legislation.

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## Audiologist and Speech Language Pathologists Interstate Compact

*Sponsored by:* **Sen David Wilson**

[Senate Bill 75](#) enacts the Audiologist and Speech Language Pathologists Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC), which allows eligible professionals from compact member states to easily obtain licenses to practice in other member states. This facilitates better healthcare availability, particularly in remote areas like Alaska, while ensuring services meet high standards. The bill emphasizes the importance of interstate compacts as a way for states to address shared challenges without federal intervention, preserving state sovereignty. It seeks to encourage cooperative solutions among states and protect their authority over policy areas.

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## Local Economic Development Tax Incentives

*Sponsored by:* **Sen Forrest Dunbar**

[Senate Bill 77](#) provides local governments with additional, optional tools to incentivize economic development. First, the legislation allows municipalities to fully exempt property taxes for economic development purposes. Currently, municipalities may only exempt the portion of property taxes that is above the district's required local contribution. This legislation does not impact a local municipality's education funding requirement.

Parts of Senate Bill 77 was passed as an amendment to Senate Bill 179.

*Co-Sponsors:* **Senator Claman**

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## Telehealth for Out-of-State Multidisciplinary Care

*Sponsored by: Sen Matt Claman*

[Senate Bill 91](#) authorizes the out-of-state multidisciplinary care team members to provide telehealth services when an Alaskan needs to receive ongoing treatment or follow-up care for a suspected or diagnosed life-threatening condition, such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS., for which the health care services as provided by the multidisciplinary care team are not reasonably available in state. This provides increased access for Alaskans suffering from ALS so they are able to stay with their family and not require constant travel out of Alaska to receive care.

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## Expanding Alaska's Fishermen's Fund

*Sponsored by: Senate Labor and Commerce*

[Senate Bill 93](#) provides an incentive to fishing vessel owners to acquire Protection & Indemnity (P&I) insurance coverage by increasing statutory reimbursements to crewmembers and vessel owners for crewmember injuries and illnesses. The legislation added viral infections to the list of covered occupational diseases and would reduce the maximum payout amounts if the fund balance falls below statutory thresholds.

Commercial fishers are not covered under Workers' Compensation. If a crew member is injured beyond \$15,000 worth of medical and/or legal bills and the vessel owner foregoes P&I insurance coverage, the vessel owner and vessel are at risk to potential medical and/or legal liabilities if an injured crewman is not made whole in an injury case. This bill encourages vessel owners to purchase the coverage by increasing the reimbursable deductible to \$15,000.

As insurance policies have risen in price, operating costs have appreciated, and labor shortages have impacted bottom lines, many owners have purchased policies with a higher deductible to control costs. This will provide support to vessel owners by establishing equity for crew across the industry, potential cost savings, and protection of loss that enables owners to provide for injury or illness without risking their entire operation.

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## Special Request License Plates

*Sponsored by: Sen Kelly Merrick*

The legislature annually allocates time to consider specialty license plates for various organizations, resulting in over 90 variations available for purchase at the DMV. Since 2003, nine bills have been passed authorizing such plates, sometimes consolidating multiple bills into one. [Senate Bill 95](#) proposes transferring the approval responsibility from the Legislature to the DMV to streamline the process, aiming to focus legislative time on more significant statewide matters. This bill would enable tax-exempt organizations, state departments, or municipalities to sponsor plates, bearing the costs themselves, ultimately reducing state expenses and saving legislative time.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Kiehl, Kaufman, Bjorkman, Claman, Dunbar, Gray-Jackson, Kawasaki, Wielechowski*

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## Public Safety Officer Peer Support Counseling Program

*Sponsored by: Sen Forrest Dunbar*

Under prior law, public safety officers were extremely limited in their options to discuss stressful and traumatic events that occurred in their workplace because they are often, by their nature, related to criminal investigations. Senate Bill 103 addresses the critical need to de-stigmatize mental health issues that affect many public safety officers by providing a safe and confidential way for them to talk about emotionally intense aspects of their work.

[Senate Bill 103](#) authorizes existing public safety agencies to establish a peer support counseling program without mandating changes to those agencies. A law enforcement agency, emergency service provider, or the Department of Corrections will have the opportunity to designate an existing employee as a peer counselor if they have prior counseling training. Any participant who seeks counseling from their designated peer is guaranteed confidentiality in those communications. Confidential space for participants to discuss emotionally traumatic events is key for creating effective Critical Incident Stress Management debriefs, which the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration recognizes as crucial for preventing and mitigating the effects of trauma.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson, Tobin, Kawasaki, Giessel*

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## Alaska Strategic Plan for Critical Minerals

*Sponsored by: Sen Kelly Merrick*

[Senate Bill 118](#) aims to develop a strategic plan to explore, develop, produce, refine, and manufacture critical and essential minerals in Alaska. It emphasizes positioning Alaska as a central producer of these minerals in the United States, supporting the development of emerging technologies, considering regulatory frameworks' effects, and maintaining environmental standards.

