

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**DECEMBER 12, 2024
9:30 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Chair
Representative Kevin McCabe, Vice Chair
Senator Click Bishop
Senator Matt Claman
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Jesse Kiehl
Senator Bert Stedman (alternate)
Senator Gary Stevens
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Sara Hannan
Representative George Rauscher
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Cathy Tilton

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Donny Olson
Representative Craig Johnson

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Jesse Bjorkman
Senator Cathy Giessel
Representative Louise Stutes

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
APPROVAL OF MINUTES
CONTRACT APPROVALS
OLD COMMITTEE BUSINESS
EXECUTIVE SESSION
NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS

SPEAKER REGISTER

Jessica Geary, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency
(LAA)
JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, LAA
Shay Wilson, Chief Information Officer, LAA
Tim Powers, Chief Technology and Outreach Officer, LAA
Emily Nauman, Director, Legal Services, LAA
Sara Race, Account Executive Gartner

I. CALL TO ORDER

9:32:58 AM

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON called the Legislative Council meeting to order in the Anchorage Legislative Information Office Denali Room. Present at the call were: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Tilton, McCabe.

Eleven members present.

Representative Saddler joined at 9:46am and Representative Rauscher joined at 9:49am, both via teleconference.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

9:34:55 AM

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved and asked unanimous consent that the Legislative Council approve the agenda as presented.

The motion passed without objection.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

9:35:20 AM

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve the minutes for the September 26, 2024, meeting as presented.

The motion passed without objection.

IV. CONTRACT APPROVALS

a. Anchorage Security Contract Renewal

9:35:41 AM

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that the Legislative Council approve renewal number 2 of the contract for armed security services with Security Services Northwest in an amount not to exceed \$199,449.20.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked that JC Kestel, Procurement Officer, speak to the item.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA), stated that in the packet is a memorandum regarding a renewal of the current contract (Renewal No. 1) with Security Services Northwest for armed security services at the Anchorage Legislative Office Building currently set to expire on December 31, 2024. The Legislative Affairs Agency is satisfied with the contractor's performance and requests Legislative Council's approval to proceed with Renewal No. 2. This renewal would extend the contract for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. If approved, three

additional one-year renewal options will remain before a new solicitation is required.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS asked if the contracted security officer also patrols Wells Fargo and does Wells Fargo have their own security officer. He asked if the legislature should offer security services to Wells Fargo as a tenant to keep them in the building and continue to help offset the Anchorage Legislative Office Building (ALOB) operating costs.

MR. KESTEL responded that the legislature is not responsible for the Wells Fargo area. Wells Fargo is to contract their own security officer, which they do not have currently. Extending security services to them would need to be discussed with the Executive Director and Legislative Council Chair to amend the contract and extend their duties. The contract currently does not include the coverage of Wells Fargo.

SENATOR CLAMAN offered praise to the security team.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON asked if the dollar amount was for 24/7 coverage.

MR. KESTEL responded that the coverage was Monday through Friday 7am-6pm with two to three evening patrols and as needed for extra duties on weekends.

There was no further discussion. Chair Gray-Jackson removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[9:40:35 AM](#)

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Tilton, McCabe

NAYS: none

The motion passed 11-0.

b. Technology Services Contract

[9:41:30 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that Legislative Council approve a three-year partnership with Gartner and a Year 1 price of \$179,200.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for purposes of discussion and asked Shay Wilson, Chief Information Officer, and Tim Powers, Chief Technology and Outreach Officer, as well as Sara Race, Account Executive with Gartner, to speak to this item.

SHAY WILSON, Chief Information Officer, LAA, referred members to the related memo in their packets and said he planned to speak to the issue this contract is trying to solve. He said technology is a fast moving industry where a significant effort must be spent to keep up with changes. Recently technology is becoming a more vital component and touching more aspects of our work. Despite the awe-inspiring collection of talent the legislature has cultivated in your Division of Technology and Information (DTI), we simply cannot be experts in every new technology and the costs of missed opportunity and choosing the wrong technology are just too high.

Mr. Wilson continued that after choosing technologies, and carefully configuring and securing to protect our systems from the severe costs of a cybersecurity incident, DTI could use expert guidance and a second set of eyes overlooking our work to help us find the right technologies and in assessing and finding our blind spots. Mr. Wilson then introduced Sara Race to talk about how Gartner might address some of these issues.

SARA RACE, Account Executive, Gartner, presented an overview of Gartner's expertise and proposed support for the Legislature. She highlighted Gartner's 46 years of experience as a leading research and advisory firm, emphasizing their ability to deliver unbiased information and a vendor-agnostic approach. This contract would allow DTI access to over 2,500 subject matter experts who have experience providing IT support for organizations across all business functions, from Fortune 500 companies to the White House to local governments, as well as international organizations. Gartner's depth and range of experience ensures awareness of the latest technology trends and pitfalls. This allows Gartner to better advise and direct an organization's use of limited resources.

Ms. Race explained that Gartner's support in this contract would focus on three primary areas: cybersecurity and information risk management, efficient IT management and cost optimization, and AI implementation to achieve operational outcomes. She highlighted the importance of ensuring preparedness against cyberattacks, aligning risk tolerance levels, and benchmarking against industry standards. Additionally, Gartner would support in assessing current IT operations, identifying gaps, and recommending best practices to improve services and optimize costs. In the area of AI, she stressed the value of clear definitions and strategic

frameworks to align initiatives with agency objectives and prevent cost overruns.

