



J&H Consulting

**Legislative Update
End of Session
May 2026**

Session Focus:

- ❖ A total of 846 bills and resolutions were introduced during the 34th session of the Alaska Legislature and 111 passed, including at least 30 during the final day.
- ❖ Balanced budget- saved by changing oil prices
- ❖ Gas line governance - Special session
- ❖ Gov's Proposed fiscal/tax package-failed to pass
- ❖ HB 78 Retirement and benefit changes - VETOED Override failed
- ❖ SB 64 Elections - VETOED Override failed
- ❖ Rural Health Transformation Program \$272 mil. in year one - reviewing first proposals totaling \$1.8 bil.
- ❖ Education policy and funding - HB 28 Passed
- ❖ Election year
- ❖ Cabbage is the state vegetable!!!!

Operating Budgets:

- Proposed budget totals 13.9 bil, has a projected \$152 mil. surplus with \$75 avg. oil price.
- PFD at \$1,000 plus \$200 for energy relief.
- PCE is fully funded at \$56 million plus \$7.9 mil. for increased costs.
- Full statutory funding for the Base Student Allocation (BSA) at \$129 bil., plus up to \$115 mil. in one-time funds or about \$129 a student dependent on oil prices (\$98) and \$29 mil. for energy relief.
- Head start includes \$3.8 mil. UGF. /Pre-K at \$6.1 mil and Early Learning Coordination at \$19 mil.
- Broadband Grants \$20.5 mil.
- Adequacy study for schools \$400,000.
- Full funding school bond debt \$41.6 mil. and REAA funding at \$19.6 mil.
- Community Assistance is funded at \$30 mil. with an added \$20 mil. for energy relief.
- Community jails funded at \$14.5 mil. an increase to actual cost.
- Disaster relief \$48 mil and fire suppression \$60.6 mil.

Op Budget:

- Shored up funding on behavioral health grants, food security, and homelessness funding.
- Energy Assistance \$24 mil.
- Salary Adjustments and a pay differential study.
- \$15 mil. for bulk fuel purchases.

Capital Budgets:

- ▶ Totals \$2.5 bil. of which \$1.8 bil. is federal, double last year.
- ▶ 148.3 mil. in funding for school construction and major maintenance covers 33 schools. Deering \$6 mil. and Buckland Boiler Replacement \$271,000.
- ▶ \$217.5 for libraries and online learning.
- ▶ \$32.5 mil. for the University of Alaska.
- ▶ 19.5 mil. For workforce training for AKLNG pipeline project.
- ▶ \$323 mil. for drinking water projects.
- ▶ Heating Assistance \$11 mil.

Cap Budget Contd:

- ▶ AEA Round 18 \$14.6 mil.
- ▶ Alaska Sustainable Energy Corp. \$35 mil.
- ▶ Weatherization \$5 mil.
- ▶ Professional Housing \$5 mil.
- ▶ Ice roads/winter trails \$6.2 mil.
- ▶ Code Blue \$500,000
- ▶ NPRA \$17.9 mil.
- ▶ Homer Airport Master Plan \$703,125
- ▶ Homer All Pedestrian Pathway \$2.79 mil.
- ▶ Kachemak Bay Drive 0-3.5 mile \$4 mil.

Education Bills:

