

2018 CAPITOL CURRENTS

30th Alaska State Legislature ~ 2nd Session

Seventh Edition – 2/26 to 3/4/18

42 days to go

~Break for Home ~

HIGHLIGHTS

Over the weekend, legislators left Juneau to hold constituent meetings.

Governor Walker ordered state flags to be flown at half-staff beginning Tuesday, February 27th in honor of former House Speaker Joe Hayes who passed away February 16, 2018 at the age of 88.

Speaker Hayes served in the Alaska State House from 1977 to 1984 and as Speaker of the House from 1981 to 1984.

The Department of Revenue released marijuana tax revenue collection numbers for the month of January and for the first time since recreational marijuana was legalized the revenue topped \$1 million for one month.

The Senate passed [SCR 5](#) proclaiming March 2, 2019, Alaska Reads Day Similar resolutions have passed in California, Indiana and on the federal level designating March 2 as Read Day, coinciding with Dr. Seuss' birthday, a day to create awareness of literacy.

[SCR 17](#) , declaring April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, passed the Senate on March 1st. The resolution brings attention to the problem of sexual violence and recognizes Alaska's volunteers, staff and agencies working to end sexual assault; in 2016 over 3,100 volunteers devoted 48,483 hours of service in Alaska.

The House passed [HB 307](#), legislation to update Alaska's Code of Military Justice to mirror recent updates to the Federal Uniform Code of Military Justice.

BUDGET ISSUES

House Finance wrapped up public testimony on the operating and mental health budgets on Saturday.

The Committee will hold hearings each morning and afternoon throughout next week to take up amendments.

They plan on adopting new committee substitutes on Friday, which could set up Floor votes the week of March 12th.

To see the full week's hearing schedule click here and scroll down: [Daily Schedule](#)

Senate Finance Subcommittees met last week and will continue meeting this week. Click on the Daily Schedule above to find subcommittee hearings of interest.

GOVERNOR'S CORNER

The Governor issued two proclamations this week. The first recognizing March as Developmental Disabilities Month and the second as Alaska Arts Education Month.

Click here to read the Alaska Arts in Education Proclamation: [AAE Month](#)

WAYS TO FOLLOW HEARINGS

Check the committee calendar the day of the scheduled hearing as sometimes a bill is rescheduled.

Daily Committee Hearings for 2018 [Meetings](#)

Gavel to Gavel: Most committee hearings can be seen and heard on Gavel Alaska. It is broadcast on both local access TV and on the internet at [360 North Gavel](#)

Streaming Video: [Live Now](#)

Testifying: Legislative Information Office (LIO) Find your LIO here: <http://akleg.gov/lios.php>
In Juneau: See committee hearing list for room numbers

Call-in: Available with prior approval from the committee chair -
From Anchorage: (907) 563-9085; From Juneau: (907) 586-9085; all others: (844) 586-9085

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!

Comments are usually time-limited (between 2-3 minutes). Written comments are taken too and can be of any length.

Several lunch and learn presentations are scheduled this week—each starts at Noon

Monday, Tom Chard with the Alaska Behavioral Health Association will present “Investing in Us- Exploring the Value of Behavioral Health”

Tuesday, The Food Bank of AK and the AK Food Coalition will present “An Overview on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)”

Wednesday, Attorney General Jahna Lindemuth will talk about the Governor’s Public Safety Action Plan and

Thursday, “Ethics in Action in the Alaska Legislature” will be presented by Dr. Charla Brown and Assistance Professor of Human Resource Management at the University of Alaska Southeast

Wednesday is a big day for confirmation hearings:

9:00am SFIN at 9:00am will examine the Mental Health Trust Authority Board of Trustees—Verne Boerner, Mike Powers and the Regulatory Commission of Alaska—Janis Wilson, Paul Lisankie

1:30pm SHSS hears from the Mental Health Trust Authority Trustees—Verne Boerner, Mike Powers

3:15pm HL&C will examine appointees for several agencies including the Board of Marital & Family Therapy; Board of Nursing; Board of Pharmacy; State Physical Therapy & Occupational Therapy Board; Board of Professional Counselors; Board of Social Work Examiners

3:30pm SRES hears from the Regulatory Commission of Alaska—Janis Wilson.

And then on **Friday**, the HEDC will hold confirmation hearings for the AK Board of Education & Early Development and the AK Teaching Practices Commission

What else is happening?

[HCR 19](#), Governor: AK Native Languages Emergency, sponsored by Rep. Ortiz is being heard in HCRA at 8am on **Tuesday**. The resolution calls on the Governor to work with the legislature, the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council, and Alaska Native organizations to ensure the survival and continued use of all 20 of the state's Alaska Native languages.

The resolution also urges the Governor to issue an administrative order recognizing a linguistic emergency.

[HB 310](#), Marriage and Minimum Age for Marriage will be heard in HSTA at 3:15pm on **Tuesday**.

Wednesday starts with an 8:00am HEDC hearing regarding the Increase Base Student Allocation ([HB 339](#)) and continues with [SB 124](#) Abortion Procedures, Child Surrender in SJUD on at 1:30pm; after confirmation hearings, SHSS will hear Christy Lawton OCS, Director, responding to the OCS Citizen Review Panel report; and if there is time after confirmation hearings in HL&C, they'll be hearing [HB 326](#), Naturopaths; Licensing; Practice.

Thursday, HSTA will take up Discrimination: Gender Identity; Sexual Orientation ([HB 184](#)) at 3:15pm and at 3:30pm, [SB 186](#), Voter Registration & PFD App Registration will be heard in SSTA

The week ends with another hearing for [SB 124](#) Abortion Procedures, Child Surrender in SJUD at 1:30pm.

LINKS OF INTEREST

[2018 Legislative Contacts](#)

[Toll-free Numbers for Legislators](#)

~ End of Report ~

Contact: Caren Robinson (carenr@gci.net)