

## **Turnagain Community Council- Senator Gray-Jackson's Report**

**May 2, 2019**

- **Today, May 2, 2019, marks the 108<sup>th</sup> day of the Thirty-First Legislature, first session. As the end of Legislative session approaches, lawmakers have expressed differing views on whether the job will get done providing the services our citizens deserve and on time. We're confident that the Legislature will get a budget to Gov. Mike Dunleavy which includes a robust package of crime bills by the 121st day of the Session - May 15th. The constitutional limit for sessions is 121 days, but the Governor or Legislature can call a special session of up to 30 days.**
- **The Permanent Fund Dividend amount remains a major question mark during this session.**
- **I serve on three Finance Sub-Committees – Labor and Workforce Development, Commerce, Community and Economic Development, and Health and Social Services. The process was long with these Departments coming before the Committees to outline its budgets but, it finally ended with the last close-out (budget recommendations) occurring on April 18, 2019.**
- **Legislators gathered in a joint session of the House and Senate on Wednesday April 17, 2019, to either confirm or deny Gov. Mike Dunleavy's choices for Commissioners of the major State departments. It was an interesting eight hours of discussion, debate and opposition. All 13 of Governor Dunleavy's cabinet nominations were approved. Of the nearly 100 board and commission appointees, six failed to get the 31 votes needed.**

- It was an honor to surprise my dear friend, Dick Traini, on his last day serving on the Anchorage Assembly, with an Alaska Legislature Citation honoring his service and contribution to the community of Anchorage for nearly 20 years. During Dick’s service to the people of Anchorage, he was known for having an excellent record of working with his colleagues and has always placed his constituents’ priorities above all else. He will be missed, but I know first-hand *“He’ll be back!”*
- On Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, I was honored to have my bill recognizing February as Black History Month, unanimously approved and without debate. I cannot express my gratitude for the support from my colleagues and Senate President Giessel for moving the Bill forward.
- Also, on Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, I was honored and pleased that the Senate unanimously passed my resolution recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Alaska, unfortunately, leads the nation in domestic violence and sexual assault with nearly 60% of Alaskan women experiencing partner violence, sexual assault, or both. Designating April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month will bring greater attention and education to all Alaskans and public support for victims of sexual assault.
- I hope you are enjoying my monthly E-newsletter. If you’re not receiving them, please send your email address to my staff at [Keith.Bauguess@akleg.gov](mailto:Keith.Bauguess@akleg.gov).