

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**JANUARY 16, 2023  
10:00 AM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Sara Hannan, Chair  
Senator Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair  
Representative Matt Claman  
Representative Bryce Edgmon  
Representative Neal Foster  
Representative Louise Stutes  
Representative Cathy Tilton  
Representative Chris Tuck  
Senator Peter Micciche  
Senator Bert Stedman  
Senator Gary Stevens

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Click Bishop  
Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senator Shelley Hughes (alternate)  
Senator Mike Shower

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Andy Josephson  
Representative Kevin McCabe  
Representative Dan Ortiz  
Representative Calvin Schrage  
Senator Tom Begich  
Senator Scott Kawasaki

**AGENDA**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
COMMITTEE BUSINESS

**SPEAKER REGISTER**

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs  
Agency (LAA)  
Megan Wallace, Legal Services Director, LAA  
Emily Nauman, Legal Services Deputy Director, LAA  
Mindy Kissner, Finance Manager, LAA

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

[10:05:29 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the Legislative Council meeting to order at 10:05 am on January 16, 2023. Present at the call were: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Stedman, Reinbold, Stevens.

Eleven members present.

## **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

[10:06:35 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved that Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented. She then objected to amend the agenda to add a policy discussion regarding legislators facing litigation in their official capacity.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON agreed there should be discussion on the item.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK stated out of respect for an outgoing legislator, he would like to see the item added to the agenda.

[10:09:32 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken to amend the agenda.

YEAS: Representatives Tilton, Tuck; Senator Reinbold

NAYS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes; Senators Stedman, Stevens

The motion to amend the agenda failed 3-7.

[10:11:09 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken to approve the agenda as presented.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Stedman, Reinbold, Stevens

NAYS: None

The motion passed 11-0.

## **III. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **A. Sanctioning of Charitable Events**

[10:11:59 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked unanimous consent that the Legislative Council ratify the Chair's sanctioning of the following charitable events per AS 24.60.080(a)(2)(B) for the Governor's Inaugural Celebration in Juneau on January 20, 2023; Fairbanks on January 28, 2023; and in Anchorage on February 18, 2023.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for purposes of discussion and noted that, as Chair, she had sanctioned these events, which now need to be ratified, and verified the Governor's Inaugural Committee was a 501(c)(3) organization. There was no discussion, Chair Hannan removed her objection and the sanctioning of these events was ratified unanimously.

**B. Approval of Legislative Legal Services Priority Policy as Amended December 19, 2022**

CHAIR HANNAN stated that this item includes approval of the priority policy as amended December 19, 2022; consideration of an additional amendment; and a determination of the implementation timeline of the amended policy.

[10:13:51 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved and asked that the Legislative Council adopt the Legislative Legal Services Priority Policy dated December 19, 2022.

CHAIR HANNAN objected for purposes of discussion and asked Megan Wallace and Emily Nauman to speak to this item.

EMILY NAUMAN, Deputy Director of Legal Services, stated that both amendments made to the priority policy in the meeting in December were done by a verbal motion with nothing in writing. Additional small changes were made to the language to ensure the amendments fit with the existing priority policy and to address details not considered in the meeting [Number 10 of the priority policy]: (1) clarification that the 10 measure limit for individual legislators was per session (10 for the first session and 10 for the second session of a legislature); (2) the individual legislator request deadline was the first sixty days of the first session of a legislature and thirty-five days for the second session to coincide with the existing personal bill deadline; (3) adding language for special sessions called by the governor that priority will be given to measures that are the subject of the special session; and (4) including committee-sponsored measures that have no limit.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK asked for clarification that if the governor calls a special session, the bills are limited to the scope he proposes, but when the Legislature calls themselves in, there is no limit.

MS. NAUMAN responded that the ten-bill limit would apply if the Legislature called a special session.

In response to questions from Senator Stevens, Ms. Nauman stated that individual drafting requests regularly exceeded ten measures, referred members to the meeting packet that included detail showing several members had introduced more than twenty bills during the 32<sup>nd</sup> Legislature; and noted that the number of drafting requests greatly exceeded the number of bills introduced.