Additionally, the Department of Natural Resources is required to provide a report comparing Alaska's current and potential future production of critical minerals to national and global production. This report will identify strategies to increase industry exploration and state production, compare permitting timelines and exploration incentives with other jurisdictions, and be made available to the legislature. The Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development is tasked with providing a report identifying the state's role in innovation, manufacturing, and transportation, analyzing its potential in global supply chains, and proposing strategies for development over the next three, five, and 10 years.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Dunbar, Kaufman, Kawasaki, Bishop, Stedman, Wilson*

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## Pharmacy Benefit Managers

*Sponsored by: Sen Cathy Giessel by Request*

[Senate Bill 121](#) represents a continued legislative effort to address the problematic influence of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) on local pharmacies, building upon previous legislation aimed at closing contract loopholes and protecting independent pharmacies. Despite initial attempts to regulate PBMs, these entities persist in circumventing regulations, prompting scrutiny at both state and federal levels nationwide. Small rural pharmacies particularly suffer from underpayments, appeals hurdles, and excessive fees imposed by PBMs,

while the latter profit significantly. Senate Bill 121 aims to empower Alaska pharmacies by providing legal recourse against unfair PBM practices, ensuring patient choice and safe medication access.

Senate Bill 121 was passed in the House companion version, House Bill 226.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Tobin, Gray-Jackson, Claman*

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## Vehicle Rental Tax

*Sponsored by: Sen Matt Claman*

[Senate Bill 127](#) mandates that vehicle rental platform companies like Turo and Getaround collect and remit the state vehicle rental tax to the Department of Revenue on behalf of vehicle owners, clarifying existing uncertainties about tax responsibilities. This bill, introduced by the Department of Revenue, specifies that these platforms, not individual owners, are responsible for tax collection and remittance. Traditional vehicle advertising methods like Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace remain unaffected by this bill, as they do not handle rental transactions. The bill also reduces the rental tax to 8% for vehicle rental platforms while maintaining a 10% tax for traditional rental car services and ensures no retroactive tax collection for platform users. Additionally, it revises the subpoena provisions related to tax collections by the Department of Revenue.

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## Enhancing Data Protection and Healthcare Access for Mammograms

*Sponsored by: Sen. Kaufman*

[Senate Bill 134](#) mandates stringent data security measures for insurers in Alaska, compelling them to establish and maintain information security programs based on comprehensive risk assessments overseen by the Division of Insurance. It requires licensees to promptly report and investigate cybersecurity incidents to the state insurance commissioner. Additionally, the bill ensures that mammography screenings and related examinations are covered without cost to insured individuals. Modeled after existing legislation in 24 other states and endorsed by federal authorities, SB 134 aims to safeguard Alaskans' sensitive information, enhance consumer protections, and fortify the cybersecurity resilience of the insurance sector.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Dunbar, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Claman*

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## Internet for Schools

*Sponsored by: Sen Lyman Hoffman*

[Senate Bill 140](#) significantly enhances broadband connectivity in eligible schools by raising the minimum download speed from 25 Mbps to 100 Mbps through the School Broadband Assistance Grant (BAG) program. Initially established in 2014 to help schools achieve 10 Mbps download speeds, the BAG program was revised in 2020 to increase it to 25 Mbps. This new bill responds to technological advancements and decreasing internet costs in rural areas by adapting the minimum requirement to 100 Mbps, enabling schools to tap into more E-rate funds. By doing so, SB 140 not only addresses the need for faster internet in Alaska's schools but also aligns them with national broadband standards. In 2023, 151 schools across 27 districts benefited from BAG awards, leveraging federal E-rate funds at an approximate ratio of 8:1, with the potential for further leverage based on free and reduced lunch calculations.

Expanding internet for schools was passed in the House companion version, House Bill 193.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bishop, Claman, Gray-Jackson, Tobin, Kiehl, Dunbar, Olson, Stevens*

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## **Enhancing Reemployment Training Options for Injured Alaskan Workers**

*Sponsored by: Sen James Kaufman*

Alaska's reemployment system primarily focuses on helping injured workers retrain for another career and fails to emphasize returning workers to their preferred profession. Unfortunately, this system is outdated and burdensome and falls short of meeting the needs of Alaska's workers on their journey back to employment. In recent years, an average of 550 workers were evaluated, with slightly over 2% of workers, or 13 workers, fully finishing reemployment plans. Senate Bill 147 addresses these deficiencies.

