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From: pl hamlett [plhamlett@hotmail.com]
Sent: Friday, May 28, 2010 6:19 PM
To: info@communitycouncils.org
Subject: FW: Berta's Briefings: New Ethics Opinion - Legislative Campaign Activity While on State Paid Travel

Mark ---

pls fwd to CPCC members

thanks
PETER HAMLETT
CPCC Chair

From: Representative_Berta_Gardner@legis.state.ak.us
To: Representative_Berta_Gardner@legis.state.ak.us
Date: Fri, 28 May 2010 14:23:41 -0800
Subject: Berta's Briefings: New Ethics Opinion - Legislative Campaign Activity While on State Paid Travel



BERTA'S BRIEFINGS

Representative Berta Gardner

Serving Geneva Woods, College Village, Green Acres, Tudor, Taku
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May 28, 2010

New Ethics Opinion: Legislative Campaign Activity While on State Paid Travel

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

On May 27, the Legislative Ethics Committee met to reconsider a previous decision about legislative campaign activity while on state paid travel. Our statutes are very clear that state resources can never be used for partisan political activity, and last year the Legislative Ethics Committee, of which I am a member, issued an opinion saying that legislators cannot do **any** campaign activity while traveling on the state's dime. I agreed with that opinion then and I still do.

I am on vacation with my family right now and did not participate in yesterday's meeting when the Committee reversed the previous decision. I want to be absolutely clear that I do not support legislators campaigning while traveling on state business.

It is my view that in the matter of using state resources of any sort, the appearance of impropriety can be as damaging as actual bad behavior because it destroys public confidence in government. For this reason, we need to have a firm, bright line between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and we must all agree to stay on the right side of that line.

The legal opinion does not provide that necessary bright line and creates a poor impression. It says, "If the legislator gives as his or her primary purpose travelling to and from the Legislative session, visiting constituents, or engaging in other legislative business, (then) they should not be barred from engaging in other incidental activities like political campaigning or partisan political activity during the trip." We can never really know another person's motives. We can only know his or her actions and behavior.

A legislator who has the opportunity campaign while traveling on the state's dime has an unfair advantage over other candidates, regardless of which activity is the motivation for the trip. Campaigning and paid state travel need to be kept absolutely separate.

Memorial Day



Representative Gardner congratulates the students at Polaris K-12 during the bill signing of HB 14 for all their efforts on designating the state dog the Alaskan Malamute.

It is that time of year that we give remembrance to those who have served in the armed forces. There are many ways that we decide to take advantage of the three day weekend whether it is camping, fishing, or relaxing at your home with your friends and family. But when Monday comes along, let's be sure to remember those who have served in the armed forces. I'm Berta and I'm Still Listening...

Berta

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