SENATOR STEVENS asked if the amended policy would help to control the Legal Services workload.

MS. NAUMAN said it will have the effect of reorganizing the work so that after a legislator has requested ten bills and after the sixtieth day, any new bill requests from that legislator will be a lower priority in a drafter's queue. All bill requests will eventually be drafted, this just allows staff to more efficiently prioritize their workload.

SENATOR STEVENS noted that nobody's bill requests would be disqualified, just fall to the bottom of the priority list. He asked if Legal Services agreed that before this policy change, some bill requests were unable to be addressed timely and that having some controls means the work will be more efficiently done. Ms. Nauman confirmed that was her belief.

CHAIR HANNAN interjected that the term 'limit' could be misleading; there is no limit to the number of bills a legislator can request, it just changes the priority of individual requests after ten.

MS. NAUMAN, in response to a question from Speaker Stutes about whether the limit was applied to pre-file requests, said for the Thirty-Second Legislature a lot of the pre-file requests occurred before the amended policy was adopted, so it is something Council will need to address later in this meeting; however, in the future, pre-file requests will be counted toward the ten request priority limit.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON asked that in the first session of a two-year legislature, if an individual member requested ten bills and workload for Legal continued to be high after the

personal bill deadline, is it presumed that Legal will work over the interim on some of those lower priority bill draft requests or will the intent be to get them done during the regular session.

MS. NAUMAN responded it is always Legal's goal to finish all drafting in a timely manner. The time it takes to draft a bill depends primarily on the complexity of the subject. If a bill request comes in after the personal bill deadline, but is a very simple bill or a duplicate of a previously drafted bill, the new draft would be done fairly quickly; the drafting of more complex bills may continue into the interim.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON, citing an example from a previous legislature of a member introducing 16 personal bills near the end of the session, said he thinks this is a good start, and would support a stronger and more definitive policy in the future.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN asked what the numbers were looking like for the Thirty-Third Legislature.

MEGAN WALLACE, Director of Legal Services, said the requests for drafts this session range from zero to twelve per legislator, so there are a few members that have reached ten this session. Some of those requests may have been made prior to the policy being amended as Legal Services receives pre-file requests before the current legislature has adjourned.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK recognized the hard work of Legal Services on behalf of all legislators and thanked them for their dedication. He said he felt this policy was a result of the actions of a small number of legislators and was very pleased that the recommendation was to prioritize bill requests rather than limit. He asked for clarification on if it was ten bills requested or ten bills introduced; Ms. Nauman confirmed it was ten bills requested. He followed up to ask if a legislator could withdraw a bill request upon discovering that another legislator had requested the same bill be drafted; Ms. Nauman confirmed that canceling a bill request was allowed.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON asked that if an existing bill was previously drafted but had to be changed, does that count as part of a legislator's ten bill priority limit.

MS. NAUMAN stated that an update to an existing bill (one drafted for the current legislature) does not count as a new bill, but if a bill drafted in a previous legislature was requested for the current legislature, it would count as a new

bill and toward the ten request priority limit, even if it was a duplicate of the past bill.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON asked if it was possible for a legislator to re-prioritize their individual bill requests.

MS. NAUMAN said if the legislation was still in Legal Services, that would be possible and repeated that it was the goal of Legal Services to draft all bill requests in a timely manner.

MS. WALLACE added that an option available to legislators was to ask leadership to request that their individual bill be prioritized as leadership requests are a higher priority in the policy; alternatively, the legislator could ask a committee to submit the bill request, as committee requests are the same priority as the first ten measures for an individual legislator.

MS. NAUMAN, in response to a comment by Senator Reinbold and to ensure a correct record, said that any bill that requires a new work order will count toward the priority limit for bill requests; a new version of an existing bill does not.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED regarding limiting the number of bills introduced by the governor (beyond the scope of this policy), if the amendments change the power of the presiding officers (they do not), and Legal Services staffing options.

MS. WALLACE, in response to a question from Representative Tuck, said the current priority policy not only prioritizes based on the number of requests, but also makes a clear delineation in terms of the timing of those requests. It was a policy decision that requests made after the sixtieth day of the first session would fall to the lowest priority irrespective of how many requests a legislator had previously made based on the anticipated workload at that stage in the session.