- ▶ **SB 41, Mental Health:** Requires age-appropriate mental health education in schools.
- ▶ **SB 23, Civics Ed:** Bill adds civics education and assessment to the list of secondary school graduation requirements.
- ▶ **HB 27, CPR:** Proposes a **one-hour CPR training** requirement for K-12 students,
- ▶ **SB 178, Infant Learning:** Expands eligibility and services provided by early intervention programs for children experiencing developmental delays or disabilities by reducing the threshold from 50% to a 25% delay. Includes increased funding.
- ▶ **HB 28, “Omnibus” education bill:** House Bill 28 includes a three-year student loan forgiveness pilot program for teachers. This program offers full-time public school teachers in special education or STEM fields student loan grant payments of up to \$5,000 per year for three years. Adds provisions for hiring retired teachers. It establishes an energy grant program for school districts that reimburses schools for their energy expenditures based on a three-year average of the district’s energy cost. The Senate Education Committee rolled in several other school bills including increases in boarding school support, increased scrutiny of correspondence study programs, and a long-needed study of state K-12 funding formulas. A provision also added limits growth of municipalities’ required contribution to schools to 4% yearly.
- ▶ **HB 246, SESA:** Increases funding to the Special Education Service Agency for outreach and services to students with disabilities from \$23 to \$26.
- ▶ **SB 146:** Adds Mt. Edgecumbe High School to the REAA list.

Bills Passed:

- ▶ **HB 78 Pension:** This bill proposes to open the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) and Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) benefit plans by adding a new defined benefit tier. Vetoed, override failed.
- ▶ **HB 388 Bulk Fuel loan:** Legislation addresses anticipated higher energy costs coming as a result of the US-Iran war. Increase loan amount from \$750,000 to \$1.5 mil. and groups can pool resources. Funded with \$15 mil.
- ▶ **SB 192 Emergencies:** Require that state and local officials use the terms “Ready,” “Set,” and “Go,” defined on maps by the colors green, yellow and red. People in a “Ready” area should begin packing for an evacuation and preparing their homes or property. Those in a “Set” area should be prepared to leave quickly, and those in a “Go” area should evacuate.
- ▶ **HB 48 Legal Aid:** Stabilizes funding for civil legal aid for vulnerable Alaskans by increasing funding by \$400,000.
- ▶ **HB 26 DOT:** Requires the Department of Transportation to coordinate with public, Tribal, and community transit programs in statewide transportation planning and expands the study of alternative transportation options to include rural and remote areas. **VETOED**

Bills Passed:

- ▶ SB 272 updates Alaska's health information exchange to improve how medical records are shared securely across providers.
- ▶ SB 89 expands the scope of practice for physician assistants working in licensed medical facilities. This legislation allows physician assistants (PAs) who have obtained 4,000 hours of postgraduate clinical experience under a collaborating agreement with a physician to operate without physician supervision in the state helping increase access to care in rural Alaska.
- ▶ SB 147 allows pharmacists to diagnose and treat simple illnesses that can be diagnosed with a test done in the pharmacy
- ▶ HB 25 bans the use of disposable polystyrene packaging materials by restaurants and other food service operations but can opt out.
- ▶ HB 184 enables the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, or AIDEA, to do financing for housing development of 3 or more units.
- ▶ HB 133 requires payment on state agency contracts with nonprofits, municipalities and tribes within 30 days or late payment fees accrue.
- ▶ SB 130 expands the state fisheries development tax credits to all fish species, not just those listed in statute. It will allow processors to get tax credits against their state fisheries tax liability for investments in new processing technology to expand products and markets.
- ▶ HB 33 changes the way the Board of Fisheries and Board of Game function by allowing members to deliberate - but not to vote - on subjects for which they have a declared personal or financial interest.

Bills:

- ▶ **SB 143:** Decreases the minimum city council size to three members for second-class cities with 1,000 or fewer residents. Allows local governments to lengthen or shorten the terms of school board members. Currently, state law requires school board members to serve three-year terms. Also requires mandatory school board training.
- ▶ **HB 239:** Omnibus Crime bill. 65 pages total, multi-part crime bill that raises the state's age of consent, criminalizes the act of using AI to create child sexual abuse material, allow tougher sentences for fatal hit-and-run offenders, and places stricter evidence processing times for sexual assault examination kits.
- ▶ **SB 9, Safe Surrender:** Amends the state's safe-surrender law for infants to permit the construction of unmanned drop-off locations at public facilities.
- ▶ **HB 36:** Shortens the deadline for foster youth to receive court hearings after being institutionalized. Creates a new state license for treatment foster homes, to provide treatment services through Medicaid for youth with medical, behavioral or developmental conditions.
- ▶ **HB 52:** Increases reporting requirements for youth in psychiatric institutions, unannounced inspections, communication requirements, among other provisions.
- ▶ **HB 16:** Sets new limits on campaign contributions.
- ▶ **SB 24:** Raise the state's tobacco possession age to 21, adds vapes for taxation, allows cigar lounges.
- ▶ **HB 280:** Requires out-of-state internet and digital companies to pay corporate income taxes based on sales to Alaskans rather than physical location