Ms. Race emphasized Gartner's service model is designed to support a wide range of needs beyond the three outlined initiatives. She concluded by reiterating the importance of leveraging Gartner's unbiased insights and comprehensive resources to ensure the legislature can make informed, strategic decisions that align technology initiatives with agency and legislative needs.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED focused on the potential risks and benefits of artificial intelligence (AI) for the legislature. Senate President Stevens highlighted nationwide concerns about AI and asked for insights from Ms. Race, who stressed the importance of defining AI before addressing its implications. She referenced a prior executive briefing on AI's impact and best practices.

Representative Edgmon inquired whether the AI partnership could assist in policy making, including enforcing legal penalties. Ms. Race clarified that while Gartner can provide research and best practices, it does not offer policy guidance.

Senator Bishop asked if Gartner had reviewed the State's IT program for gaps and whether, if approved, the partnership would include assessments for LAA. Ms. Race confirmed that no partnership has been established yet but emphasized the value of self-assessments for cybersecurity and operations. She affirmed that Gartner would provide these assessments to LAA. Senator Claman asked about the frequency of updates on the assessment process. Mr. Wilson explained that updates are typically provided through the IT Subcommittee, which reports to the Legislative Council, but a direct reporting method could be established if needed.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, LAA, at the request of Senate President Stevens, said that she fully supports the proposal, emphasizing the value of an external firm ensuring alignment with industry best practices in a rapidly evolving landscape. She views it as a responsible measure to safeguard legislative operations and is open to reporting updates as needed, depending on the findings and appropriate reporting level.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON noted that Alaska is in the early stages of AI policy development and referenced a past AI-related bill that did not pass. He asked whether the proposed

arrangement with the advisory firm would support the legislature in developing AI policy by providing information through LAA. He also compared AI policy to broadband regulation, highlighting the need for legislative action and wondered if this partnership would facilitate that process.

SENATOR BISHOP, in follow-up to Representative Edgmon's comment, acknowledged the perceived significant cost of the proposed arrangement but emphasized the need for perspective, suggesting that if compared to the potential financial impact of a legislative shutdown, that would likely outweigh the expense of this proposal which seems to him a bargain.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON thanked the previous speaker and members for the discussion and before withdrawing her objection expressed familiarity with Gartner, noting its successful partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage, and voiced support for the Legislative Affairs Agency's proposed partnership, pending the vote. Seeing no other comments, she withdrew her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[10:03:07 AM](#)

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Tilton, McCabe

NAYS: Representative Rauscher

The motion passes 11-1.

NOTE FOR THE RECORD: Representative Rauscher intended to vote yes on this item but was participating via teleconference and misunderstood the motion.

V. OLD COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Social Media Policy

[10:04:07 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved that the Legislative Council adopt the Social Media Policy as amended and authorize the Legislative Affairs Agency the authority to make technical and conforming changes.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for purposes of discussion and asked Emily Nauman, Director, Legal Services, to speak to the item.

[10:04:33 AM](#)

Council took a brief at-ease.

[10:14:16 AM](#)

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

[10:14:20 AM](#)

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON repeated her objection and requested Emily Nauman to speak to the item.

EMILY NAUMAN, Legal Services Director, LAA, began by reminding the committee that the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling on the use of social media by public officials in the *Lindke v. Freed* case (March 2024), which resulted in Legal Services proposing updates to the Social Media Policy at the April 30, 2024, Legislative Council meeting; those updates were not adopted. In response to questions and comments at that meeting, Legal Services amended the proposed updates as follows:

Recommendation 1(d) was updated to include a suggestion that if the information being posted was available elsewhere, legislators include a link to the other option, as courts are more likely to view exclusive postings as an official government action. This change, proposed by Senator Claman, provides evidence that the information is publicly accessible, reducing the risk of First Amendment violations.

Recommendation 2 was updated to acknowledge that not all social media platforms allow universal comment disabling, noting that where that option was available, it should be used and further advising legislators to turn off comments where possible or manage them on a post-by-post basis.

Recommendation 5 was added to clarify when legislators can legally filter, hide, or block comments and users, regarding the removal of obscene content which should not constitute viewpoint discrimination.

Ms. Nauman concluded by emphasizing that *Lindke* serves as a framework for determining whether public officials' social media actions could be considered government conduct and, if so, whether they infringe on First Amendment rights.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE asked Ms. Nauman if, under *Lindke*, whether a legislator, who he said cannot solely represent the State, could ever be considered a public official with exclusive authority to speak for the State.

MS. NAUMAN responded explaining that under *Lindke*, "State action" requires both possessing and exercising actual authority, making it difficult for an individual legislator

to meet this two-pronged test. While roles like committee chairs or legislative leaders might come closer, Alaska's public records system (BASIS) reduces the likelihood of exclusive authority to make committee announcements or exclusive authority for leadership announcements as it takes an entire body to make a decision. Ms. Nauman said as she understands *Lindke*, it would make it very difficult for an individual legislator to act with the authority of the state; she qualified her response by saying that *Lindke* is related to a municipal employee, therefore this is still a gap in legal precedent to know how the courts would take that decision and apply it to legislators.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE emphasized that, unlike a mayor or city manager who holds sole authority to act for their entity, an individual legislator cannot act unilaterally without votes from others and the governor. He stressed the importance of this distinction and indicated he had additional amendments to propose.

[10:21:14 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved to amend page 1 paragraph 2 by adding the word "solely" to the last sentence so it reads, "it is the policy of Legislative Council that a legislator assumes all risk and responsibility for legal defense of any action resulted from filtering, deleting, or hiding comments on a social media post related to legislative matters or from blocking, banning, or otherwise restricting user access to a social media account used **solely** for legislative matters."

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATOR CLAMAN asked a clarifying question on the proposed amendment, that the word "solely" is being added on the last line of the paragraph before "legislative matters."

VICE CHAIR MCCABE responded stating that was correct.