SENATOR STEDMAN said that looking at the charts, it's clear that at least half of legislators do not go over ten bills and, if they do, they can ask a colleague to file their good idea or be a co-sponsor. He said there is no intent to stifle the legislative process, so if there are 'barnacles' with this policy change, Council can modify as necessary. He noted that one legislator had more than 35 bill requests and while they may all be good ideas, they aren't all number one good ideas, so he feels that there has been abuse of the system for tactical and political reasons and this is a good start.

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE said that Council pursued this option to address those legislators significantly outside of the mean without limiting access and within existing Legal Services resources so there wouldn't be a dramatic increase in cost to the Legislature by adding attorneys. He asked for confirmation of his assumption that the work necessary to draft individual bill requests after the priority limit of ten would not result in attorney overtime, but would occur as the normal workday and workload allowed.

MS. WALLACE confirmed that his assumption was correct, continuing that this clear policy direction will allow Legal Services to better prioritize staff workloads and to limit overtime to higher priority items.

CHAIR HANNAN indicated she was ready to vote on the motion then recognized Representative Claman.

[10:42:45 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN moved that Legislative Council amend the Legal Services Priority Policy dated December 19, 2022, to specify that priority within each category shall be in the order the request was taken and in proportion to all legislators making requests within the same category.

VICE-CHAIR REINBOLD objected.

[10:43:06 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

[10:44:26 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order. She apologized for any confusion and clarified that Representative Claman was offering an amendment to the motion to approve the Legal Services Priority Policy dated December 19, 2022.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN stated that that the language he proposes to amend is the last sentence on page two that reads, "Priority within each category shall be in the order the request was taken" his motion would add the language, "and in proportion to all legislators making requests within the same category."

Representative Claman, speaking to the reason for his amendment, provided an example that if there is a floor session and Legislator X requests fifty amendments and three other legislators each request one amendment after Legislator X submitted fifty requests, this policy change would give

Legal Services the ability to draft the single amendment requests before drafting all fifty amendment requests by Legislator X. This policy makes the amendment request process fair and equitable.

REPRESENTATIVE CLAMAN, in response to a request for clarification by Senator Reinbold, replied that as a matter of Legal Services managing their workload, it is reasonable for them to have flexibility in giving all legislators a decent opportunity to have amendments drafted. He added that if a legislator submits fifty amendment requests for a bill on the floor, perhaps they should take some responsibility in prioritizing their own requests.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED regarding additional requests for clarification by Senator Reinbold of Representative Claman's amendment language and intent, specific mention of fairness, equity, nonpartisan support, and workload management. Ms. Wallace summarized that this language provided Legal Services the flexibility to respond to as many requests from as many members as possible and noted that the changes to the priority policy are explained on page five of her memo.

SENATOR STEDMAN said it might help the public to understand that a lot of the bill requests or amendments never see the light of day, it is just tactical maneuvering to gum up the system, drive up the cost and make us less efficient. With this policy, Council is trying to un-gum the system, lower the cost, and make us more efficient. If members are uncomfortable with these limits, they should be doing the work in committee. He said he looks forward to implementing these changes and Council can revisit in the future.

[10:55:33 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Stedman, Stevens

NAYS: Senator Reinbold

The motion to amend passed 10-1.

[10:56:35 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

[10:57:16 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order.

[10:58:38 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved that Legislative Council amend the Legal Services Priority Policy dated December 19, 2022, and amended on January 16, 2023.

[10:59:42 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Stedman, Stevens

NAYS: Senator Reinbold

The motion to adopt the Legal Services Priority Policy as amended passed 10-1.

### **C. Further Amendment to Legislative Legal Services Priority Policy**

CHAIR HANNAN explained that the next decision for Council is to determine the implementation timeline of the priority policy for the Thirty-third Legislature; specifically with regard to when the ten request priority limit will go into effect since several legislators had submitted requests prior to Council setting the priority limit.

