



Alaska State Legislature

Senator Matt Claman

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Serving West Anchorage

March 2024 Community Council Update

Constituent Survey— Our constituent survey focuses on the questions that face legislators each year, including which state services should receive priority. Funding prioritization is particularly important as the State continues to face financial challenges. The results of our survey will help inform us about legislation we decide to support and how to vote on key issues.

We hope you will take a moment to share your opinions. You can take the survey by using the link to our survey on my website: <https://alaskasenate.org/matt-claman/>

Education Funding Update— Last Monday, the Senate voted to accept the changes made by the House of Representatives to Senate Bill 140, a comprehensive education package. The final version of SB 140 passed the House with a vote of 38-2 and the Senate with a vote of 18-1. That version includes the following provisions:

- A \$680 Base Student Allocation increase, which is less than education advocates say is needed to maintain schools, and more than the \$300 boost first proposed by the House Majority. The \$680 increase represents the first increase in the BSA in seven years;
- \$14.5 million for home school students;
- \$10 million in additional Alaska Reads Act funding;
- A statewide charter school coordinator to help Alaskans navigate charter school application and enrollment;
- \$7.5 million designated for student transportation, which we last adjusted in 2012
- Access to millions of dollars in federal funding for improved internet for rural schools.

Governor Dunleavy warned that he may veto the bill unless the legislature amends it to include additional funding for teacher bonuses and to allow the State to approve charter schools instead of local school districts. The governor's refusal to accept a compromise could directly harm rural school districts who may miss the opportunity for substantial federal grants to improve internet access.

If the governor decides to veto the bill, the legislature may choose to override it. An override would require a 2/3 vote of the legislature in a joint session: 40 out of 60 legislators. It's uncertain whether there will be enough votes to override.

Anchorage Municipal Election— The Anchorage Municipal Election is Tuesday, April 2nd. Anchorage Elections are held by mail, with some options to vote in-person. The Municipality will mail ballots to qualified, registered Anchorage voters on March 12th, three weeks before the election. The ballots must be post marked by April 2, 2024.

To read more about the upcoming Anchorage Municipal Election, please visit the Municipal's website here: <https://www.muni.org/Departments/Assembly/Clerk/Elections/Pages/default.aspx>