

# District 11 Newsletter

Rep. John Coghill, Alaska State Capitol, Room 204, Juneau, Alaska 99801

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The Legislative Session is in high gear and things are moving along smoothly. I have been privileged to have many folks from Fairbanks pass through my office.

North Pole Middle School teacher **Barbara Nore** together with chaperone **Jamie Holladay** accompanied nine students to Juneau. These youngsters came to Juneau with the Close-Up Program.

Students included: **Kyle Ballam** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), **Panika Ellis** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), **Cohl Fell** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), **Anita Holladay** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), **Kari Nore** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), **Kristina Seidl** (8<sup>th</sup> grade), **Kandace Sellman** (7<sup>th</sup> grade), and **Ashley Stowe** (7<sup>th</sup> grade). It was a pleasure to have such an engaging group of students come to Juneau this year.

They were introduced on both the Senate and House Floors. They had a opportunity to personally meet with **Senator Therriault**, **Speaker Harris** and myself to ask questions about the legislative process. The students gained a broader view of the working of the legislature. The students were able to visit with the **State Troopers**, watch court in session and learn how the **Judges**, prosecutors, and public defenders interact. They also took a tour of the **Governor's Mansion**, the **Alaska State Museum**, **Mendenhall Glacier** and the Alaska Permanent Fund office. Lucky for the students it wasn't all work and no play. Students were able to go swimming, bowling, skating, rock climbing, shopping, and play basketball. They also spent time at Bullwinkle's Pizza playing video games and enjoyed some of the best pizza in town.

**Bob Ingalls** from Love in the Name of Christ (Love INC) was recently in Juneau looking for funding for a handicap van to transport people from North Pole to Fairbanks for medical treatment, and \$250,000 to remodel the Quality Meat Building which they purchased as a new office building.



There is a new House Page from the Fairbanks area, **Ashton Compton**. Born in Fairbanks, Ashton has lived in the Interior most of her life. She is excited about working for the Legislature and I am pleased that the Interior is represented by such a responsible, dedicated, young woman. Her future plans are to attend college at the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus. House Pages are responsible for keeping the House Floor in order, setting up committees, delivering bill sets, and anything else that the Representatives need.

Fairbanks North Star Borough **Mayor Jim Whitaker** was recently in Juneau doing a good job lobbying for an all Alaska Gas Project with the Port Authority. The All-Alaska Gasline would move stranded gas to market more quickly, would benefit the economy with more jobs, and would provide a more competitive price for gas in Alaska. He said the All-Alaska alternative could deliver gas as early as 2012. The proposal is a credible project and talks are being held with Sempra Energy which is the largest US utility customer base and a Fortune 500 energy services holding company. The interior will greatly benefit from a natural gas pipeline and I appreciate Mayor Whitaker's hard work.



## Did you know?

Every time the price of oil per barrel increases by \$1.00 it means approximately 60-65 million dollars to Alaskans in additional oil revenues.

To Contact My Office: Please call -  
(877) 465-3719 (Toll Free in Alaska)

Or email me at:

[Rep\\_John\\_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us](mailto:Rep_John_Coghill@legis.state.ak.us)

[www.johncoghill.com](http://www.johncoghill.com)



~Students from North Pole Middle School with Senator Therriault and Representative Coghill~

## Representative Coghill is the prime sponsor of several bills:

**House Bill 16 – School Funds Related to Boarding Schools—** This legislation reimburses some boarding school costs incurred by the district operating the program. There are three boarding schools that would qualify for reimbursement for a stipend and a roundtrip between the student’s community of residence and the school during the school year.

**House Bill 46 – Water/Sewer/Waste—Utility Grants—** This bill will ensure that privately owned public utilities are eligible for grants funded through the Municipal Water and Wastewater Matching Grant Program within the Department of Environmental Conservation. The cost of improvement made to the utility with grant money can not be passed on to the consumer.

**House Bill 53 – Children in Need of Aid/Review Panels—** This bill creates a duty and standard of care for social workers who are making decisions for children in state custody. HB 53 also makes court proceedings open to the public, and gives certain parents the right to a jury trial in proceedings to terminate parental rights. The bill encourages the use of Child Advocacy Centers where available. It requires audio recordings for all interviews of children believed to have been sexually abused. This legislation goes a long way to protect and preserve families and makes government accountable for its actions.

**House Bill 91 – Indecent Exposure to Minors—** This legislation makes repeat convictions of indecent exposure within the observation of a person under sixteen years of age a felony.

**House Bill 121—Road Service Areas—** This bill is designed to enable the borough to dissolve or consolidate service areas that are nonfunctional or are functioning below minimum standards and that pose a financial risk to the borough. HB 121 is written in such a way as to protect those service areas that are taxing themselves adequately and doing a good job in maintaining their roads to insure safe passage on them.

**House Bill 133 – Local Boundary Commission—** The Local Boundary Commission has a regulation that expands that requirement to “an aggregate vote of the people in the borough and the people in that area to be annexed.” This requirement is above and beyond what the legislature had in mind and dilutes the voting rights of those voters in the area to be annexed. This legislation is about fairness, preserving a representative form of government, and making sure that laws implemented by non-elected servants of government through regulation do not extend beyond the laws implemented by elected legislators.