[11:01:54 AM](#)

SPEAKER STUTES moved that the policy be implemented effective on January 17, 2023, and that any drafting that has occurred prior to that date is not included in the limits of this policy.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON agreed that the start date should coincide with the start of the new legislature which would provide parity to all legislators. She asked that memo should go out to all members for legislation planning purposes.

MS. WALLACE, in response to a question from Senator Stedman about the effects of the implementation date on Legal Services' workload, said that most of the bill requests have been completed and sent out. She said Legal Services has no recommendation on this policy decision and believed there would be minimal impact to the workload either way.

Ms. Wallace, in response to a clarification question by Representative Tuck, said that the choice before members now is an implementation date of either December 19, 2022, or January 17, 2023; the handling of early bill requests was not discussed at the December 19, 2022, Council meeting so

clarification on the implementation date would be appreciated. She went on to explain to members that the motions approved to amend the priority policy in December 2022 were a mixture of written and verbal, and Legal Services wanted to ensure that the finally amended policy was what Council had intended and, additionally, to request an implementation date as that item was not discussed in the December 2022 meeting.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED to again request that a memo be sent to all legislators regarding the changes to the Legal Services Priority Policy; in support of equal access for all legislators; and in general support for the motion.

[11:10:45 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes, Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Reinbold, Stevens

NAYS: Senator Stedman

The motion to implement the policy effective January 17, 2023, passed 10-1.

#### **D. Legislative Staff Session Housing Stipend**

CHAIR HANNAN explained that this issue has been raised by several legislators concerned about recruitment and retention of legislative staff. She asked Ms. Geary and Ms. Kissner, Finance Manager, to summarize the history of the staff stipend.

[11:12:07 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

[11:12:37 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order.

SPEAKER STUTES moved that Legislative Council table this issue and that it be brought up when the Thirty-Third Legislative Council has been seated.

[11:13:07 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

[11:15:44 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order.

CHAIR HANNAN, in response to an objection to the motion, indicated a motion to table is not debatable and requested a roll call vote.

11:16:02 AM

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Stutes, Tilton; Senators Micciche, Stedman

NAYS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Tuck, Senators Reinbold, Stevens

The motion to table failed 4-7.

CHAIR HANNAN asked Ms. Geary and Ms. Kissner, to speak to this item.

MINDY KISSNER, Finance Manager with the Legislative Affairs Agency, said that in 2019, Legislative Council adopted a \$30 per day lodging stipend for staff relocating to the capital. This amount matches the long term, noncommercial per diem allocated by the executive branch. LAA was asked to provide a break down on what it would cost if the staff lodging stipend was increased; using \$5 increments, the budget impact of increasing the staff lodging stipend to \$35 per day is \$78,000, \$40 per day is \$156,000, and \$45 per day is \$234,000.

Ms. Kissner, in response to a question from Senator Stedman, said that the current long term lodging stipend for executive branch employees is \$30 per day.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED about the rate when adjusted for inflation; Ms. Geary noted that the average rent on the Legislative Housing List has increased approximately \$200 a month since 2020 when the policy was first implemented, which would equate to an increase of about \$7 a day to the lodging stipend. Though the analysis was provided in \$5 per day increments, Council can determine the increase.

REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER noted that the original lodging stipend was approximately \$900 a month; with rents averaging \$1500 per month for apartments and \$2100 per month for a single-family home, he said he was comfortable with an increase of \$20 per day, making the monthly stipend \$1500.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON stated her support for retaining legislative staff and that she was concerned that the rental rates for session housing were increased based on the amount

of the staff lodging stipend. She expressed that it was her personal opinion that it would be better to have sessions on the road system and asked if it was possible to do an analysis of the rate increase from 2020, when the lodging stipend was implemented, to current rental rates.

MS. KISSNER said that in 2020 the housing list had apartments averaging \$1300, ranging from \$800-2000, and houses averaging \$1900 a month, ranging from \$1050-3200.