MS. NAUMAN noted that this policy change is a Council decision but could shift its meaning by raising the question of Council liability for social media accounts that mix legislative and personal content, a concern highlighted in *Lindke*.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE contended that without the word "solely", the policy could infringe on legislators' First Amendment rights by restricting their ability to discuss legislative matters on personal social media accounts. He emphasized that State officials have private lives and constitutional rights,

including the ability to share job-related information and control speech on their personal platforms.

MS. NAUMAN acknowledged the concern and clarified that the policy primarily defines when the Legislative Council would cover a legislator's legal defense. She noted that adding "solely" raises the question of whether the Council would defend legislators sued over mixed-use social media accounts. While supporting the legislator's First Amendment rights, she also cited *Lindke*, which warns that failing to separate personal and official posts increases liability.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE responded expressing appreciation for the discussion as well as concern that without the word "solely" the policy could expose the legislature to a First Amendment lawsuit from legislators who feel it restricts their ability to share job-related updates on personal social media. He argued that such a restriction could be legally challenged as a violation of free speech rights.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED between Ms. Nauman and Senator Claman, focused on whether adding the word "solely" to the Social Media Policy would impact legislators' ability to seek legal representation from the Legislative Council. Clarifying that the policy as presented without "solely" would categorically deny coverage for litigation related to social media actions. Noting that adding "solely" could create flexibility, allowing legislators with mixed-use accounts to request defense, as the policy would then apply only to accounts used exclusively for legislative matters. The Legislative Council would continue to evaluate such requests on a case-by-case basis.

SENATOR CLAMAN concluded his questions by verifying his understanding that adding "solely" would give legislators more flexibility to request legal representation from the Legislative Council, which would decide on a case-by-case basis.

MS. NAUMAN confirmed that is how she reads it, yes.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE said that if a legislator posts non-legislative content, their account would no longer be considered "solely for legislative matters". He then asked whether any legislative Facebook accounts are funded, operated, or managed by the legislature on behalf of a legislator.

MS. GEARY answered she was unaware of any legislative Facebook accounts funded or operated by the State, though caucus press staff might have accounts, but not State-funded ones.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE noted that *Lindke* considers whether a social media account is state-managed or funded. He referenced the Alaska Public Offices Commission's (APOC) view that personal effort in maintaining an account equates to personal funding. Since legislators fund their own accounts, the legislature would not be obligated to defend them if they choose to use an account solely for legislative matters.

MS. NAUMAN responded that *Lindke* suggests using State resources, such as staff or a State computer, to manage a social media account could indicate State action.

SENATOR BISHOP stated that he is unfamiliar with social media and asked if blocking someone on Facebook is equivalent to refusing mailed responses to a newsletter and whether there is a legal connection between the two actions.

MS. NAUMAN responded that a newsletter differs from social media because it does not create a public forum for interaction. Courts have ruled that allowing comments on a social media account establishes a public forum, meaning officials cannot remove posts based on viewpoint. Unlike a newsletter, where responses are private, deleting comments or blocking users from a public social media forum can raise First Amendment concerns.

SENATOR BISHOP clarified that "solely" creates the ability for legislators to come to Legislative Council and ask if they would defend them or not.

MS. NAUMAN responded yes.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE suggested a better analogy could be comparing a legislator's Facebook page to a public bulletin board they maintain. He said that, under *Lindke*, a legislator has the right to remove inappropriate content posted by others, just as they could remove unauthorized material from their bulletin board. He continued that the policy effectively advises legislators to "lock up" their bulletin board by disabling comments.

MS. NAUMAN agreed that a bulletin board is a better analogy for Facebook, while a newsletter reflects a no-comment social media account. Her advice as a conservative approach is for legislators to remove all third-party posts from their

bulletin boards to avoid creating a public forum. Courts allow removal of obscene content, but the key legal issue is viewpoint discrimination—removing only certain perspectives could lead to legal challenges under *Lindke*.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked whether the policy allows an existing account to switch from allowing comments to a no-comment setting or if this restriction applies only from the account's creation.

MS. NAUMAN stated that most social media platforms allow users to toggle comment settings post by post, even after an account is created. She noted that LAA staff could provide technical details but emphasized that users can generally control comments individually for different posts.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked whether a social media account can switch to a legislative-only, no-comment setting after previously allowing comments on non-legislative posts.

MS. NAUMAN confirmed her understanding that social media settings can be changed but acknowledged she is not an expert and suggested others may have more technical knowledge.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON reminded members to please speak clearly into the microphone so there is an accurate recording.

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON highlighted the key issue of whether to keep the policy general or add the word "solely", creating a strict threshold for legislative social media use. He acknowledged both perspectives and sought further discussion on whether the policy should remain flexible or impose a specific standard that the Legislative Council would later have to interpret.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE explained that his understanding of his amendment is that adding "solely" would allow legislators to create a dedicated legislative page following policy guidelines, while preserving their First Amendment rights to discuss legislative matters on personal pages. Without "solely," he argued the policy could restrict legislators from posting about their job on personal accounts. The intent was to clarify that official legislative pages must follow specific rules to qualify for Legislative Council representation.

[10:46:43 AM](#)

Council took a brief at-ease.

10:51:16 AM

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, seeing no other discussion, removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

10:51:27 AM

YEAS: Senators Claman, Gray-Jackson; Representatives, Rauscher, Tilton, McCabe

NAYS: Senators Bishop, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Saddler

The motion failed 5-8.

NOTE FOR THE RECORD: Representative Saddler voted "nay" but was announced as a "yea" on the record, which reflected a 6 yea, 7 nay vote tally. This discrepancy doesn't change the outcome of the vote.