[Senate Bill 147](#) improves the efficiency, fairness, and predictability of Alaska's reemployment system, enhancing support for injured workers and fostering a more resilient workforce for zero-cost to the state. The legislation shifts focus on a return-to-work process rather than retraining workers, updates reimbursement rates to reflect today's economic realities better, and removes unnecessary administrative burdens to accelerate the path to reemployment while also providing modernized reporting requirements.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Gray-Jackson*

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## **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligibility Adjustments**

*Sponsored by: Senator Cathy Giessel*

In Alaska, many families and seniors face the dilemma of choosing between paying bills or putting food on the table due to rising costs, while local food banks struggle to keep up with inflation. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) plays a critical role, feeding one in eight Alaskans. However, recipients often confront the "benefits cliff," where earning slightly more can lead to a loss in benefits, discouraging self-sufficiency. [Senate Bill 149](#) proposes broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE), enabling Alaska to adjust SNAP income limits from 130% to 200% of the Alaska poverty standard and waive asset tests. This reform aims to mitigate the cliff effect, promoting economic stability. By streamlining administrative processes and saving costs, BBCE holds promise for fostering more self-sufficient communities, representing a significant step towards a prosperous future for Alaska and its residents.

Senate Bill 149 passed as an amendment to House Bill 344.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Dunbar, Gray-Jackson, Olson, Tobin, Wielechowski, Kawasaki, Kiehl, Claman*

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## **Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Commission**

*Sponsored by: Sen Donny Olson*

[Senate Bill 151](#) addresses the urgent need to confront the root causes of MMIP and provide vital support to affected communities. It mandates cultural training for police officers, establishes the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Review Commission within the Department of Public Safety (DPS), and directs the appointment of MMIP investigators to ensure dedicated resources for investigating cases. The Commission, comprising nine members from diverse backgrounds, will collaborate with law enforcement to analyze unre-

solved MMIP cases across regions, identify trends, and make strategic recommendations to enhance coordination and reduce violence against Indigenous individuals.

Additionally, SB 151 emphasizes collaboration with the MMIP Review Commission on public outreach initiatives to raise awareness and engagement on MMIP issues. The legislation calls for a comprehensive needs assessment to strengthen protective and investigative resources within the state's criminal justice system, amplifying efforts to identify and report MMIP cases. By requiring DPS to share missing persons information with the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) database, the bill also enhances coordination at the national level. With recent funding allocations for additional MMIP investigators yielding progress in reviewing cases, the establishment of the Review Commission is deemed crucial to sustaining momentum and pursuing justice for unresolved MMIP cases.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Stedman, Tobin, Kawasaki, Wielechowski, Kiehl, Stevens*

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## **Establishing a Community Energy/Net Metering Program**

*Sponsored by: Sen. Bill Wielechowski*

[Senate Bill 152](#) creates a community energy program that will increase options for renewable energy development, allow Alaskan ratepayers to lower their electric costs, and offset natural gas usage by establishing a virtual net metering program for small-scale renewable energy generation.

Without this legislation, ratepayers for regulated utilities could utilize net metering, which lowers their electric bills based on the amount of electricity they generate from generators like solar panels or wind turbines. Unfortunately, many ratepayers, including renters and condo owners, have been unable to take advantage of net metering because they do not have space available on-site. Senate Bill 152 will allow multiple ratepayers to pool their resources to receive net metering benefits from a single project.

The community energy program will help utility customers save money, attract millions in investment, and help offset natural gas use in Cook Inlet while creating good jobs for Alaskans.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Dunbar, Gray-Jackson, Kawasaki*

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## **Bidder Preference of State Contracts for Veterans and Servicemembers**

*Sponsored by: Sen Bill Wielechowski*

Alaska has a veteran population of veterans of about 70,000. Senate Bill 154 highlights career opportunities for our former service members looking for a new way to serve their community as civilians and add adept employees to the state's workforce.

[Senate Bill 154](#) enacts a 2 percent bidder preference for veterans and servicemembers, not to exceed \$5,000, for procurement contracts. These programs aim to offer civilian work experience through industry training, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, or internships for their time while exiting their active service contract. Eligible entities are those that have employed at least one person enrolled in or recently graduated from, the US Dept. of Defense, SkillBridge, or Army Career Services for servicemembers or spouses.

The legislation is a win-win for Alaskan businesses and for Alaska's veterans looking to start their new chapter in the civilian workforce.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Dunbar, Kawasaki, Tobin, Gray-Jackson, Claman*

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## **Establishes the Friday Before Memorial Day as “Alaska Veterans’ Poppy Day”**

*Sponsored by: Sen Forrest Dunbar*

With Alaska having the highest per capita population of Veterans, the Alaska legislature saw the significance of establishing the Friday before Memorial Day as Alaska Veterans’ Poppy Day. [Senate Bill 159](#) does just that and is a powerful way to remember and honor our fallen soldiers and ensure they receive the remembrance they deserve.

