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**From:** pl hamlett [plhamlett@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 23, 2012 2:23 PM  
**To:** info@communitycouncils.org  
**Subject:** FW: Berta's Briefings: Issues People Care About

Mark,

pls fwd to CPCC members

Thanks  
PETER HAMLETT  
CPCC Chair

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From: [Representative Berta Gardner@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Representative_Berta_Gardner@legis.state.ak.us)  
To: [Representative Berta Gardner@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Representative_Berta_Gardner@legis.state.ak.us)  
Subject: Berta's Briefings: Issues People Care About  
Date: Wed, 22 Feb 2012 01:28:43 +0000



## **BERTA'S BRIEFINGS**

### REPRESENTATIVE BERTA GARDNER

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**FEBRUARY 21, 2012**

## **Issues People Care About**

Dear Friends and Neighbors,



Who says people don't follow what's going on in our state? This past Saturday, the Anchorage

Rep. Berta Gardner and Sen. Johnny Ellis enjoyed hearing what was on people's minds at last Saturday's constituent meetings.

Caucus (comprised of Anchorage-area legislators) held a public meeting to hear from people about whatever was on their minds – and then later, Senator Ellis and I held a constituent meeting for our district. The first hearing was standing room only in the Assembly Chambers and I truly appreciated the thought and preparation people put into their testimony.

Here are some of the biggest issues which people supported or opposed at the hearing:

- **Waldron Lake.** People supported continued efforts to purchase the Waldron Lake area for inclusion in our city's park system.
- **Support for Education.** There was broad support for education through early funding, inflation proofing, and teacher retention.
- **Home Energy Rating Program.** I learned that in addition to saving on energy costs for homeowners, and reducing Anchorage's draw on gas supplies, a significant number of serious safety problems were found and corrected during energy audits.
- **Engineering Building(s) for University of Alaska.** There was testimony about the need for expanded engineering facilities at both the University of Alaska's Anchorage and Fairbanks campuses. Existing facilities are bursting at the seams.
- **Autism Insurance Coverage.** Many parents, some in tears, spoke in support of mandating insurance coverage for autistic children. Parents are desperately looking for help to ensure that their children will get the help they need to avoid being institutionalized.
- **Oil Taxes.** We heard opposition to the Governor's oil-tax bill that would cost the state billions in revenue each year.
- **Knik Arm Bridge (KABATA).** There was testimony that KABATA the traffic, job and population numbers to justify the bridge were not reliable and that costs for the proposal have escalated significantly.
- **Film Tax Credits.** Many people supported extending the Film Tax Credit Program and not just because they want to see their friends in the movies. I learned from people representing a wide range of industries – from engineers to caterers to car rental operators – that the program has had a tremendous impact, particularly as the film work often comes during the shoulder season, when work for many is sorely needed.

Similarly, our constituent meeting was very well attended and neighbors had a number of thoughts on the following:

- **Again, Waldron Lake was on people's minds.**
- **Upcoming Seward Highway construction.**

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- **The bike trail under the Seward Highway.**
  - **The timing of Alaska PFDs.**
  - **Daylight Savings Time in Alaska.**

One of my favorite things about being your representative is to get out in the community and hear what's on your mind. These recent public meetings did not disappoint me. I'm Berta and I'm still listening,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Berta". The letter "B" is large and loops around the "e" and "r".

### ***Quote of the Week***

What sort of business would you start or project would you back if you could get the state of Alaska and federal government to assume all the fiscal risk, cover your payroll and pay a good chunk of the actual costs? But those are the terms for the Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority. The public keeps the risk and private business keeps the profit - should there ever be any. And if not, the losses? Those belong to the public, too. This is a great deal for someone, but not for taxpayers.

***-Representative Les Gara, Anchorage***

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