



**Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
North Star Community Council
February 9, 2022**

Happy Black History Month Everyone!

I want to take a moment and reflect on this month-long celebration of Black History Month. I was honored to see the passage of Senate Bill 40, an act establishing the month of February, each year, as Black History Month. This month honors and recognizes the contributions that African Americans have made in Alaska and the United States.

Ranked Choice Voting

On January 19th, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled that Alaska's new ranked-choice voting system and non-partisan primaries are legal and can be used for the 2022 elections.

How does Ranked Choice Voting works?

In each race, voters will rank their choices in order of preference. The top four candidates who advanced from the primary election will appear on the General Election the ballot. If voters would like to vote for a write-in candidate, they may do so and include that candidate in the ranking. For a candidate to win, they must receive a majority (50% + 1 vote) of total votes cast. If no candidate receives most votes in the first round of counting, more rounds of counting continue until a candidate reaches a majority.

How are votes counted in Round 1?

Only the vote for your 1st choice candidate is counted.

- If a candidate receives more than 50% of first-choice votes, that candidate wins.
- If no candidate wins in Round 1, the counting goes to Round 2.

How are votes counted in Round 2 and subsequent rounds?

The last place candidate from each race in Round 1 is eliminated and their supporter's 2nd choice selection is allocated to the remaining candidates on the ballot. This vote redistribution process continues until one candidate reaches over 50% of the votes or until there are two candidates remaining and the candidate with the most votes, wins. In each round of counting, each voter gets one vote. You can find additional information at <https://www.elections.alaska.gov/>

Committee Membership

I continue to sit on the following committees:

- Alternate [Senate Comprehensive Fiscal Plan Working Group](#)
- Member [Senate Health & Social Services \(Fin Sub\)](#)
- Member [Senate Commerce, Community & Economic Dev \(Fin Sub\)](#)
- Member [Senate Community & Regional Affairs](#)
- Member [Senate Labor & Commerce](#)

State of the State Address

On January 25th, 2022, Governor Mike Dunleavy gave his fourth State of the State speech.

A few of his speech's highlights are:

- How he envisioned Alaska as a state that is a leader in renewable energy.
- He sees Alaska finally developing its vast stores of natural gas on the North Slope.
- He also called for the settling of the dividend issue.
- The Governor spoke of the redistricting plan what is currently under litigation, and where 59 of the Legislature's 60 members face election this year: including himself.
- The Governor spoke of his administration's handling of the pandemic, as its goal is to make sure our healthcare system is strong and that we have the tools available for each of us to take care of ourselves.
- Governor Dunleavy talked about how oil prices in the recent months have been among their highest levels during his administration.
- Dunleavy also urged lawmakers to prove to Alaskans wrong who think nothing will get done this is an election year.
- Speaking of his vision, Governor Dunleavy said that that "The test is going to be, how serious is that vision and is the administration going to put the work in on being here in the Capitol for the next 90 days, guiding us through and working with us."

I was honored to have SB 80 "An Act relating to mental health education," heard in the Finance Committee on Feb. 8th. The bill was held for later discussion.

Always representing your interests!



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