Poppies have long been a symbol of remembrance and gratitude for the men and women who have served in the military. The tradition began with the famous poem “In Flanders Fields” by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae during World War I. Poppies were among the first flowers to bloom in the war-ravaged fields of Flanders, and their red color served as a powerful symbol of the bloodshed and sacrifice of those who fought in that battle. This poem and the poppy’s association with remembrance quickly spread throughout America.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Stevens, Gray-Jackson, Kaufman, Merrick, Claman, Myers, Bjorkman, Bishop, Stedman*

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## **Psychedelic Medicine Task Force**

*Sponsored by: Sen Forrest Dunbar*

[Senate Bill 166](#) establishes the Alaska Mental Health and Psychedelic Medicine Task Force with the aim of preparing for potential federal approval of psychedelics for medicinal purposes, emphasizing that the bill does not intend to legalize these substances. Given the high prevalence of conditions like PTSD, depression, and substance use disorders in Alaska, especially among veterans and survivors of domestic violence, the Task Force will explore the potential of psychedelic-assisted therapies in addressing these issues within Alaska’s healthcare system. Comprising healthcare professionals, Alaska Native communities, veterans, and mental health advocates, the Task Force will meet regularly, deliver recommendations to the legislature and governor by December 31st, 2024, and dissolve upon the convening of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature. It will investigate barriers to implementation and access, necessary licensing and regulatory requirements, and other safety guidelines for integrating psychedelic medicine into Alaska’s healthcare framework, particularly in light of the FDA’s consideration of MDMA for PTSD treatment.

The Psychedelic Medicine Task Force was passed in the House companion bill, House Bill 228.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Gray-Jackson, Tobin*

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## **Extending Alaska’s Senior Benefits Program**

*Sponsored by: Sen Scott Kawasaki*

Alaska’s Senior Benefits program serves the pioneers who built Alaska. Through their efforts, we live in one of the richest states in the union. It has always been an Alaskan priority to provide the opportunity for elder Alaskans to be able to stay here and live and play with their grandchildren.

[Senate Bill 170](#) extends Alaska’s Senior Benefits program until June 30, 2034 to support low-income seniors

across the state. The successor to the Longevity Bonus created in 1972, the Senior Benefits program protects low-income seniors by providing them with modest monthly cash assistance to pay for expenses like food, heating, electricity, transportation, and prescription medication. The program was established in 2007 and currently aids nearly 9,000 Alaskans aged 65 and older with incomes at 75, 100, and 175 percent of the federal poverty level. The assistance can range from \$76 to \$250 a month for eligible seniors.

Senate Bill 170 passed as an amendment to Senate Bill 147.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Wielechowski, Tobin, Kiehl, Wilson, Dunbar, Gray-Jackson, Stevens, Merrick, Claman, Bishop, Stedman, Olson, Giessel, Kaufman*

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## **Honor and Remember Flag and Honor and Sacrifice Flag**

*Sponsored by: Sen. Jesse Bjorkman*

[Senate Bill 174](#) creates two state symbols, the Honor and Remember Flag and the Honor and Sacrifice Flag, to honor those who lost their lives in the line of duty serving in the U.S. armed forces, or as police officers or firefighters and their families. Recognizing the limited accessibility of monuments and memorials, these flags aim to provide a widely visible and official emblem acknowledging the sacrifices made by service members and the ongoing loss experienced by their families. With twenty-seven states already adopting the Honor and Remember Flag, SB 174 outlines the specifications for these flags in state law, detailing where and when they may be flown without imposing additional costs on the state.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Kaufman, Hughes, Myers, Dunbar, Gray-Jackson, Merrick, Bishop, Claman, Stevens*

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## **Prohibiting Transfer Tax on Property**

*Sponsored by: Sen Jesse Bjorkman*

[Senate Bill 179](#) is the result of numerous conversations with realtors from around the state as well as representatives of municipalities. The legislation proposes to prohibit municipalities and the state from imposing a transfer tax, fees or other assessments on sales, grants assignments or transfer of real property.

Imposing these taxes increases the cost of purchasing a home, the largest investment most Alaskans will make in their lifetime. Implementing transfer fees or taxes simply increases the upfront cost of those purchases.

Increasing the overall cost to home sellers and buyers will dampen all home and property sales. The additional burden of these types of taxes has a negative impact on young, first-time home buyers as they begin to raise their families. Seniors on fixed incomes lose retirement income as the equity in their homes is reduced.

*Co-Sponsors: Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson*

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## **Workers Compensation Guaranty Fund**

*Sponsored by: Senate Labor and Commerce*

[Senate Bill 183](#) aims to ensure timely payment of workers' compensation claims by exempting the Workers' Compensation Benefits Guaranty Fund from the annual budget sweeps mandated by Article IX, Section 17 of the Alaska Constitution. These sweeps have previously rendered the Fund insolvent, causing delays of up

to six months for injured employees awaiting benefits. The Fund, established in 2005, is financed through penalties from uninsured employers and recoveries, intended to assist employees when their employers fail to provide required insurance. Although the Fund was sufficiently balanced before FY21, a \$3.1 million sweep depleted it, leading to delayed payments. Supplemental budget allocations have been slow to rectify this, demonstrating that including the Fund in the sweep provision disrupts its purpose with negligible fiscal benefit to the state.