10:52:50 AM

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved to amend page one, paragraph 1(c) by striking the first clause so it would read as amended: "If sharing official information, do not invoke the authority of the legislature when sharing the information; and...". He said that the clause is unnecessary and redundant as existing policies already govern how official information should be communicated. Additionally, the clause risks infringing upon legislators' First Amendment rights by imposing vague restrictions on communication with constituents; removing this language ensures clarity while respecting constitutional protections.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED to confirm which language the motion intended to strike.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE confirmed that his motion was to strike "Do not share official information and," so the clause would read as amended: "If sharing official information, do not invoke the authority of the legislature when sharing that information; and..."

MS. NAUMAN commented that this amendment is another policy decision. She noted that sharing official information is a key factor in determining state action under *Lindke*. While agreeing with Representative McCabe that an individual legislator is unlikely to be deemed a "State actor," she

emphasized that the most cautious legal advice would be to avoid sharing official information to minimize risk.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS asked whether the policy would restrict press availabilities, as they involve sharing official information about legislative activities, committee actions, and bill progress. He asked if sharing official information in that context would be considered invoking the authority of the legislature.

MS. NAUMAN commented that she initially considered the policy in relation to committee schedules and had not considered press availabilities. She said such information is available elsewhere (e.g., BASIS, KTOO's Gavel Alaska), however, if that information was only available on a legislator's Facebook page and nowhere else, she would advise that legislators avoid deleting comments on that press availability post or block an individual from being able to view it.

SENATOR KIEHL asked whether "official information" has a specific definition in this context and if there is a test to determine what qualifies, citing committee schedules as an example.

MS. NAUMAN responded that *Lindke* focused on a city manager's unilateral actions, making it a less direct fit for legislators. She grappled with defining "*official information*" in a legislative context but suggested it could include committee schedules, as they inform public participation.

SENATOR KIEHL expressed support for the amendment, questioning whether "official information" could include a Senator's stance on a bill and emphasizing the importance of clear guidelines for social media use.

SENATOR CLAMAN expressed support for the amendment, citing constituent meetings as an example. He argued that legislators commonly use social media to advertise such meetings, which are official acts of individual legislators but not the legislature as a whole. Removing "do not share official information" prevents unnecessary restrictions, while keeping "do not invoke the authority of the legislature" ensures legislators do not falsely imply full legislative endorsement.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, seeing no other discussion, removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[11:02:19 AM](#)

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, McCabe

NAYS: none

The motion passed 12-0.

[11:03:12 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved to amend page three, paragraph five by either deleting or modifying it to align with the *Lindke* decision. Specifically, the following paragraph should be addressed where it says "Viewpoint discrimination by a State actor is generally found by the courts to be an infringement of the speaker's First Amendment rights. Viewpoint discrimination occurs when a State actor treats a person's speech differently based on their opinion or perspective on a subject. For example, if a State actor deletes social media comments that criticize a fisheries policy but allows other speech about the fisheries policy, that would be viewpoint discrimination. As noted above, one's view of what constitutes an exception to free speech, such as obscenity or libel, can differ substantially from another's. While in deleting a comment you might not feel that you are practicing viewpoint discrimination, a dispute on the issue could lead to a court to view your justification for the deletion as a pretext for practicing viewpoint discrimination."

Vice Chair McCabe said that the paragraph risks overstating or mischaracterizing the application of the First Amendment protections, particularly following *Lindke*. He clarified he is specifically speaking here of everyone's First Amendment protections, including a legislator's First Amendment protections. He continued the *Lindke* decision clarified distinctions between private and official actions. He said legislators must have a clear and actionable policy that avoids overreach and respects legislators' constitutional rights. Removing or revising the paragraph ensures that the policy is legally sound and does not create unintended restrictions or usurp a legislator's First Amendment rights on his own personal social media pages.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion.

SENATOR BISHOP asked for a copy of the amendment.

MS. NAUMAN commented that it is another policy decision, and the amendment is, essentially, a deletion of paragraph five, all of paragraph five.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE clarified his motion stating a desire to delete or to edit the paragraph. He restated his understanding that the current paragraph restricts legislators' First Amendment rights, which the court has ruled unconstitutional, and suggested revising or replacing it.

MS. NAUMAN explained that the paragraph was added to provide guidance, not restrict First Amendment rights. The policy clarifies that the Legislative Council generally will not defend legislators sued over social media actions but offers best practices to minimize legal risk. *Lindke* serves as a threshold test to determine if a legislator is acting as a State official. If so, the paragraph advises caution in actions like selectively deleting posts to avoid potential First Amendment violations.

SENATOR BISHOP clarified his understanding that section five is reaffirming sections one, two, three, and four.

MS. NAUMAN clarified and described the policy as a series of cautionary steps for legislators using social media. It advises against blocking comments or users but, if done, suggests clarifying the account is personal. If blocking is necessary, it should not apply to legislative posts. The final guidance in section five warns against deleting comments or blocking users based on viewpoint to avoid potential litigation.

SENATOR BISHOP clarified his understanding using an analogy of section five as the advice "don't touch the stove, it's hot."

MS. NAUMAN affirmed Senator Bishop is correct with his analogy.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS had a comment on technical proceedings and expressed concern that the amendment's wording, "either delete or modify", lacks clarity and does not provide a clear resolution. He suggested the amendment should explicitly state whether to delete the paragraph or specify a particular modification.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE reiterated his primary concern, that as he reads it, the paragraph incorrectly defines legislators as State actors without aligning with *Lindke*, which specifies

State actors must have the authority to speak for the State. He expressed concern that this misalignment could expose legislators to legal challenges for social media activity on personal pages. Since there was no time to clarify the language with Legislative Legal, he proposed removing the paragraph to avoid potential misinterpretation by the courts.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON suggested that Vice Chair McCabe amend his motion to just say "delete", instead of "amend or delete", based on the procedural concerns raised by Senate President Stevens.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE stated that he is happy to amend his motion and that his intent with this was to clarify the distinction between a "State actor" and a "State actor with the authority to speak for the State," as defined in *Lindke*, and invited corrections if mistaken.

