

Legislative Update



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For Immediate Release:

Greetings,

It's week four of this Legislative session. This week, the Senate Finance Committee received presentations from the Department of Revenue on the status of the State's debt and received a presentation from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

In addition, the committee heard the following bills: SB 141: Naming the Raymond & Esther Conquest Bridge over the Wood River, which runs between Dillingham and Aleknagik. And SB 24: Public Schools Mental Health Education and SB 125: Ak Housing Finance Corporation, Sustain Energy. All bills remain in the committee for further consideration.

The House and the Senate met in a joint session this week to hear the State of the Judiciary from Chief Justice Peter Maassen. One item of interest he mentioned was a new pilot program the Courts started in Bethel last November, allowing jury selection by videoconference in civil cases and criminal misdemeanor cases. This method eases the expense for the courts and the inconvenience for a potential juror, from having to travel to Bethel to see whether they would be among the chosen few who would serve duty.

Chief Justice Maassen also discussed that last June, the court issued an order creating a new rule for Child in need of Aid cases. This rule creates a uniform process for Tribe's intervention in cases involving children who are subject to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Federal law gives a child's Tribe the right to participate in the proceedings, but the court did not have a uniform way of recognizing that right. CINA Rule 26 establishes that all the Tribe needs to do is notify the court of its intent to participate, no motion or other formality is required.

The Senate Finance Subcommittees will begin their work on the agencies FY25 Operating budget soon. The House Finance subcommittees have already started. Next week, US Senator Lisa Murkowski will come before the Legislature to give her annual address.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lyman Hoffman".



Senator Hoffman and Senator Stedman addressed Lisa Parady and Alaska Council of School Administrators from across all of Alaska in Senate Finance on 2-5-24

2024 First Lady Volunteer Awards Nomination Period Now Open

First Lady Rose Dunleavy opened the nomination period from February 8th to March 7th this year. Started in 1975 by First Lady Bella Hammond to recognize and pay tribute to exceptional volunteers who have made an extraordinary contribution within their community.

Nominations can be submitted online at volunteeraward.alaska.gov or by submitting paper applications that are available to pick up in person at the Governor's offices in Anchorage, Juneau, Soldotna, Fairbanks and Palmer.

The First Lady Volunteer Awards ceremony and luncheon will be tentatively held at the Governor's residence in Juneau this spring.

**Apply for you 2024 PFD Deadline
to apply Is March 31, 2024**

[Welcome to the 2024 PFD Online Application](#)