



**Senator Gray-Jackson's Notes
Turnagain Community Council
May 6, 2021**

Welcome May!

In my April newsletter, I included a survey regarding the various issues currently in front of the Legislature. I am hopeful that some of you had the opportunity to participate. The response from constituents and others throughout the State was great and below are some of the highlights.

Q 1. What should be the legislature's top priority for 2021?

- 47% believe addressing the budget should be legislature's top priority.
- 20% believe a constitutional amendment to protect the PFD should be a top priority.

Q 2. How should the State of Alaska address the COVID-19 pandemic?

- 23% believe in a Supplemental PFD.
- 23% believe in a Statewide mask mandate for indoor public places.

Q 3. During 2020, were you or anyone in your household unable to work or became unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

- 64% were neither unemployed nor had someone in household unemployed.
- 16% were unemployed themselves.

Q 4. How do you feel about the following revenue options for the State?

- 54% support an increase in oil and gas production tax.
- 50% oppose a Statewide sales tax.
- 59% oppose using earnings from the permanent fund.
- 51% oppose an income tax.



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Q 5. The State of Alaska is facing a deficit of over \$2 billion for the upcoming fiscal year. How do you believe the State should address this deficit?

- 32% prefer deep cuts to services, no new revenue.
- 28% prefer no more cuts, new revenue.

Q 6. How should the State fund the following services and programs in the upcoming year?

- 47% support PFD funding staying the same.
- 62% support Pioneer Home funding staying the same.
- 36% support decreased funding for the University system.
- 37% support eliminating oil tax credits funding.
- 64% support trooper funding staying the same.
- 34% support homeless services receiving an increase in funding.
- 38% support an increase in funding for addiction and behavioral health.
- 39% support Medicaid funding staying the same.
- 35% support K-12 education receiving an increase in funding.
- 39% support an increase in funding for the Marine Highway.
- 56% support senior benefits funding staying the same.

American Rescue Plan

The State of Alaska is slated to receive \$1.02 billion.

- Anchorage is slated to get \$45 million.
- School districts in Alaska will share \$358 million.
- \$152 million for emergency rental assistance.
- \$43 million for low-income heating assistance.

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- \$74 million for childcare stabilization grants.
- \$11 million for transit programs in Anchorage.

HB 76 Emergency Declaration

On March 26th, the House passed House Bill 76 (HB76). This legislation seeks to continue the necessary public funding for testing, vaccinations, and grants to re-open our economy safely. Additionally, HB76 protects access to millions of dollars in vital federal funding. The bill passed the Senate on the evening of April 28th with minor amendments. Later that evening, the House voted 25-15 to accept the Senate's changes and send the bill to the Governor's desk. As of yesterday, at 1:00p.m., it was reported that the Governor signed HB76 but ended the emergency declaration.

Senate Bills on the Move

SB 1- Chokehold Ban

- First Committee hearing scheduled for May 6th in State Affairs.

SB 4-Prohibit Peace Officer Shoot Moving Vehicle

- First Committee hearing scheduled for May 6th in State Affairs.

SB 46- Law Enforcement: Registry; Use of Force.

- First heard in Community and Regional Affairs Committee on April 20th, second hearing was on May 4th.

SB 47- Vehicle Registration/Persons W/Disability.

- Heard and moved from State Affairs and onto the Rules Committee. The bill passed unanimously on April 30, 2021 and will be heard in the House State Affairs on Thursday.

If you are not receiving my monthly newsletter, please let us know.

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