Senate Bill 183 passed as an amendment to Senate Bill 147.

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## **Extending the Alaska Commission on Aging**

*Sponsored by: Senator Scott Kawasaki*

[Senate Bill 189](#) extends the Alaska Commission of Aging for eight years until June 30, 2032. Alaska's senior population, the fastest-growing per capita in the United States, has surged by 62.3% between 2010 and 2021, resulting in a rise in seniors living below the poverty line alongside increased mortality rates, particularly in areas like senior suicide, fatal falls, and alcohol-induced deaths. The Commission plays a crucial role in addressing these challenges by collecting data, proposing solutions, and serving as an advisory council for federal funding. Senate Bill 189 was supported by numerous organizations including AARP and Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Tobin, Gray-Jackson, Stevens*

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## **Employer Drug and Alcohol Testing Through Saliva**

*Sponsored by: Senate Labor & Commerce*

[Senate Bill 196](#) adds oral fluid, or saliva, to the list of samples an employer may collect from an employee for drug and alcohol testing. While an employer could already choose to collect an oral fluid sample instead of a urine or breath sample, adding the collection of oral fluid in this section of statute protects the employer from legal claims related to drug or alcohol testing and subsequent employment actions.

Collecting urine or breath samples for job-related testing can have drawbacks. Using an oral fluid sample mitigates the challenges of these other methods. Collecting or testing a urine sample can require traveling to an off-site facility, and urine samples are susceptible to cheating unless the sample collection is observed by another person.

In contrast, oral fluid is collected with a swab, can be easily collected at the job site without needing a restroom, and can be certain to be from the employee without significantly invading their privacy.

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## **AHFC Property Purchase to Enhance Maintenance Operations**

*Sponsored by: Sen James Kaufman*

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) manages over 1,600 units of public housing across 13 communities in Alaska, with Anchorage as its maintenance hub. Facing challenges with storage due to vandalism and theft from shipping containers, [Senate Bill 205](#) authorizes AHFC to purchase a property at 700 Bragaw Street, which they have been renting since September 2023. This property includes office space, a warehouse,

and storage yard, providing an opportunity for AHFC to improve maintenance operations, equipment storage, and staff training. Funding for the purchase would come from federal funds and existing assets, pending approval from the legislative branch. AHFC aims to acquire the property in 2024, enhancing its ability to address maintenance needs and streamline operations across its housing portfolio.

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## Return to Work Program for Injured Workers

*Sponsored by: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson*

[Senate Bill 206](#) proposes the establishment of a voluntary program in Alaska aimed at assisting injured workers to return to work swiftly and efficiently, either to their original position or a modified one with the same employer. By facilitating communication between insurers, rehabilitation specialists, and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the program aims to provide necessary support and resources to workers facing injuries or illnesses, thereby reducing time away from work and ensuring continued career progression despite health challenges. Modeled after successful initiatives in states like Oregon and Montana, this legislation promises to bolster Alaska's workforce stability, alleviate the economic burden of prolonged absences, and foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

Senate Bill 206 passed as an amendment to SB 147.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Dunbar, Kaufman*

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## Establishing the Military and Veteran Family Help Desk

*Sponsored by: Sen Scott Kawasaki*

[Senate Bill 207](#) establishes a military and veteran family help desk within Alaska's Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, mirroring initiatives in Washington and Virginia. With Alaska's significant military population, constituting about 7% of the total populace, and their nomadic lifestyle, the help desk aims to bridge the gap between military families and essential state services. Recognizing the diverse needs of military families, the help desk will serve as a centralized point of contact, facilitating access to services such as employment assistance for military spouses, educational resources, and navigating various state-specific requirements. By prioritizing the employment of military spouses and inclusivity for family members, the legislation aims to better serve those who have served Alaska.

Senate Bill 207 was passed as an amendment to Senate Bill 154.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Tobin, Bjorkman, Gray-Jackson, Dunbar, Merrick*

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## Teacher Certification Incentive

*Sponsored by: Sen Jesse Bjorkman*

[Senate Bill 215](#) aims to retain highly qualified teachers in Alaska by incentivizing membership in the National Board of Certified Teachers, a rigorous program emphasizing content knowledge, personalized teaching, continuous improvement, and effective implementation of teaching methods. Alaska teachers who obtain the certification is eligible for an annual \$5,000 bonus. Such teachers are crucial for the diverse student population in the state. The legislation addresses recruitment, retention, and educational outcomes, urging support to



retain certified teachers and encourage more to pursue certification.

