

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

Representative Gabrielle LeDoux

Greetings from Juneau! With all of the recent renovations at the Capitol, it's nice when some things stay the same. The mission of my office and staff is to provide the best possible service to constituents. As with last session, I will work hard for you. I will solicit and listen to your concerns and viewpoints. We will not always see eye-to-eye on the issues, but my goal is that you will feel well represented and that the line of communication is always open.

Once again I will serve as Co-Chair on the Special Committee on Fisheries. I also serve on the following committees, Labor and Commerce, Community and Regional Affairs and Resources. In addition to my duties on committees, I have been assigned to three House finance subcommittees: Community and Economic Development, Fish and Game, and Transportation and Public Facilities.

I am pleased to report that my entire staff has returned to assist me and serve you this session. Suzanne Hancock continues to serve as my Chief of Staff. Christine Marasigan, who was in the district during interim, is my Legislative Aide and Kimberly Wallace is my Legislative and Fisheries Committee Aide.

Fisheries Committee

The Fisheries Committee, which I co-chair with Representative Bill Thomas, will hear HB 328. This bill concerns mixing zones in spawning areas. The first hearing on this bill was Friday, January 20th. I encourage you to listen and be part of the process by participating at your local Legislative Information Office located at 112 Mill Bay Road the next time there is a meeting. I will do my best to make sure everyone gets heard on this issue before any action is taken on this legislation. 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 you can contact her via e-mail at: Kimberly_Wallace@legis.state.ak.us.

Personal Legislation

There are some bills from last session that are still active. HB 83, my bill extending the life of the Seismic Commission, has moved through the House. This bill will be heard January 24th at 3:30 in Senate State Affairs. This is a timely bill for our area and the entire state. This commission is doing great work and needs to be continued.

HJR 9, the Exxon Resolution, also passed through the House and I have requested a hearing in Senate Judiciary.

HB 325 is a new bill that bans the sale or importation of noxious weeds. This bill is currently in House Resources and has generated much interest.

Even though many invasive species are not regulated or controlled federally, other states have passed a wide array of laws designed to address invasive species problems. Many

states are also beginning to adopt non-agricultural weed prohibitions to protect natural systems, especially aquatic or wetland areas. Both gardeners and outdoor enthusiasts are watching this bill with interest. I am planning on working with the Department of Natural Resources to provide a mechanism so that the department can regulate new invasive species with greater ease.

HB 341 is a bill that requires the Alaska Aerospace Development Corporation to increase its board membership and ensure that two board members reside in the Kodiak Island Borough. This bill has been referred to the House Labor and Commerce committee.

HB 322, a safe haven bill for infants, provides for the safe surrender of unwanted infants without criminal penalty. This bill has been referred to the House Health, Education and Social Service committee. We will schedule a hearing after the bill has been thoroughly reviewed by staff and state agencies.

HB 325 concerns post conviction DNA testing. This bill establishes a procedure for application for a DNA test and the appointment of counsel. HB 325 was referred to the House Judiciary committee.

Budget

As you may have heard in the Governor's State of the State address in relation to the budget, there is \$6 Million in federal funds going to Kodiak for the paving of the last bit of road to the Alaska Aerospace Development Corporation facility. What you have not heard about is a clear plan for the budget surplus. Like most people when they experience a windfall, it is prudent to both save and spend. I look forward to hearing from you on how you think the state should deal with the surplus.

Also mentioned in the Governor's State of the State address was the controversial bridge projects and Juneau road. The Department of Transportation says that major projects will not affect the timetable for other, smaller projects around the state. However, I believe that this needs to be scrutinized, as we do not want our projects getting delayed due to larger projects in the state. This is something I will keep my eye on.

Immigration Assistance

On January 17, 2006 the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services came to Kodiak and met with a number of people. I will continue to advocate for this service to our community. I hope to have the Alaska State Office of Citizenship Assistance come to Kodiak this spring and will keep you updated.

Kodiak College is offering English as a Second Language as well as pronunciation courses for those who are interested. I commend Connie Dooley at the Kodiak College for soliciting our community for their wants and needs and finding ways to meet those requests.