MS. NAUMAN responded that she interpreted "State actor" in the paragraph as referring to *Lindke*'s test for determining whether someone is acting as a State official or a private citizen. She reaffirmed the advice, explained that if a legislator is deemed a State official under *Lindke*, they should avoid blocking, banning, or filtering content based on viewpoint.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE restated his assertion that since legislators lack the authority to speak for the State, the paragraph is problematic because it implies otherwise.

MS. NAUMAN responded acknowledging that while it is unlikely a court would find an individual legislator acting on behalf of the legislature, no definitive Supreme Court ruling exists to fully exclude that possibility. She emphasized that *Lindke* is not a perfect fit for legislators, and her advice is a cautious legal approach to mitigate potential risk.

[11:14:38 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved to amend his motion to delete the fifth paragraph in its entirety on page three.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purposes of discussion.

SENATOR CLAMAN stated his support for the first two points, but not the third.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked a clarifying question on what the exact amendment is.

MS. GEARY responded that it is her understanding that the amendment would delete all of subsection five and asked Representative McCabe to confirm.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE clarified that the amendment would remove only the paragraph under subsection five while keeping the bolded statement. He objects to the "State actor" language, contesting that without specifying "with the ability to speak for the State," it could wrongly imply that all legislators meet that definition. He also noted that existing court cases, including *Lindke*, do not clearly apply to legislators, in his opinion rendering the recommendation unnecessary.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS interjected with a parliamentary procedure question noting that there are two motions to address: one to "either delete or modify" and an amendment specifying "delete."

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON acknowledged that Senate President Stevens is correct and there being no further discussion removed her objection before asking for a roll call vote.

[11:17:59 AM](#)

Council took a brief at-ease.

[11:18:46 AM](#)

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE clarified that he is offering a revised amendment to remove all non-bolded text so that the paragraph would read "If you choose to filter, delete, or hide comments, or block or ban individuals, do not filter, delete, or hide comments, or block or ban individuals based on viewpoint."

[11:19:37 AM](#)

Council took a brief at-ease.

[11:19:53 AM](#)

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE withdrew his amendment to his first amendment, then withdrew the first amendment.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON asked Vice Chair McCabe for an amendment.

[11:20:08 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved to strike all non-bolded text under paragraph five so that paragraph five would then read, "If you choose to filter, delete, or hide comments, or block or

ban individuals, do not filter delete, or hide comments or block or ban individuals based on viewpoint."

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS inquired on Ms. Nauman's comments on the proposed amendment.

MS. NAUMAN stated that the discussion on the previous amendment that was withdrawn is the same as this one.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, seeing no other comments, asked for a roll call vote.

[11:21:05 AM](#)

YEAS: Senators Stedman; Representatives Rauscher, McCabe, Saddler

NAYS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan

The motion failed 4-8.

[11:22:15 AM](#)

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON noted the committee is now back to the main motion to adopt the Social Media Policy as amended. Seeing her previous objection for the purpose of discussion has yet to be removed, she inquired if there was any further discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked Vice Chair McCabe for his perspective on the upcoming decision, given his involvement in related matters and the outcome of the amendments.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE responded that he believes because *Lindke v. Freed* does not directly apply to legislators, the policy could be used against them if they delete comments from personal social media pages. He highlighted the ambiguity of "viewpoint discrimination" and expressed intent to vote against the policy due to potential risks.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER thanked Legislative Legal and everyone involved for their work on the issue, noting its importance, but indicated he would likely vote against it.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON restated for clarity that the committee is back to the main motion, as amended.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS expressed appreciation for the committee leadership, emphasized the importance of adopting a media policy, and noted that future Legislative Councils can modify it if needed.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked whether Representative McCabe's use of the word "incriminate" accurately reflects the policy's implications.

MS. NAUMAN responded that she does not believe characterization of the policy as "incriminating" is an accurate reflection of the policy, clarifying that the policy is intended as a set of best practices to help legislators avoid litigation rather than an incriminating measure. She explained that the only binding aspect is the Legislative Council's decision not to cover legal costs for social media-related actions. She also noted that as laws evolve, the policy will be updated to reflect new legal developments.

SENATOR BISHOP asked whether this policy still does not preclude any lawmaker from coming to Legislative Council to ask for litigation expense support. He followed up his question, stating that it's still early in this area of law and this topic could be brought up a year from now with more policy changes.

MS. NAUMAN confirmed that the policy does not prevent lawmakers from requesting litigation support, but it allows the Legislative Council chair to cite the policy in denying coverage. The chair could still bring requests to the Council, and legislators remain free to take individual actions, but liability would be their responsibility unless an exception is made. She agreed with Senator Bishop's statement that at this point it is likely that this policy will be brought up and updated with more changes.

VICE CHAIR MCCABE asked whether a court or lawyer could use the policy against legislators, despite it being a set of recommendations, to challenge their communication with constituents on personal social media pages. He also questioned if this could conflict with *Lindke*, which allows officials to remove users or delete comments.

MS. NAUMAN responded that she does not see how the policy could be used in court to prove that a legislator's actions constitute State action under *Lindke*'s legal test.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON agreed with Senate President Stevens and Senator Bishop, acknowledged the effort put into the policy

and suggested it would be prudent to move forward as the Legislative Council can amend it in the future. There was no further discussion and she asked for a roll call vote.

[11:28:50 AM](#)

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Saddler

NAYS: Representatives Rauscher, McCabe

The motion passed 10-2.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. Security Update

b. RFP 670 Alaska State Capitol Electronic Access Controls

c. RFQ 667 Alaska State Capitol Security Screeners

d. Legal Update

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON said that Council would go into Executive Session to receive a security update, discuss two RFPs, and receive a legislative legal update.

