

Alaska State Legislature

Chairman
State Affairs Committee

Vice-Chair
Judiciary Committee

Vice-Chair
Veterans' Caucus

Member
Transportation Committee
Joint Armed Services Special Committee

Finance Subcommittees
Administration
Corrections
Military and Veterans' Affairs



A Communication From
REPRESENTATIVE BOB LYNN
District 23 Anchorage

Session:
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October 24, 2013

TO: Representative Mike Hawker, Chair
Legislative Council

FR: Representative Bob Lynn

RE: Staff use of Facebook

It would be very helpful to our office and I assume other offices, if my staff could have access to my Facebook page. I do put posts on there that relate to legislative issues and events. Please open up Facebook to staff at the individual legislator's discretion. Thanks!

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bob Lynn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.



Representative Scott Jio Wo Kawasaki

Alaska State Legislature

October 29, 2013

The Honorable Mike Hawker
716 W. 4th Ave. Suite 610
Anchorage AK, 99501-2133

Dear Chairman Hawker:

Thank you for taking up the issue of utilizing Facebook and other forms of social media for legislative business on legislative networks and computers. I oppose banning the use of Facebook and other social media on legislative computers. I also support very strict and clear guidelines for social media use and a policy to allow legislators to exercise their own authority of whether their office and staff should be connected. Here are some thoughts the committee could consider in drafting a policy.

I have used Facebook and social media for personal and professional uses and campaigns for more than a decade. The medium of constituent communications has changed greatly in a few short years. The antiquated snail mail and phone calls were largely replaced with the facsimile and Public Opinion Messaging System. Now, any person can reach a lawmaker directly through electronic mail. Audio conferences are now video conferences where constituents actually get to see real-time reactions to public comments. With over one billion Facebook users and more social networks with which to interact with lawmakers, constituents can have the kind of access that they deserve without moving the Capitol. To remove any form of communication would deny access to the very people the legislature seeks to serve and will represent a step backward in a government that should strive to be more open and transparent.

Very strict and clear guidelines should be established with consultation with the Legislative Ethics Committee and the Alaska Public Offices Commission. The guiding principle should be that the public deserves every potential point of open access to communicate and dialogue with the Legislature. A Facebook page could be the standard for members to communicate with the public, instead of a personal profile which is only open to 'friends.' Social media should not be used as a way to circumvent public records laws and all messages should therefore become public messages.

Once again, thank you for taking up the issue and considering the establishment of clear guidelines for the Legislature to follow. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance to you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Kawasaki".

Representative Scott Kawasaki
City of Fairbanks