SENATOR STEDMAN said he would be comfortable with an increase of \$7.50 to keep even with inflation and agreed with Representative Tilton's concern that raising the lodging stipend could have an impact on rental rates. He said it was reasonable to adjust the lodging stipend every few years for inflation or have a periodic review by Legislative Council. He finished by saying that for those that feel the road system is a good place, he would recommend putting the Capitol on an island as it would make everyone more productive.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK, noting that the \$900 monthly stipend amount was about 70% of the average monthly apartment rate of \$1300 in 2020, and 70% of the 2023 average monthly apartment rate of \$1500 is about \$1055, so he agreed with Senator Stedman's recommendation of raising the stipend \$7.50 a day.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON said he supports in concept of approving the highest increase for the lodging stipend but with worker shortages all across Alaska, he is concerned about the perception. He mentioned the Assembly Building, which may be made available to legislative staff at no cost; the call for pay raises in the public and private sector; the State Officers Compensation Commission recommending a salary increase for commissioners from \$136,000 to \$168,000; and the issue of legislator compensation which will probably come up. He said this is difficult for him, that one could argue that the highest increase is inadequate, but he believes Council also needs to consider the perception of this policy decision.

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE said Council has been reviewing numbers for months and he believes the information being provided is correct. There is fierce competition for employees and members cannot do their jobs without staff. He said he thought there were several options for the executive branch and how they pay per diem, but the Legislature has one. He said looking at the increased costs and trends over the past decade, taking into account that the Legislature will soon be adding 33 units, which may relieve some market pressure, he was willing to make a motion to increase the daily stipend by

\$10 for the Thirty-Third Legislature. He said Legislative Council can re-evaluate going forward. He ended by saying that he understands staff face a hardship, that he's heard rumors of new staff sleeping on inflatable beds and said he thinks the Legislature wants good staff who are well-rested and able to serve.

11:29:39 AM

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved that Legislative Council add \$10 to the Moving and Travel Policy and staff lodging stipend for the Thirty-Third Legislature.

REPRESENTATIVE TILTON objected to ask since it is still the Thirty-Second Legislature, would this motion encumber the Thirty-Third Legislature and are there existing funds to cover this increase.

MS. GEARY responded that the motion as drafted also requests a supplemental in the FY23 budget and an increment in the FY24 budget, and the budget request would go before the next Legislative Council.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked if the Legislature increased salaries last year for legislative staff.

MS. GEARY stated that there was a five percent cost of living adjustment effective October 31, 2022. She added that this was the first one that legislative and other exempt staff received, while the executive branch employees in bargaining unions have been getting regular increases.

SENATOR STEDMAN stated that the Legislature has not had a raise in over a decade or longer. He said he thinks the target rate is better set at \$7.50, which is close to the inflation rate, and if other issues surface the next Council can deal with it.

11:32:53 AM

SENATOR STEDMAN moved to amend Senate President Micciche's motion to change the increase from \$10 a day to \$7.50 a day.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED regarding the need to state the entire motion for the record with the figure of \$7.50 a day.

11:34:32 AM

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved that the Legislative Council amend the Moving and Travel Policy to increase the staff lodging stipend to a total of \$37.50 per day effective January 1, 2023. She further moved that the Legislative Council support

the FY 2023 supplemental request and FY 2024 increment request for the amount of \$117,000 for consideration by the Finance Committee to fund this increase.

11:35:14 AM

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

11:38:54 AM

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order and, following parliamentary procedure, asked both Senator Stedman and Senate President Micciche to withdraw their motions.

SENATOR STEDMAN withdrew his motion to amend \$10 a day down to \$7.50 a day.

SENATOR MICCICHE withdrew his original motion.

11:39:43 AM

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD, restating the motion, moved that Legislative Council amend the Moving and Travel Policy to increase the staff lodging stipend to a total of \$37.50 per day effective January 1, 2023. She further moved that Legislative Council support the FY 2023 supplemental request and FY 2024 increment request in the amount of \$117,000 for consideration by the Finance Committee to fund this increase.

REPRESENTATIVE FOSTER objected and stated his support of the \$10 increase.

11:42:01 AM

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE moved to amend the motion for an increase of \$10 per day or a total of \$40 per day with a FY 2023 supplemental request and FY 2024 increment request of \$156,000.

SENATOR STEDMAN objected and said he supported the original motion of \$7.50 per day.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK said that a \$7.50 increase equates to 75% of the average rent of \$1500 and when combined with the 5% cost of living adjustment staff received, he thought it was adequate.