Senate Bill 215 passed as an amendment to House Bill 230.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Kaufman, Giessel, Bishop, Merrick, Stevens*

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## **Grants for Natural Disaster Relief**

*Sponsored by: Sen. Jesse Kiehl*

[Senate Bill 236](#) addresses the inadequacy of state aid for Alaskans affected by non-federally declared disasters, such as increasing relief from \$21,000 to either \$50,000 or half of the federal relief, whichever is greater. Additionally, it enables condo owners to utilize state aid for condo-wide damage expenses, providing crucial flexibility for recovery efforts in the face of natural disasters, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by Alaskans in rebuilding their lives post-disaster.

The sections authorizing condo owners to utilize state aid was passed as an amendment in House Bill 345.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Bishop, Claman, Dunbar*

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## **Transparency and Fairness in Property Tax Assessments**

*Sponsored by: Sen. Jesse Kiehl*

[Senate Bill 242](#) ensures transparency and fairness in property tax assessments for Alaskans by setting baseline standards for property value assessments and allowing municipalities to adopt their own standards if necessary. It mandates that tax appeals be heard by an appointed Board of Equalization instead of elected officials to prevent conflicts of interest, though municipalities can opt out if they cannot fill these positions. The bill prohibits increasing assessed values during the appeal process to protect taxpayers' rights, requires Boards of Equalization to provide explanations when disagreeing with recent appraisals, and ensures that assessors possess the necessary experience and credentials.

*Co-Sponsor: Senator Kaufman*

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## **Establishing May as ALS Awareness Month**

*Sponsored by: Senate State Affairs Committee*

On a national level, the month of May is recognized as ALS Awareness Month. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease was first identified in 1869. In the 155 years since, there is still no effective treatment and no cure. ALS is a neurodegenerative disease that affects the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord that control voluntary muscle movement and breathing and is a 100% fatal disease. There is no cure for ALS, and it affects approximately 5 in 100,000 people. Approximately 30,000 people in the United States are currently living with ALS, and approximately 60 people in Alaska are currently living with ALS.

[Senate Bill 256](#) took the National recognition and established it here in Alaska to further our awareness of the disease. Raising awareness and the need for funding for research will help further developments towards a treatment that stops the progression of ALS.

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## **PFD for Wrongfully Convicted Alaskans**

*Sponsored by: Senate State Affairs*

[Senate Bill 258](#) allocates Permanent Fund Dividends (PFDs) to Alaskans whose convictions were overturned, with exceptions for cases involving plea agreements. This measure aims to assist wrongfully convicted individuals in rebuilding their lives by providing financial support for essentials like housing and education.

Senate Bill 258 was passed as an amendment in House Bill 28.

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## **Railbelt Transmission and Energy Production**

[Senate Bill 307](#) aims to eliminate “wheeling” rates, which are transmission costs charged by utilities, and extend tax benefits to independent power producers. This legislation seeks to reduce electricity costs and foster energy development, directly benefiting constituents facing some of the highest electricity prices in the nation. The bill also supports the \$413 million Grid Resilience Innovation Partnership (GRIP) project, enhancing the transmission capabilities of Bradley Lake and other power sources.

Key provisions include the creation of a Railbelt Transmission Organization (RTO) based on the successful Bradley Lake Project Management Committee model, setting uniform standards for transmission costs, and establishing deadlines with oversight from the Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA). Additionally, the bill provides funding for RCA staff and commissioners, raises qualification standards for RCA members, and forms a new board of directors for the Alaska Energy Authority. These measures collectively strengthen the state’s energy regulatory framework and promote collaboration among stakeholders to achieve fair and efficient energy solutions.

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## **Facilitation of Accessible Behavioral Health Care**

*Sponsored by: Senator Forrest Dunbar*

[Senate Concurrent Resolution 9](#) advocates for the enactment of parity standard regulations in Alaska to facilitate accessible behavioral health care. These regulations would mandate private insurers, including Medicaid, to cover behavioral health services with the same ease and speed as physical health care, eliminating obstacles like excessive paperwork, stigma, outdated insurance rules, and care limitations. By implementing these regulations, the transition between physical and behavioral health services would be seamless, allowing more focus on patient treatment rather than administrative tasks. The anticipated benefits include efficient and cost-effective care, reduced dependence on emergency rooms and correctional facilities, increased participation of Medicaid providers, improved care coordination, and evidence-based programs, ensuring that Alaskans receive behavioral health services under equitable terms comparable to medical and surgical care.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Claman, Kiehl, Tobin*

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## **Seafood Industry Task Force**

*Sponsored by: Senate Finance*

[Senate Concurrent Resolution 10](#) establishes the Joint Legislative Seafood Industry Task Force to address

the economic challenges facing the state's seafood industry. With the industry being a significant contributor to both rural and urban economies, the task force aims to develop a long-term vision and strategic plan for the industry's sustainability. It will evaluate governmental policy options, community impacts, market coordination, product development incentives, marketing efforts, and quality improvement measures. Comprising legislators, industry representatives, tribal members, and ex officio officials, the task force will work towards supporting the statewide seafood industry as a whole. It must submit its findings and recommendations to the legislature by January 21, 2025, before its termination on February 1, 2025.

