

# Alaska State Legislature



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SENATE PRESIDENT PETE KELLY

April 12, 2017

Dear Speaker Edgmon,

*Bryce*

We are fast approaching Day 90 of this first session of the 30<sup>th</sup> Legislature, with substantial work unresolved to address the serious matters Alaskans expect us to address. The Senate Majority is willing to remain in session beyond Day 90 to actively engage in legislation that resolves our fiscal problems. This legislation includes:

- Restructuring the earnings from the Permanent Fund to pay dividends and to provide some support to government: The Senate delivered a plan, SB 26, to the House on March 15. The Senate awaits a House version of this critical legislation.
- Operating and capital budgets: The operating budget was returned to the House, and we waited five days for House action. The capital budget, as is typical, will be held in Senate Finance until our other business is concluded, in order to accommodate final financial decisions.
- Budget-related issues: These include consideration of a motor fuel tax (SB25, HB 60); freezing state workers' pay (SB 31, HB 71); limiting exposure related to pension obligation bonds (SB97); oil and gas tax credit reform (HB 111), and legislation supporting education (SB 102, 103 and 104).

Acknowledging that the Senate and House have worked diligently on difficult fiscal matters the past 85 days, we are also prepared to continue work on several key bills that are time-sensitive or particularly critical for the constituents we represent. These include:

- SB 34/HB 74, Real ID
- SB 54 and SB 55, public safety
- SB 48/HB 23, providing insurance for families of deceased public safety officers
- SB 79/HB159, addressing the opioid epidemic

- SB88, Mental Health Land Trust exchange authorization
- HB 141, Alaska Technical and Vocational Education Program

We may entertain other measures deemed in the best interest of Alaska. Additionally, we will work with you to set a date to meet in joint session to confirm the Governor's appointees.

Like the House and the Governor, the Senate is committed to completing the work before us. However, the Senate does not intend to remain in session longer than necessary to accomplish the work Alaskans demand of us. Every additional day in Juneau is a cost to our treasury. Consideration of a range of other legislative issues is a distraction from a timely resolution of our fiscal problems. We believe we must act to define the scope of legislative work if we are to proceed beyond Day 90, and look forward to your concurrence.

Pete Kelly

