



## Alaska State Legislature Senate Majority News

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### **Senator Ben Stevens Named New Senate President**

Senate Majority picks new leadership for the 24<sup>th</sup> Alaska Legislature

(ANCHORAGE) - Senator Ben Stevens (R-Anchorage) was chosen by his colleagues to lead the state Senate as its President for the next two years.

Senator Stevens joined the Senate in 2001 and served as Majority Leader for the past two years. During that time he succeeded in strengthening Alaska's educational system, improving its transportation infrastructure and fostering economic development.

"Over the next two years the Senate will tackle the most important economic development project our state has seen in decades, the proposed North Slope natural gas pipeline. The Senate Majority will work with the administration to review and approve a gas line contract that creates thousands of new jobs and ensures that the state's financial interests are protected," says President Stevens.

The Senate Majority Leader position will be taken over by Senator Gary Stevens (R - Kodiak) "As Majority Leader I will work hard to make sure Alaska's smaller communities have a strong voice in the Senate," says Stevens who represents Kodiak Island and other coastal communities.

Several committee chairmanships have also been filled:

Rules Committee Chair - Senator John Cowdery (R - Anchorage)

Health & Human Services Committee Chair – Senator Fred Dyson (R- Eagle River)

Judiciary Committee Chair – Senator Ralph Seekins (R – Fairbanks)

Resources Committee Chair – Senator Tom Wagoner (R – Nikiski)

State Affairs Committee Chair – Senator Gene Therriault (R – North Pole)

Labor & Commerce Committee Chair – Senator Con Bunde (R – Anchorage)

Transportation Committee Chair – Senator Charlie Huggins (R – Palmer)

Community & Regional Affairs Chair – Senator Gary Stevens (R – Kodiak)

Finance Committee:

Co-Chair, Operating Budget - Senator Gary Wilken (R – Fairbanks)

Co-Chair, Capitol Budget - Senator Lyda Green (R – Wasilla)

Remaining Finance Committee Members:

Vice Chair, Senator Con Bunde (R- Anchorage)

Senator Fred Dyson (R- Eagle River)

Senator Bert Stedman (R – Sitka)

A major change in the organization is the appointment of Senator Gene Therriault as chairman of the Legislative Budget & Audit Committee. As Chairman, Senator Therriault will oversee the review and approval of a proposed contract under the state's Stranded Gas Act. Due to the importance of this work, Therriault's position has been elevated to a member of the Senate leadership.

Other senate committee chairmanships will be announced at a later date. The new Senate leadership will take office when the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the Alaska Legislature convenes in Juneau on January 10, 2005.

For more information contact Senate Majority Press Secretary Jeff Turner at (907) 269.0257.

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