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## Urging Congress to Amend Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act

*Sponsored by: Sen Forrest Dunbar*

[Senate Joint Resolution 13](#) acknowledges the historical context of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971, which required Alaska Native village corporations to convey land for future municipal use. However, despite this requirement, only a few villages have incorporated, leaving much land unused. Recognizing that this mandate inhibits economic development, the resolution urges Congress to pass the Alaska Native Village Municipal Lands Restoration Act of 2023, or similar legislation, which would restore control of the land to the Alaska Native village corporations. It also calls upon the President to sign such legislation into law, aiming to empower these communities for economic prosperity and self-sufficiency by allowing them to determine the best use of their land and resources.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Giessel, Olson, Gray-Jackson, Claman, Bishop, Wielechowski, Kawasaki, Tobin, Stedman, Stevens*

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## Support Alaska's Seafood Industry

*Sponsored by: Sen Click Bishop*

Alaska's seafood industry is crucial for its economy, benefiting various stakeholders from fishermen to coastal communities. Despite being a major contributor to the U.S. seafood harvest and global seafood production, challenges like high interest rates, inflation, and competition from farmed fish threaten its economic viability. [Senate Joint Resolution 14](#) advocates for equitable treatment of Alaska seafood by the federal government, proposing the establishment of an Office of Seafood Policy and Program Integration within the USDA to address issues like limited access to federal support programs. The resolution also calls for greater federal cooperation and support mechanisms, including addressing unbalanced tariffs, to ensure the industry's survival amidst economic challenges.

*Co-Sponsors: Senators Bjorkman, Claman, Hoffman, Giessel, Stevens, Dunbar, Merrick, Kiehl, Tobin, Wilson, Gray-Jackson, Olson, Kaufman, Stedman, Wielechowski, Kawasaki*

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## Improving Aviation Safety in Alaska

*Sponsored by: Senate Community & Regional Affairs*

[Senate Joint Resolution 20](#) urges the United States Congress to address the frequent outages experienced by Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) and Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) stations in Alaska. It highlights the critical role of these stations, particularly in rural communities heavily reliant on aviation for essential supplies and services. The resolution calls for specific actions to enhance the reliability

and functionality of these weather stations, including ensuring spare part availability, establishing redundancy measures, and authorizing state involvement in maintenance. Additionally, it urges collaboration between federal agencies and Alaska’s representatives to address these issues comprehensively within the Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative.

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## **Carbon Capture**

**House Bill 50** aims to tackle the challenges of carbon emissions, energy independence, and renewable energy exploration. House Bill 50 focuses on carbon capture and storage, granting the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) the authority to lease state lands for the storage of CO<sub>2</sub>. Additionally, the bill authorizes the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (AOGCC) to regulate CO<sub>2</sub> storage, ensuring environmental and correlative rights protection.

Meanwhile, HB50 also includes Reserve-Based Lending, which aims to help bolster Cook Inlet oil and gas production and mitigate the risk of relying on costly imported liquified natural gas (LNG). The program would be administered by AIDEA and would provide loans to oil and gas producing companies based on the value of oil and gas reserves.

In tandem with these efforts, HB 50 also modernizes Alaska’s geothermal exploration program, aligning it with the state’s renewable energy goals. By extending exploration opportunities and simplifying the leasing process, the bill aims to stimulate job creation in the clean energy sector and provide affordable, renewable energy to rural communities.

Overall, these legislative initiatives signify Alaska’s commitment to addressing energy challenges while promoting economic growth and environmental sustainability. By embracing carbon capture, supporting local energy production, and investing in renewable resources, the state is taking significant steps towards securing a stable and self-reliant energy future for its residents.

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# Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Priorities

## House Bill 268 – State Operating Budget

### Education Items:

- \$174.7 million outside the BSA formula increase (equivalent to a \$680 BSA increase).
- \$7.3 million for Pupil Transportation.
- \$5.2 million for K-3 reading, distributed using the House’s method.
- Good Governance:
- \$20 million for fire suppression.
- \$15.5 million added to the disaster relief fund.
- \$20 million ‘back-stop’ language for AMHS.
- \$11.9 million added for Maintenance of Equity.
- Community Assistance Fund:
- Fully capitalized, paying out \$30 million in FY25 and FY26.
- Permanent Fund:
- 75/25 PFD: \$914.3 million for a PFD of \$1,360 per person, plus \$295 Energy relief totaling \$1,655 per person in the fall of 2024.
- Inflation Proofing: \$1 billion capped the transfer from ERA to the Principal.
- FY25 ‘Waterfall’ Language:
- \$78/barrel oil: Spring Forecast triggering roughly \$135 million available for surplus, supplementals, or disparity tests.
- \$81-\$93/barrel oil: The next \$645 million will be allocated between FY26 energy relief payments and the Statutory Budget Reserve, capped at \$500 per energy relief check.
- Over \$94/barrel oil: Revenue directed to the Constitutional Budget Reserve.
- Department of Administration:
- Added \$1.2 million UGF for rural Public Broadcasting to provide for emergency communication capability.

### Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development:

- Added \$4 million UGF grant to the Municipality of Anchorage for summer operations of the municipal homeless shelter.
- Added \$5 million UGF for Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) - \$2.5 million from Capital budget.
- Added \$10 million UGF, \$10 million seafood industry taxes and \$7.35 million Fed to Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI).

- ASMI/ATIA Cooperative language, using \$1.5 million each (\$3 million total to jointly market Alaska Seafood and Alaska as a tourism destination).
- \$2.5 million for the Alaska Gasline Development Corporation (AGDC). The Conference Committee also added intent language that directs AGDC to procure a third-party analysis of its pipeline proposal to determine its economic value to Alaska.

### **Department of Corrections**

- \$526.9 thousand UGF was added to enable the Hooper Bay Community Jail to reopen.

### **Department of Education and Early Development:**

- Added \$5.2 million UGF for Head Start to match Federal funds.
- \$500,000 for Mt. Edgecumbe students to travel home for Christmas.
- \$500.0 UGF grant funding was added for each of the following purposes: Hunter Education and Alaska Resources Education.

### **Fish and Game**

- \$430.0 UGF for increased research:
- \$45.0 OTI start-up costs for the Chelatna fish weir
- \$85.0 for three seasonal positions to support the Chelatna fish weir
- \$300.0 for Coho Salmon Genetic Testing in Upper Cook Inlet (FY25-FY30)
- \$455.0 to reestablish the Division of Subsistence
- \$250.0 and one PCN to restore the Director position.
- \$205.0 for travel, services, and commodities

### **Department of Health:**

- Added \$1.5 million for Senior and Disabilities community-based grants, meals on wheels, and senior transportation services.
- Added \$1.5 million for Adult Day Services for grants to senior centers.
- Added \$7.5 million UGF for grants to childcare providers.
- Added \$10 million (\$5 million UGF, \$5 million Fed) to increase the reimbursement rates for in-home and personal care assistant services.
- Added \$250.1 GF Match and \$268.2 Federal Receipts to increase reimbursement rates for Autism Services

### **Department of Law:**

- Structural changes in the Civil Division.
- \$500.0 for Statehood Defense
- Military and Veterans' Affairs

- Added two positions (Accounting Tech II and Veterans' Services Officer) for a total UGF increase of \$93.4.

#### **Department of Natural Resources:**

- Restructured funding for fire suppression activity by “resurrecting” the Fire Suppression Fund.
- \$1.8 million in pay/salary increases for firefighters.

#### **Department of Public Safety:**

- \$3.7 million UGF to maintain support to the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

#### **Department of Revenue:**

- Created a new appropriation for the Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation Anchorage Office Operations, with funding of \$100 (whole dollars) to decommission the Anchorage Office.

#### **Department of Transportation and Public Facilities:**

- \$1.3 million UGF for Central Region hiring and recruitment of highways and aviation staff (i.e. Anchorage snowplow drivers).
- \$8.4 million SDPR for road and bridge maintenance related to the Manh Choh gold mine.

#### **University**

- • \$20 million for R-1 research (\$12.5 M higher ed fund, \$5.4 UGF, \$2.1 Univ Receipts)
- • \$416.0 UGF for campus safety and security at UAA
- • \$3.9 million for fixed cost increases (above the Gov. request)

#### **Judiciary**

- Added \$252.6 UGF for Court Security Screeners to increase pay and attract/retain screeners.

## Senate Bill 187 – State Capital Budget

- \$68 million to K-12 and the University of Alaska for deferred maintenance:
- \$9 million for K-12 school construction for the top 2 schools on the school construction list, Newtok and Minto, and design and foundation funds for Nelson Island;
- \$63 million for school projects 1-26 on the major maintenance list, including two projects for Mt. Edgecumbe High School;
- \$28 million for the University of Alaska for projects 1-8 on their major maintenance list.
- \$30 million for professional housing and weatherization.
- \$15 million for life and health safety.
- \$9.7 million to leverage federal grant funding.
- \$8 million to the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for the state’s federal harbor matching funds, and additional resources if a state-owned harbor needs emergency fixes to avoid liabilities.
- \$7.5 million for food security.
- \$75 million for infrastructure projects across the state.