

Hot Sheet

March 5, 2025



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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

With Anchorage Municipal Elections coming up on April 1st, Labor Walks are ongoing every Saturday at 10am at the IBEW Hall in midtown Anchorage.

As we enter the middle part of the legislative session, many legislators are returning home to their districts to host constituent town halls. Please check your local legislator's social media or official channels to learn where and when these may be and attend if you can. Legislators need to hear from their constituents on the issues that matter.

Join the United Academics, Local 4996 and community members in Fairbanks and Juneau for the Stand up for Science Rally on March 7 at 12pm - the location in Fairbanks is the corner of Geist and University. The location in Juneau is the State Capitol.

The Budgets

The Senate Finance Committee: On Wednesday, March 5, the Committee heard a presentation on Medicaid enrollment and spending in Alaska from the Department of Health. This topic is very timely given the likelihood of federal Medicaid cuts, which was covered in last week's Hot Sheet. On Thursday, March 6, the Committee heard two revenue bills (SB 73 and SB 113) and Sen. Hoffman's SB 109 which is the proposed 25-75 Permanent Fund POMV split.

The House Finance Committee: Department Finance Subcommittees are completing their closeouts as the budget process advances. On Tuesday, March 4, the Committee heard the FY 26 budget for the Department of Commerce. On Wednesday, March 5, the Committee heard a presentation on the three-year budget outlook from Alexei Painter, Director, Legislative Finance Division. Later this week the Committee is expected to hear closeout reports.

Alaska House and Senate Bills

Public Education Updates: The House Rules Committee held a rare meeting on Wednesday, March 5 in order to introduce a committee substitute and hear amendments to Rep. Himschoot's HB 69 (EDUCATION FUNDING: INCREASE BSA). The committee heard several amendments from members of the minority and voted down nearly all of them, except for one from Minority Leader Costello which would allocate funds for the Alaska Reads Act. The bill was moved out of committee on a 5-2 vote and is expected to be heard on the floor soon.

Revenue Bills: A number of revenue bills have been introduced in the Senate. This includes Sen. Yundt's SB 92 (CORP. INCOME TAX; OIL & GAS ENTITIES) which would close the S-Corp loophole and has been heard in the Senate Resources Committee; Sen. Claman's SB 73 (MARIJUANA: TAX/REGISTRATION; INCOME TAX), and the Senate Rules Committee SB 113 (APPORTION TAXABLE INCOME; DIGITAL BUSINESS). The Senate has said new revenue will be necessary to fund the budget given ongoing Finance Committee conversations.

HB 71: Governor Dunleavy again introduced his anti-free speech bill designed to curtail public protests, HB 71 (OBSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN PUBLIC PLACES). The bill received several hearings last year, and was widely criticized for being too broad and infringing upon Alaskans' first amendment rights. Attorney General Greg Taylor wrote a hearing request to House Transportation Committee co-chairs Rep. Carrick and Eischeid and will be heard on 3/6 at 1pm.

Hot Button Issue

Governor Dunleavy proposes Constitutional Amendment to upend Alaska

Judiciary: The Amendment would give future governors more power when picking judges for the Alaska Court System and make the process more partisan. We have a nationally renowned system for evaluating and selecting state judges. Any Constitutional Amendment would have to pass the legislature before going to the voters in order to be enacted. There have been no hearings on either to date. The Alaska AFL-CIO strongly opposes this proposed Constitutional Amendment.