

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux

There are many who say, "Government doesn't listen." As your representative in state government, I want to listen. Your input is important to me and so just as I took the time to walk my district during the interim I am calling constituents during the session to make sure that we are on the same page on the issues facing our state. Our district is very diverse and so are your interests. I have spoken with a few constituents at length on the methamphetamine and marijuana bill. Some have brought up funding for education. Some of you are concerned about legislation concerning the Permanent Fund Dividend for students and military. Others are concerned about the oil and gas negotiations and what it will mean for our state.

Legislation is moving very quickly and the deadline for any new personal legislation has passed. You can track a bill by going to the Alaska State Legislature BASIS page: <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/>. I encourage you to contact our office at 1-800-865-2487 or you can e-mail me at representative_gabrielle_ledoux@legis.state.ak.us if there are matters that concern you.

The House Special Committee on Fisheries

HB 328, which relates to banning mixing zones in spawning areas, passed out of the Special Committee on Fisheries on January 26th. The next committee of referral is House Resources, which is chaired by Representative Ramras (R-Fairbanks) and Representative Samuels (R-Anchorage). I sit on this committee and as a prime co-sponsor of HB 328 I will look forward to hearing this bill

A hearing is scheduled for HB 420: Forest Resources & Practices Standards on Wednesday, February 15th, 2006 from 8:30 a.m.-10 a.m. HB 420 was introduced by Rules by request of the Governor. Please see the link below to access the full text version www.legis.state.ak.us/PDF/24/Bills/HB0420A.PDF

Kimberly Wallace is my Fisheries Committee Aide and if you would like to be added to the Fisheries e-mail list or if you have any questions or input on pending legislation you can contact her via e-mail at: Kimberly_Wallace@legis.state.ak.us.

Personal Legislation

HB 83, which will extend the life of the Seismic Commission, is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Finance Committee. This legislation is an important issue for Alaska and in light of Mt. Augustine's activity, a very timely piece of legislation.

HB 324, which bans the importation of Orange Hawkweed, will be heard in the House Resources Committee on February 15, 2006. Our office has met with representatives from groups and agencies with interest in the bill so that the concerns of all who are stakeholders in this legislation are being addressed. There are many good ideas and further work that can be done to keep Alaska from being overtaken by invasive plants.

The language of this bill is simple and straightforward. I believe this bill will be a good beginning to solving the problem of invasive weeds.

I signed on to HJR 29 as a co-sponsor. This resolution urges the United States Department of Justice and the Alaska Department of Law to identify all natural resources damages from the Exxon Valdez oil spill that were unanticipated at the time of the 1991 settlement. There is \$100 million dollars available through what is known as the “Reopener for Unknown Injury” clause of the 1991 civil settlement to carry out plans to both identify and remedy damages.

I have introduced HB 431, which is legislation relating to a winery licensee. Under current state law our two wineries in Kodiak cannot ship directly to a customer in the State of Alaska but outside wineries can. It is my hope that this bill will help provide an equal playing field for our local wineries.

Legislation of Interest

HB 371 was heard in the House Community and Regional Affairs last month. This is a bill that provides for a community dividend program. A committee substitute was presented and I amended it so that communities that are not organized but that are in an organized Borough would also receive money. There are 13 community dividend/municipal assistance bills working their way through the system and I would appreciate your input. Both AML and the Department of Commerce and Economic Development are working on a side-by-side comparison for these bills. These documents will dramatically change as these bills make it through the committee process. If you have any questions or comments, please contact our office.

HCR 29 is a resolution that directs the commission of natural resources to complete a management plan for the area encompassing the Pebble copper deposit and requesting a report to the legislature. My position on Pebble Mine is that I listen to what my constituents want and act accordingly. To date, from what I have read and heard about open pit mining, I have very serious questions regarding impacts on habitat and the Bristol Bay watershed. Unless pristine water and safe and secure fish habitats are assured, I cannot support development.

However, from what I can see there will be several years and much public comment before any mining proposal even comes forward. The immediate question is HCR 29. I am uncomfortable setting a higher standard for this project than other major projects in our state. We must look to the future and not discourage resource development in our state while protecting the important resources in our area. Let our existing processes work to give us a factual basis for a responsible conclusion.

Services Online

From filing your articles of incorporation to tracking current legislation there are many Alaska state services online. Students in your household can also get homework help online at the Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) at the following webpage:

<http://sled.alaska.edu/homework.html> There are homework services available to Alaskan students in grades 4-12 every day of the week from 2:00pm to 9:00pm.

You can also file your Permanent Fund Dividend application online. Please remember that the deadline to file your Permanent Fund Dividend is March 31, 2006. Forms and online filing instructions are available at <http://www.pfd.state.ak.us/> or you can go to the Legislative Information Office located at 112 Mill Bay Road.

Opportunity

The Denali Commission has a 12-week internship program that is open to anyone currently enrolled in a graduate or undergraduate degree program. The areas of focus can range from community planning to public health to economics. Although the Denali Commission accepts applications from anyone, it is particularly interested in selecting talented Alaskans, especially those with experience in rural Alaska. I think this is a wonderful opportunity and I hope you will encourage the college student in your household to apply. The internship guidelines and application is available at the following website www.denali.gov. Applications are due Friday, March 17, 2006.

Visitors

There are many groups that had their meetings in Juneau such as the Alaska Municipal League, Alaska Conference of Mayors, Alaska Travel Industry Association, Alaska Association of School Boards and the Alaska Caberet, Hotel, Restaurant and Retailer's Association. Kodiak visitors to our office included Carolyn Floyd, Marvin Bartleson Sr., Jerome Selby, Rick Gifford, Cecil Rainey, Mike Milligan, Pam Foreman, Peggy Dettori, Louise Stutes, Andy Lundquist, Steve Thomsen, Norm Wooten, Betty Walters, Scott Arndt, Amy Griffith, Michael Horton, Molly Carver, Cortney McGuffie, Jeff Barnhart, and Heidi Morrisen.

It was also a pleasure to have constituents from the Lake and Peninsula Borough visit. Many thanks to Jack Hobson, Sr., Brian Kraft, Dan Oberlatz, Ralph Angeson, Trefon Angeson, Glen Alsworth, Martha Anelon, Mary Hostetter, Natalie Sorenson and Rebecca Jensen for taking the time to talk with me. If your travel plans include some time in Juneau, please stop by the office.

Contact Us

Juneau is only a phone call away and my office is always happy to assist you. You can contact us toll free at 1-800-865-2487, or via e-mail at: representative_gabrielle_ledoux@legis.state.ak.us. I can be reached by fax at (907) 465-4956 and by U.S. Mail at:

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If you are interested in listening in on a teleconferenced committee meeting, obtaining hard copies of current legislation, or Permanent Fund Dividend applications Lorna Steelman and Heather Fincher at the Legislative Information Office located at 112 Mill Bay Road can assist you.

I would like to thank the Kodiak Daily Mirror and the Bristol Bay Times for providing this space to keep you informed. Past editions of Your Representative's Report are available on my webpage at <http://www.akrepublicans.org/ledoux/>. If you would like to receive an e-mail version of this column, please contact Christine R. Marasigan in my office at: christine_marasigan@legis.state.ak.us.

Thank you for reading your Representative's Report.