Political Landscape:



GOVERNOR'S RACE HAS 17 IN THE RUNNING. THE POOL OF CANDIDATES FOR ALASKA GOVERNOR IN THE 2026 ELECTION INCLUDES, TOM BEGICH, JOHNATHAN KREISS-TOMPKINS, MATT CLAMAN, CLICK BISHOP, DAVE BRONSON, ADAM CRUM, EDNA DEVRIES, MATT HEILALA, SHELLEY HUGHES; HANK KROLL, JAMES PARKIN, TREG TAYLOR, JESSICA FAIRCLOUTH, JAMES PARKIN, AND BERNADETTE WILSON.



NEXT YEAR IS AN ELECTION YEAR WHICH IMPACTS THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION. HALF OF LEGISLATOR UP FOR REELECTION AND SEN. SULLIVAN. RANKED CHOICE VOTING ON THE BALLOT AGAIN. A BIG CONSEQUENTIAL ELECTION CYCLE.



SEVERAL PROMINENT ELECTED OFFICIALS HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR RETIREMENTS; SEN. STEVENS, MYERS AND HOFFMAN, REP. JOSEPHSON AND SADDLER.

- ▶ Fri June 19: Juneteenth
 - ▶ **End of Second Special Session (Alaska LNG)**
- ▶ Sat June 27 - Candidate withdrawal deadline
- ▶ Wed July 1: First Day of State Fiscal Year 2027
 - ▶ **Rural Health Transformation Advisory Council Meeting**; register [HERE](#), 9 to 11 a.m.
- ▶ Sun July 19 - Voter registration deadline (Primary)
- ▶ Mon Aug 3 - Absentee In Person, Early Vote, Electronic, Special Needs Voting Begins (Primary)
- ▶ Sat Aug 8 - Deadline to Apply for Absentee By Mail / Regional Offices Open for Absentee and In Person Voting (Primary)
- ▶ **Tues Aug 18 - 2026 Primary Election - see candidates [HERE](#): Polls 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.**
- ▶ Aug 25-27 - Alaska Municipal League: “Summer Legislative Conference” Fairbanks
- ▶ Mon Aug 31: Target Date to Certify Primary Election Results/Deadline to Withdraw from General Election
- ▶ Mon Sept 7 - Labor Day
- ▶ Sun Oct 4 - Voter registration deadline (General)
- ▶ Mon Oct 12 - Indigenous Peoples / Columbus Day
- ▶ Oct 18-21 - First Alaskans Institute: “Elders & Youth Conference” Anchorage
- ▶ Mon Oct 19: Alaska Day Observed
 - ▶ Absentee In Person, Early Vote, Electronic, Special Needs Voting Begins (General)
- ▶ Oct 22-24 - Alaska Federation of Natives: “AFN Convention” Anchorage
- ▶ Sat Oct 24 - Deadline to Apply for Absentee By Mail / Regional Offices Open for Absentee and In Person Voting (General)
- ▶ Oct 27-29 - Alaska Municipal League: “Rural Energy Conference” Fairbanks
- ▶ **Tues Nov 3 - 2026 General Election: Polls 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and unofficial Results 9 p.m.**



**Quyanaqpak and Taikuu
Working together to advance
your priorities**