

2018 CAPITOL CURRENTS

30th Alaska State Legislature ~ 2nd Session

Thirteenth Edition – 4/9/18 to 4/15/18

The 24-hour Rule rules!

HIGHLIGHTS

Rep. Kito left the House Majority Coalition this week; leaving the Majority with the bare minimum of 21 members.

Kito told the Juneau Empire that he no longer feels bound on procedural votes or budget requests to vote with the Majority. “Each decision will be each decision”, he said.

Handling of [SB 63](#), Regulation of Smoking sponsored by Sen. Micciche seems to be the impetus for Kito’s departure. The bill has been sitting in HRLS since late January and was amended during a hearing this week without the opportunity for public comment.

The Rules CS provides three substantive changes: it allows municipalities and established villages to opt out of the smoke free workplace bill; removes vaping and e-cigarettes from regulation under SB 63; and removes regulation of marijuana from the bill.

The Legislature met in Joint Session this week to vote on the Governor’s appointments to his Cabinet and to various Boards and Commissions.

Only one person of the 98 considered was rejected during the meeting. Kenni Linden of Palmer, a former Planned Parenthood employee was turned away from serving on the Board of Certified Direct-Entry Midwives by a vote of 28-32 largely along party lines.

The Senate honored outgoing legislators Sen. Berta Gardner and Sen. Dennis Egan this week. An overflowing Butrovich room held senators, representatives, staffers and other well-wishers; many speaking in glowing terms of the work of both retiring senators. Governor Walker also congratulated the two on their service.

[HB 240](#), Pharmacy Benefits Managers sponsored by Rep. Guttenberg passed the House and has been referred to SFIN. HB 240 establishes fair audit and pricing practices by regulating PBMs.

[HB 323](#), Extend the Board of Pharmacy sponsored by Rep. Sullivan-Leonard passed the Senate today. It extends the Board through June 30, 2022.

[HB 25](#), Contraceptives Coverage: Insure: Medical Assist sponsored by Rep. Claman passed the House this week. The bill’s been referred to SHSS and FIN.

HB 25 allows doctors to prescribe up to a year’s worth of birth control through a single prescription. The bill also requires health insurers to cover birth control, including devised such as IUDs and implants.

[HB 287](#), Appropriation: Pupil Transportation; Education sponsored by Rep. Seaton passed the Senate on Saturday. The bill forward funds Education. It was amended in SFIN so now goes back to the House for concurrence.

[HB 339](#), Increase Base Student Allocation sponsored by Rep. Gara passed the House on Saturday. The bill would raise the BSA \$100 from \$5,930 to \$6,030. It must now make its way through the Senate.

If you're in Juneau, attend the **April 20th Violence Against Women Awareness Rally**.

Scheduled from 5:30pm - 9:30pm at the Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall-320 West Willoughby Avenue.

The rally is to raise awareness of violence against women in Alaska Native communities. The rally will include a panel of speakers, a march through downtown Juneau and a screening of the film "Wind River".

BUDGET ISSUES

The Conference Committee on the operating and mental health budgets has been established. The members are Sen. Hoffman, MacKinnon, Olson and Rep. Seaton, Foster and Thompson.

Sen. Hoffman will be the committee Chair and Rep. Seaton will be the Vice-Chair. Mason's Manual – the rule book for the Legislature- specifies the House and Senate take turns chairing this committee. The first year of each Legislature the Chair is a Representative and the second year sees a Senator as Chair.

The CC met Saturday and adopted the identical appropriations and language in HB 285 and HB 286. They also approved a motion asking each body to grant limited powers of free conference for those budget items that are not identical in the House and Senate versions of the bills.

With limited powers of free conference the members can adopt amounts from zero to the higher amount listed in the House or Senate versions of the bills.

Neither the capital budget nor the regular supplemental budget are showing on the hearing calendar yet!

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 weeks as legislators try to wrap things up.

As of today, here's a list of bills to be heard next week:

Monday

[HB 151](#), DHSS; CINA; Foster Care; Child Protection sponsored by Rep. Gara will be in its last committee of referral, SFIN at 9am. The bill was amended in SHSS.

Look here for an explanation of the SHSS committee substitute: [SHSS CS HB 151](#)

At 1:30pm SJUD is scheduled to hear [SB 134](#), Termination of Parental Rights; Guardians sponsored by Sen. Gardner; [HJR 21](#), Feds Respect State Regulation of Marijuana sponsored by Rep. Guttenberg; and [HB 123](#), Disclosure of Health Care Costs sponsored by Rep. Spohnholz.

Tuesday

HHSS will meet at 3:00pm and take public testimony on [SB 198](#), UAA Long-Acting Contraception Study sponsored by Sen. Kelly and [SB 208](#), March: Sobriety Awareness Month sponsored by Sen. Gardner.

SSTA will hear [HCR 19](#), Governor: AK Native Languages Emergency sponsored by Rep. Ortiz. This is the resolution's last committee.

Thursday

[SB 127](#), Criminal Law; Parole; Probation; Sentencing sponsored by Sen. Costello will be heard twice in SFIN-9:00am with a general introduction and 1:30pm where public testimony will be taken

SB 127 can best be described as a repeal of SB 91-the 2016 criminal justice reform bill.

Friday

SFIN has scheduled two hearings on [HB 214](#), Bree's Law sponsored by Rep. Drummond one at 9:00am to introduce the bill and one at 1:30pm to take public testimony. The bill names the section of the Safe Children's Act that requires anti-dating violence curricula be taught in high schools after Bree Moore.

Bree was a young Alaskan woman killed by her dating partner.

~ End of Report ~

Contact: Caren Robinson (carenr@gci.net)