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD said this was a difficult vote because staff are listening. She said that staff receive step increases, have their moving expenses paid, some are well compensated already, and this will be an increase to the budget. She preferred the original motion, so will likely be a 'no' vote on this amendment.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON asked if this policy only pertained to regular sessions and not special sessions.

MS. KISSNER affirmed that it was only for regular sessions.

[11:45:51 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called a brief at ease.

[11:46:22 AM](#)

CHAIR HANNAN called the meeting back to order and requested a roll vote on the motion to amend.

[11:47:08 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Foster; Senator Micciche

NAYS: Representatives Edgmon, Stutes, Tilton, Hannan, Tuck;  
Senators Reinbold, Stedman, Stevens

The motion to amend failed 3-8.

CHAIR HANNAN said that brings Council back to the original motion of a \$7.50 increase to the daily staff lodging stipend.

[11:48:25 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Representatives Claman, Edgmon, Foster, Hannan, Stutes,  
Tilton, Tuck; Senators Micciche, Reinbold, Stedman,  
Stevens

NAYS: None

The motion passed 11-0.

#### **IV. ADJOURN**

CHAIR HANNAN said this was her last meeting as Chair and thanked members for their time and service. She said she learned a lot and gained much knowledge from her fellow Council members. There have been twenty-five Council meetings over the last two years that she served as Chair.

Chair Hannan said she specifically wanted to take the time to recognize the extraordinary work of Executive Director Jessica Geary whose professionalism and tirelessness are immeasurable. Until she became Chair, she did not appreciate the 24/7 nature

of the job to keep this institution functioning. Ms. Geary has proved indispensable to the Legislature during some of the most challenging times in our history: during the COVID pandemic, creating policies never before contemplated and contracts for testing and quarantining. Ms. Geary has been able to deftly manage the seemingly endless series of crises in the last two years, though maybe it has always been that way. When things are running smoothly, legislators are unaware of the work going on behind the scenes.

Chair Hannan continued that she regularly hears from Director Geary's staff about the pride they take and the respect they have for their boss. She is tremendously committed to the institution of the Legislature and every one of her actions and decisions is made with that commitment in mind. She said Ms. Geary was her high school student a long, long, long time ago, and to have learned so much from her has been a privilege and an honor. It has been an honor to work with her over the last two years. She wished Ms. Geary could take a week off, but since she cannot, Chair Hannan said she offered a small token of flower bouquets with appreciation and respect.

Addressing Ms. Geary directly, Chair Hannan said it has truly been an honor to work with her these last two years and she really wished could turn her phone off at night but knows she won't. Ms. Geary hears from sixty bosses on a regular basis and the demands are relentless. She then opened the floor to other members.

SENATOR STEVENS thanked Ms. Geary as well [somewhat inaudible].

SPEAKER STUTES requested everyone please give Ms. Geary a big thank you and a round of applause.

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD expressed that it was a privilege to serve in the Legislature and on Council with all of the members and offered her appreciation to everyone at Legislative Affairs, who she said have been amazing from Accounting to Legal Services to so many others that make the Legislature work at huge sacrifice. She ended with a reminder that we are a constitutional republic, not a democracy, and that every member takes a sacred oath to the constitution which is the supreme law of the land. She wished all new members good luck and everyone a nice session.

SENATE PRESIDENT MICCICHE expressed his thanks to Chair Hannan for her service and appreciated her consistency and her assertiveness when necessary to solve some tough issues. He

offered his thanks to all at this meeting, which is also his last.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK thanked Chair Hannan and said if Jessica Geary is an example of one of her students, he is grateful for her and the impact she has had on all her students.

CHAIR HANNAN closed the meeting by saying it has been a privilege to learn from her fellow members as Chair of Legislative Council and said they have been a 'crafty bunch.' She noted to Ms. Geary that all her staff were in the room as well as her husband to see this recognition. She said the work Ms. Geary does keeps the Legislature going and as the Agency does its work, no one notices because everything is running smoothly.

VICE CHAIR REINBOLD moved to adjourn the meeting.

With no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM.

[11:57:06 AM](#)