

# 2018 CAPITOL CURRENTS

30<sup>th</sup> Alaska State Legislature ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Session

Fourteenth Edition – 4/16/18 to 4/22/18

~ 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row 90<sup>th</sup> day deadline comes and goes ~

## HIGHLIGHTS

[SB 134](#) passed the Senate this week. It must now make it through the House.

Sponsored by Sen. Gardner, the legislation clarifies that a parent who chooses to keep a child conceived through rape can sever ties with their rapist, if approved by the court and in the best interest of the child.

In 1987, the Legislature passed a law allowing a mother to terminate a rapist father's parental rights. This law was inserted in AS 25.23, which focuses on adoption.

SB 134 clarifies that a petition for involuntary termination of parental rights may be filed in a proceeding that is independent from an adoption or a proceeding under child in need of aid statutes.

There are currently 45 states with statutes that allow for the parental rights of rapists to be reduced or terminated.

[HB 236](#), also passed the Senate this week. Sponsored by Rep. Kawasaki it extends the [Senior Benefits Program](#) another 6 years.

[House Joint Resolution 21](#), sponsored by Rep. Guttenberg passed the legislature this week. The resolution calls on the federal government to respect states' rights and the will of the Alaskan people regarding marijuana policy. It also urges the federal government to reconsider its listing of marijuana as a schedule one controlled substance.

Sen. Wielechowski's [Sense of the Senate](#) supporting net neutrality principles and urging the United States Congress to use its authority under the Congressional Review Act to overturn the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) decision to repeal net neutrality passed the Senate.

The Congressional Review Act gives Congress the authority to overturn the decision through a joint resolution of disapproval within 60 days after the FCC submits their decision to Congress. That 60-day deadline is this Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Discussion around [SB 198](#), Sen. Kelly's Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptive Study brought up a previous pilot program to put pregnancy test kits in public restrooms. The results have been published and can be viewed here: [Pregnancy Tests in Bathrooms Study](#)

[HB 240](#), the Fair Audit and Pricing for Pharmacists bill sponsored by Rep. Guttenberg passed out of its last committee of referral Friday morning. Its in SRLS waiting to be schedule for the Floor.

[HB 214](#), sponsored by Rep. Drummond was heard and held in SFIN on Friday. The bill would rename the anti-dating violence curriculum section of the Safe Children's Act after Alaskan Bree Moore who was murdered by her dating partner.

[SB 37](#), Pharmacy Board & Staff; Drug Distribution/Manufacturing sponsored by Sen. Giessel was amended in HRLS on Monday by amending in [HB 231](#) to the bill.

HB 231 CFEC: Board Salary; Staff Classified Service sponsored at the request of the Governor reduces the number of commissioners appointed to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission from three to two; specifies that the chair of the commission will also serve as the executive director establishing the salary at a Range 27; and, allows one commissioner to exercise the powers and duties of the commission when there's a vacancy on the commission.

What does this have to do with the Pharmacy Board or whole sale medication distribution? Nothing. The Legislative Legal Division wrote a legal opinion describing the single subject for the legislation as boards and commissions!

SB 37 was scheduled for the Floor each day this week and a few amendment attempts failed. It's on the calendar in third reading for a vote on Monday. After it passes the House it will have to go back to the Senate for concurrence. (*Concurrence is agreement with the changes made in one legislative body from the contents of the bill as it left its original body*)

## **BUDGET ISSUES**

The operating budget conference committee met twice this week to agree on several differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget. Negotiations continue next week. You can look here to find the motion sheets for the hearings: [Conference Committee](#)

Moving through the list of items in a Department, Vice-Chair Seaton will announce which version (House or Senate) will be accepted for each item. If a committee member disagrees the item will be moved to the end of the list and be voted on separately.

Members will approve the agreed upon list and then come back to the individual items where there was disagreement and vote on them separately.

Committee hearings are usually very short-announcing to the public budget decisions that have been negotiated.

[Capital Budget](#): The Senate has not yet passed the capital budget to the House for consideration. As introduced, the capital budget would leverage \$1.1 billion in federal dollars for construction projects on roads, rails and runways.

In addition to the budget, House leadership and the Governor continue to push for changes to the Permanent Fund to pay for government. Here is a recent study on the PFD and poverty in Alaska: [PFD Study](#)

On Wednesday the House voted to concur with changes made in the Senate to the Education early funding bill. [HB 287](#) appropriates \$1.32 billion for K-12 public education in fiscal year 2019. The Senate added a provision to fund the same amount in fiscal year 2020, plus an additional \$30 million in one-time grants to school districts if the Alaska Legislature passes [SB 26](#).

SB 26 would implement a percent of market value approach (POMV) for the use of earnings from the Alaska Permanent Fund to pay dividends and fund a portion of the cost for essential state services.

The House and Senate passed different versions of SB 26 last year, and the bill is scheduled for a hearing in its' conference committee over the weekend.

While the Senate version of the HB 287 funds Education for FY19 at the same level as this year, discussions regarding an increase are not over. Last Saturday, the House also passed [HB 339](#) which would raise the Base Student Allocation (BSA) by \$100, resulting in a statewide increment of \$25 million. HB 339 was heard and held in SEDC on Friday.

### **HEARINGS OF INTEREST**

*If you want to share your opinions/concerns about a particular piece of legislation, look for hearings where the committees list public testimony being taken. That's your chance!*

The 24-hour rule is not really 24 hours' notice—it's the day before notice.

Practically, a bill can be scheduled at 11:59pm for a hearing the next morning at 8am!

Check the [Daily Schedule](#) throughout the day for bill hearings to be posted for the next day.

Bills can also come up under the calendar item of "previously heard" at any time.

Lots of moving parts over the next few days as legislators try to wrap things up.

**~ End of Report ~**

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