[11:29:50 AM](#)

VICE CHAIR MCCABE moved and asked unanimous consent that the Legislative Council go into Executive Session under Uniform Rule 22(B)(4), discussion of a matter the public knowledge of which would adversely affect the security of the state or nation, or adversely affect the security of a governmental unit or agency and 22(B)(3), discussion of a matter that may, by law, be required to be confidential. The following individuals may remain in the room or online during Executive Session: Jessica Geary, Santé Lesh, Rayme Vinson, JC Kestel, Ernest Daigle, Shay Wilson, Tim Powers, Emily Nauman, Megan Wallace; Security Subcommittee members Matt Simpson and Micaela Bradner; Tom Koloski and Tom Wilder of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency; any legislators not on Legislative Council, and any staff of Legislative Council or Security Subcommittee members.

[11:30:46 AM](#)

A roll call vote was taken.

YEAS: Senators Bishop, Claman, Hoffman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, McCabe

NAYS: none

The motion passed 12-0.

11:31:52 AM

Council went into Executive Session.

2:25:30 PM

Council came out of Executive Session.

A roll call vote was taken to establish a quorum.

Present at the call were: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton.

Ten members present.

2:26:48 PM

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS moved to table RFQ 667-Alaska State Capitol Security Screeners, the Visitor Screening Policy, and the ID Badge Policy.

After a brief at-ease and some confusion about the need for a vote, a roll call vote was taken on the motion to table.

2:27:54 PM

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON stated that during Executive Session, the Council discussed five topics that require action: two procurements (RFP 670 and RFQ 667) and three Security Update-related items under "New Committee Business" (two policies - Capitol Visitor Screening Policy and ID Badge Policy - and the Juneau mailroom relocation proposal).

NOTE: RFQ 667 and two policies (Capitol Visitor Screening and ID Badge Policy) were tabled.

She asked Representative Edgmon for a motion on RFP 670.

b. RFP 670 Alaska State Capitol Electronic Access Controls

2:29:07 PM

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON moved that Legislative Council approve the award of RFP 670 to Southeast Electric LLC in an amount not to exceed \$458,850.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for purposes of discussion and asked that JC Kestel and Tim Powers to speak to the item.

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, LAA, recapped what was in the packet before the members and in their discussion. On September 24, 2024, the Agency issued RFP 670 to solicit proposals for the installation of electronic access controls in the Capitol. RFP 670 closed on November 26, 2024, with one proposal received from Southeast Electric LLC. The proposal went through the Performance Evaluation Committee (PEC) to ensure it met all the needs listed in the RFP. The PEC scored the proposal and chose to proceed with a recommendation to Legislative Council for the award to Southeast Electric LLC. Southeast Electric's cost proposal was \$437,000 and the Agency is requesting a five percent contingency fund be added to the bid amount to cover unforeseen challenges.

TIM POWERS, Chief Technology and Outreach Officer, LAA, said the project proposes to improve physical security of the interior doors of the Capitol and Thomas Stewart Building. As background, the entire Capitol Complex exterior doors and all of the Anchorage Legislative Office Building (exterior and interior) already have electronic access controls. We're looking to expand that system to 130 additional doors, those are all interior doors in the Capitol and Thomas Stewart Building. This will replace the need to issue metal keys for the first door of entry into all offices from the main hallways of the Capitol.

Mr. Powers noted some benefits of this project include enhanced security; access control-key fobs allow granular control over individual doors in addition to groups; remote management-access can be granted, revoked, or modified remotely; audit trails-logs will track when and by whom doors are accessed; convenience and keyless entry-staff won't need separate keys for office entry if they already have access to the Capitol; and cost savings-key fobs are cheaper to replace than metal keys and do not require replacing door hardware if lost.

Mr. Powers continued that the installation scope of this project is the Capitol and Thomas Stewart Building for 130

interior doors. Wiring and installation of access control readers and door hardware will be completed in the interim.

Programming and system configuration, similar to the Anchorage Legislative Office Building, will be completed in-house by the DTI staff. The project timeline, if approved by January 1, 2025, ensures that all materials will be available by June 1, with a three-month construction period concluding on September 1, 2025.

Mr. Powers said they worked with an engineer to design this system, and the engineers estimate came in at \$481,000-\$554,000 so our request to include a five percent contingency is still below the engineer's estimate.

There was no discussion. Chair Gray-Jackson removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[2:33:26 PM](#)

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

VII. NEW COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- a. Capitol Visitor Screening Policy (tabled)**
- b. Identification Badge Policy (tabled)**
- c. Capitol Mailroom Relocation**
- d. Legislative Council Transition Readiness and Office Policy**

c. Capitol Mailroom Relocation

[2:34:07 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON moved that Legislative Council approve the proposal to move the Capitol mailroom to an offsite location equipped with necessary screening technology and protocols.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Jessica Geary and JC Kestel to speak to the item.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA), said that a recent security assessment identified the onsite Capitol mailroom as a potential vulnerability, leading to a recommendation to relocate package screening offsite. The proposal includes purchasing the necessary equipment, two new full-time employees, and buildout work mostly done in-

house. The current estimated cost is \$617,500, and approval by this committee is requested to proceed with recruitment, incorporating the expenses into the FY26 legislative budget request, and issuing procurements for screening detection equipment.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked for a definition of "necessary screening".

