



CONSTITUENT NEWSLETTER

Session Report - Spring 2004

REP. LESIL MCGUIRE

Serving House District 28 - South Anchorage including the neighborhoods of Bayshore, Klatt, Campbell Lake, Dimond, Oceanview, Sandlake, and Southport

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Tell me what you think!

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I'll be in Anchorage to hear your thoughts

Chair, House Judiciary Committee

Vice-Chair, Economic Development, Trade & Tourism Committee

Member, House Rules Committee

Member, Oil & Gas Committee

Member, State-Federal Research & Development Committee

To My Friends and Neighbors in District 28:

Hello from Juneau! We're past the half way mark and already it's been a productive session. Thanks to input from many of you, I came back to Juneau with a very aggressive legislative agenda, and since that time I have added even more.

I've been proud to carry HB 337 which establishes an electronic organ donor registry through the division of motor vehicles. I'd like to thank Duane Bannock, the DMV director and Bruce Zelnheraitis of Life Alaska for all their help and support with this bill. The bill is currently in the Senate Finance committee awaiting their consideration.

Also, I'd like to thank our Southport neighbor, Paige Hodson for her inspiration and hard work on HB 385. This bill will raise the level of consideration domestic violence has when courts are making child custody determinations. This bill is based on a national model that has been adopted by 22 other states. I'm pleased to announce that this bill passed the House by an unanimous vote last week.

Lastly, I'm moving forward on a child endangerment measure that was brought to me by District 28 neighbor Dore Meyers. This bill will be heard in the House HESS Committee very soon!

As always, I appreciate your comments and input and look forward to hearing from each of you. I'm always eager to help and serve my constituents in South Anchorage.



The "Brooke Act" Passes the House and Senate Unanimously! HB 397 Protects Alaska's Children

"HB 397 will help parents and guardians of minors to learn what is going on in their lives and empower them to make smart decisions about what is in their child's best interests."

Hintroduced in response to a case in which a minor was contacted without her parents consent and questioned by a defense investigator. The bill, when it becomes law, will require defense attorneys and investigators get parental consent before conducting a recorded interview of a minor victim or witness of a sexual offense. Currently this protection is only afforded the minor if the interview is not recorded. "By closing this loophole in the law, we will be able to better protect minors," says Representative McGuire.

Anatomical Gift Registry Bill Passes House

“The intent of the bill is to make it easier, at the time of an accident, for health and public safety officials to recognize donors in a timely enough matter to save Alaskan lives. States that have authorized their DMV’s to register organ and tissue donors have seen a dramatic rise in the number of organ donors.”

HB 337, the anatomical gift registry act, passed the house by a unanimous vote on Tuesday, February 23. Intended to create an organ donor registry linked to voluntary donors within the DMV system, the bill creates a database that allows organ procurement organizations such as LifeAlaska and Lifecenter Northwest to get donor information quickly and efficiently. Among the people testifying about the bill was Ray Vidic, a Juneau resident.

Vidic’s compelling testimony recounted the trials his friend has endured for ten years and continues to endure while waiting for a kidney transplant. From tri-weekly dialysis sessions, to weekly weight fluctuations of twenty pounds or more, Vidic’s friend spends everyday hoping to see the next. When speaking of the need for this type of legislature and the promotion of the cause Vidic said, “We are doing what he can’t do, because he is busy just trying to stay alive.” Vidic went on to say, “If we save even one life, you have all done a wonderful thing.”



Rep. McGuire presiding over judiciary.

HCR 31 Proclaims June 2004 As Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month

“These numbers can’t be reduced by finding a “cure,” but only through effective prevention of TBIs.”

The Alaska House of Representatives passed HCR 31 by a unanimous vote on Wednesday March 24th. The intent of the resolution is to make Alaskans aware of Traumatic Brain Injury, its cause, its effects and means of prevention.

With over 1.4 million Americans sustaining TBIs every year, prevention and awareness are of utmost importance. **Alaska has the second highest per capita rate of Traumatic Brain Injury in the U.S. for men between 18 and 40 years of age.** This fact alone begs for a solution to this growing medical problem. With prevention as the only way to lower the number of Traumatic Brain injuries it is important for all Alaskans to know what kind of steps can be taken to minimize risk.

Have an organ donor card?
Good..but you aren’t done yet.

Make sure your wishes are followed by taking these three steps:

1. Register with the Alaska Organ & Tissue Donor Registry at www.lifealaska.org, or by calling them at 907.562.LIFE
2. Sign a Donor wallet card (available at the DMV or from Life Alaska)
3. Share your decision with your family

Share your Life Share your decision



Rep. McGuire presents a certificate of appreciation to Officer Aaron Whitt and his K-9 partner for their outstanding service in the line of duty.

HB 551: Protecting Alaska's Children From Drug Felons

"I don't think that people with felony drug convictions should be working with our children. It sets a bad example as well as puts them in possible danger."

HB 551, which was introduced on April 5th, protects Alaska's children by making sure those who teach our children do not have prior convictions for felony drug offenses. The bill, sponsored by House Judiciary, not only allows school administrators to screen employees for these offenses before hire; it also gives them the ability to terminate employees who have been convicted of these offenses while employed.

While drafting this bill, Rep. McGuire noticed that people applying for a limited teaching certificate weren't held to the same standards as regular teachers in regards to their criminal history. HB 551 corrects this oversight by requiring people applying for a limited teaching certificate to submit to a criminal background check prior to receiving the certificate.

By making these simple, but effective changes, Representative McGuire hopes to promote a positive educational environment while keeping Alaska's children safe.



Rep. McGuire discussing the specifics of bills on the floor of the House of Representatives.

CSSHB 273 promotes sports and recreational activities for children in Alaska

"It is sad to think that Alaska's youth are being denied access to sports and other recreational activities because of liability concerns. Parents should have the right to release coaches, schools and others from negligence based claims."

CSSHB 273 allows the parent or guardian of a minor to make a decision to release a recreation provider from liability on behalf of their child. Not only does this put the decision in the hands of the parent, where it should be, it will also lower the cost of sports and recreational programs. Along with this reduction in cost, more children will have access to these programs and the breadth of activities offered will also increase.

HB 338 is Good for Education

"These changes to early school enrollment are supported by the Anchorage School District and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development."

HB 338, which passed House Special Committee on Education on Thursday, April 1st accomplishes two simple but necessary changes that govern the entry of children into school.

First, the bill allows a school board to delegate the authority to approve early entry application to their chief school administrator. Currently, a full school board vote is required to approve such early entry applications. This minor change relieves the boards of this administrative burden more appropriately left to education professionals.

Secondly, HB 338 adjusts the standard entry date from August 15th to September 1st. This change helps to align Alaska's standard entrance date with most of the states in the union. By making this change we will create a less confusing situation for families moving into the state including our numerous military families.



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*Mark your
 Calendars!*



Townhall Meeting
 Saturday, May 15th
 1-3 p.m.

BAYSHORE ELEMENTARY LIBRARY

Contact my office for more information.