Mt. Augustine

I encourage everyone in my district to follow local news sources and heed Borough, City and Tribal government warnings concerning Mt. Augustine. The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management recommends that you prepare a disaster supply kit as well as an emergency disaster plan with your family. For more information and a checklist of what you can do to be prepared please check out the following websites:

Alaska Volcano Observatory
<http://www.avo.alaska.edu/>

Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
<http://www.ak-prepared.com/plans/mitigation/volcano.htm>

United States Geologic Survey
http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/Hazards/Safety/what_to_do_during_ashfall.html

Federal Emergency Management Agency
<http://www.fema.gov/hazards/volcanoes/volcanof.shtm>

Opportunities

The Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development has sent a notice about the sale of limited entry permits. A total of 20 permits from various fishing areas are being sold. Written offers received by 4:00pm on February 28, 2006 will be reviewed for acceptance on or before March 7, 2006. For more information please contact the Alaska Division of Investments at 1-800-478-5626 or go to their webpage at: <http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/investments/>.

Our Federal delegation can make appropriation earmark requests. Senator Lisa Murkowski's website has a form available online <http://murkowski.senate.gov/approps.html>. Every federal fiscal year, Alaskans are welcome to submit requests for programs or projects to be funded by earmarks in annual federal appropriations bills. Such funding typically goes to state or local governmental entities or non-profit organizations. There is no guarantee that your project request will receive funding and please note that the appropriations process is not completed until late each calendar year.

These funding requests are due no later than March 1st. When you have completed the form it can be e-mailed to: Funding_Request@murkowski.senate.gov or faxed to: (202) 224-5301. Also, you can mail it to the following address:
Senator Lisa Murkowski, Hart 709, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

It is also important that if you are considering making an earmark request that would benefit a community, please coordinate with that community. That way, confusion about duplicate, competing, or unwanted earmarks can be avoided.

For those who may not be familiar with earmarks as opposed to regular appropriations, earmarks are not regular appropriations for ongoing, authorized programs that receive federal support, such as Title I or Safe & Drug Free Schools. They are directed, usually one-time appropriations to communities, groups, or activities that support worthwhile projects that fall outside the normal appropriations process.

If you have any specific questions about the process, please contact Nathan Butzlaff, who coordinates all of the earmark requests for Senator Murkowski. He can be reached at 202-224-6665 or Nathan_Butzlaff@murkowski.senate.gov. You can also contact Senator Ted Stevens and Representative Don Young's office.

Boards & Commission

There are several appointments to boards and commissions that I will comment on in the coming months. Please contact Christine Marasigan at christine_marasigan@legis.state.ak.us in my office for a complete list of appointees. Your input is important. The Governor appoints people to boards and commissions and the Alaska State Legislature approves the appointments just as the President appoints judges to the Supreme Court and the Senate must confirm the selection.

Some of the boards and commissions with new appointments include: Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Board of Chiropractic Examiners, Board of Fish, Board of Marital and Family Therapy, Board of Examiners in Optometry, Workers' Compensation Appeals Commission, and Big Game Commercial Services Board. I encourage you to not only comment on the commissioners and committee members but to also consider applying to be on a State of Alaska Board or Commission. I am pleased that over 20 people from Kodiak serve on various state boards and commissions. For more information you can go online to <http://gov.state.ak.us/boards/>.

Visitors/Congratulations

Shawn Dochtermann of Kodiak was in my office the first day of session. I also had the pleasure of seeing Martha Anelon from Iliamna. Kodiak City Manager Linda Freed also stopped by the office. I am always happy to see constituents from the district. If you have any plans to visit Juneau, I hope you will visit.

Congratulations to the Lake and Peninsula School District for dedicating the new Tanalian School addition in Port Alsworth Thursday, January 12th. It was an honor and a pleasure to be there. I also enjoyed spending time in Tom and Becky McKennett's classrooms.

On A More Personal Note

Thank you for your calls of concern over the loss of my Mother-in-Law, Shirley LeDoux. She was a woman who loved her family very much and I admired her integrity, enormous personal strength and genuine faith.

I would also like to personally welcome home our very own National Guard members returning from Iraq. Thank you for your selfless dedication and service.

Contact Us

Although I will be in Juneau during session, we are only a phone call away and are always happy to assist you. Please contact my Juneau office 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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I would like to thank the Kodiak Daily Mirror 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.