JC KESTEL, Procurement Officer, LAA, responded that since this is a government facility, the Alaska State Capitol, all mail is currently screened through X-ray machines. However, this is currently done using a twelve-year-old X-ray machine, which is outdated and unable to detect biological agents or explosive materials. A security review identified vulnerabilities that could allow harmful substances to pass through undetected. The proposed upgrade includes three advanced screening devices: one similar to TSA equipment, capable of detecting explosive materials and biological agents through swabbing and trace analysis. While the device also tests for narcotics, the primary focus is on enhancing explosive detection to improve Capitol security.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER attempted to ask a follow-up and was interrupted by the Chair calling a brief at-ease.

[2:38:23 PM](#)

Council went into a brief at-ease.

[2:39:11 PM](#)

Council returned from brief at-ease.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER asked that if the final costs are significantly higher, can the proposal be reconsidered and potentially rejected in the future.

MR. KESTEL responded that if the RFP results exceed the proposed costs, the committee can decline the contract at a future meeting. He noted that significant cost changes are possible but not anticipated.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS stated that it seems this proposal modernizes the facility with advanced equipment and personnel for \$617,500, including \$267,000 for staffing and upgraded X-ray, biological, and explosive detection, significantly improving current security measures.

MR. KESTEL agreed with Senate President Stevens' assertion and added that it would provide the ability for better, more efficient testing.

There was no further discussion. Chair Gray-Jackson removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[2:40:52 PM](#)

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

d. Legislative Council Transition Readiness and Office Policy

[2:41:39 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON moved that Legislative Council adopt the Legislative Council Transition Readiness and Office Policy as presented, to be effective immediately; and authorize the Legislative Affairs Agency the authority to make technical and conforming changes.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion and asked Ms. Geary to please speak to the item.

JESSICA GEARY, Executive Director, LAA, stated the proposed Transition Readiness and Office Policy before the committee is meant to address issues that comes up bi-annually as the Agency works on the transition from outgoing leadership to incoming leadership, such as office swaps, authorizing staff hires, and many other transition tasks. So, the Agency identified ways to simplify the process, including setting timelines, prioritizing leadership offices, and providing clearer guidelines. Ms. Geary paused to note that before further discussing the policy details, she wanted to point out an oversight in excluding Juneau-based legislators and staff from the proposed policy, which are addressed with a suite of five amendments that have been distributed to the committee. She asked that the Chair present them as a single motion for consideration.

[2:43:58 PM](#)

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON moved to amend the Transition Readiness and Office Policy with the following suite of amendments.

Amendment 1, section 1.3 Packing and Move-Out Process: add a subsection related to exemptions for year-round offices to

consider Juneau based staff and legislators to read, "Exemptions for year-round offices: legislators and staff maintaining year-round operations in Juneau are exempt from packing and decluttering requirements, except where essential maintenance or IT updates necessitate temporary adjustments."

Amendment 2, section 1.3, subsection 5: add a second bullet to read, "Year-round offices coordination: inspections, maintenance, and IT updates will be scheduled in consultation with year-round office occupants to ensure minimal disruption."

Amendment 3, section 1.4 Final Inspections: to the final bullet four, add "and year-round offices" so that the bullet reads, "Returning legislator offices and year-round offices will only be inspected for maintenance or IT needs."

Amendment 4, section 1.5 Artwork and Maintenance Access: to the "personal artwork removal" bullet one, add "unless exempt under the year-round offices' provisions" so that the bullet reads "Unless exempt under the year-round offices' provisions, legislators and staff must remove all personal artwork and wall-mounted items before vacating their offices (can be left in office until final packing deadline). Items left behind after the final packing deadline will be removed by LAA staff."

Amendment 5, section 1.5 Artwork and Maintenance Access: to the "maintenance authority" bullet two, add "LAA will ensure that year-round offices retain operational access during maintenance or updates." So that the bullet reads, "LAA staff are authorized to remove any wall-mounted items, including personal artwork and decorations, to facilitate timely patching, painting, and other maintenance tasks. LAA will ensure that year-round offices retain operational access during maintenance or updates."

MS. GEARY noted that Jeff Stepp, Legislative Council committee aide, is passing out the policy that includes the amendments and asked for a brief at-ease.

[2:46:34 PM](#)

Council went into a brief at-ease.

[2:47:23 PM](#)

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON moved that Legislative Council adopt the suite of previously read amendments as a single amendment.

SENATOR CLAMAN objected for purposes of discussion.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS asked about the practicality of the May 31 move-out deadline.

[2:48:14 PM](#)

Council went into a brief at-ease.

[2:48:44 PM](#)

Council returned from brief at-ease.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON, restating her motion, moved that Legislative Council adopt the suite of previously read amendments as one amendment to the policy.

There were no objections and Chair Gray-Jackson asked for a roll call vote.

[2:49:09 PM](#)

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS again expressed concern that the May 31 office move-out deadline may be impractical, as special sessions can occur as late as August or later. He noted it would be a shame to clear offices if legislators still need them for a special session.

MS. GEARY acknowledged the concern, clarifying that the May 31 deadline is meant for preparedness, not full office clearance. The goal is to ensure offices, especially for retiring legislators, are ready for an eventual move. While the policy does not explicitly address special session exemptions, they recognized the challenge of quickly unpacking for unexpected sessions.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS responded that he understands what Ms. Geary is explaining and pointed out that the policy requires packing personal items and decluttering by May 31 but suggested a later deadline, such as December, might be more practical.

MS. GEARY further clarified that the May 31 deadline is primarily for decluttering, while final inspections are set

for December 15. The intent is to leave offices accessible for maintenance, IT work, or potential relocation. Removing personal artwork and wall decorations allows for necessary repairs, but authorization exists for maintenance to proceed even if items remain. She acknowledged the policy isn't perfect due to the variability of the legislature's timeline.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS suggested removing the expectation for legislators to pack up by May 31 and the related bullet points, noting that some may need to remain in their offices beyond that date.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON asked if Senate President Stevens would like to offer an amendment.

[2:53:28 PM](#)

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS made a motion to remove "Legislators are expected to:" and the related bullet points following.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON asked that Senate President Stevens repeat his motion.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS moved that under Section 1.3 Packing and Move Out Process, remove "Legislators are expected to: Bullet 1 - remove or pack personal items; Bullet 2 - declutter workspaces and clearly label any remaining items; and Bullet 3 - remove personal artwork and wall-mounted decorations."

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for purposes of discussion.

[2:54:09 PM](#)

Council took a brief at-ease.

[2:56:04 PM](#)

Council returned from a brief at-ease.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS withdrew his amendment. He then moved to add at the end of Section 1.3 Packing and Move-Out Process the following language: "The presiding officers may extend the May 31 deadline due to possible special sessions."

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON objected for the purpose of discussion.

SENATOR STEDMAN sought clarification on the issue of office move-out deadlines, questioning why legislators elected for two years wouldn't be able to leave their belongings and visit their offices as needed.

MS. GEARY responded that this is at the end of a second session only.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER restated what he understood the proposed language to be and questioned whether extending the May 31 move-out deadline shouldn't be based on an official special session call, rather than a presiding officer's speculation about a potential session.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS responded that it's often unclear when a special session may be called and noted that legislators have needed their offices as late as November. The proposed motion allows presiding officers to act on the possibility of a special session before requiring office move-outs.

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER, in support of Senate President Stevens, said that under Governor Walker, legislators were in special session as late as two days before Thanksgiving, and have also been called into multiple special sessions in one year highlighting the need to consider this possibility when setting office move-out deadlines.

REPRESENTATIVE HANNAN stated support of Senate President Stevens' motion, appreciating the need for guidance on office move-outs while emphasizing the importance of interim maintenance. She highlighted the extensive work required to repaint and repair offices before each new legislature and noted that clearing personal items helps the maintenance crew start sooner. She appreciates that the policy provides a deadline while allowing flexibility for presiding officers to grant extensions based on individual circumstances.

There was no further discussion. Chair Gray-Jackson removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[3:00:48 PM](#)

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

CHAIR GRAY-JACKSON stated Council is now back to the main motion to adopt the Transition Readiness and Office Policy as amended.

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked for clarification on the term "presumptive presiding officers," questioning the basis for that presumption and noting that leadership decisions can change before the session begins.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED between Representatives Saddler, Tilton, and Rauscher, Senate President Stevens, and Director Geary regarding Section 2.6 Early Engagement with Presumptive Leadership: concerns about how presumptive leadership is determined, the need for a smooth and efficient transition from one legislature to another, a preference for general policy language that allows for response flexibility, and confirming the Agency can quickly and easily pivot if presumptive leadership changes during the transition. Additional discussion covered the continued need for transition memos between legislatures and setting in policy the start date of session funding.

There was no further discussion. Chair Gray-Jackson removed her objection and asked for a roll call vote.

[3:11:23 PM](#)

YEAS: Senators Claman, Kiehl, Stedman, Stevens, Gray-Jackson; Representatives Edgmon, Hannan, Rauscher, Saddler, Tilton

NAYS: none

The motion passed 10-0.

[3:12:39 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE RAUSCHER moved and asked for a reconsideration of the previous vote regarding Technology Services Contract.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED regarding Representative Rauscher's request, including two at-eases. It was determined there would not be a reconsideration vote and Representative Rauscher withdrew his motion.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Gray-Jackson stated that she had a few remarks for the record, noting that it appeared to be her last meeting. She reflected on her time as Chair of the committee and shared that she was filled with immense gratitude and a deep sense of accomplishment. She expressed that the role had been an extraordinary journey and that she had the privilege of collaborating with some of the most dedicated and talented legislators she could have hoped for—even jokingly including Senator Stedman, which drew laughter from those present.

She first extended a heartfelt thanks to the outstanding staff across all divisions in LAA, offering a special acknowledgment to JC Kestel, Procurement Officer; Shay Wilson, Chief Information Officer; Tim Powers, Chief Technology and Outreach Officer; Emily Nauman, Legal Services Director; Megan Wallace, Chief Counsel; and Mike Warendt, Anchorage LIO Operations Manager, along with his exceptional team. She emphasized that their reports, insights, and contributions had been invaluable to the committee's work during her two years as Chair. She also recognized Jessica Geary, Santé Lesh, Molly Kiesel, Madison Truitt, and the entire team, acknowledging their consistent dedication to supporting all 60 legislators, ensuring that they knew their hard work didn't go unnoticed.

Additionally, she expressed her profound gratitude to her Legislative Council staff, Jeff Stepp. She recalled how, when he accepted her offer to work alongside her, she felt immense gratitude, knowing that selecting him as her staff member would be one of the best decisions of her public service career—and affirmed that it was. She credited his experience, expertise, and steadfast support for making her role as Chair of the Legislative Council a truly stress-free experience. However, she humorously admitted that she had spent the previous night dreaming about the meeting.

Among the many projects the committee undertook, she highlighted the completion of the assembly building apartments as one that stood out. She described how bringing the project to fruition—from establishing rental leases and policies to furnishing the apartments—was no small feat. While it may have seemed straightforward, ensuring that these spaces reflected privacy, comfort, and professionalism for legislators and staff, while adhering to responsible use of taxpayer dollars, required a careful balance. She recounted how drafting policies, selecting a rental agency, choosing furniture designs, and overseeing every detail to blend function with tradition was both a unique and rewarding experience. She expressed immense pride in what had been accomplished, emphasizing that the project's success would not have been possible without the dedication of the exceptional staff, whose expertise, commitment, and attention to detail transformed a vision into reality. She noted that the apartments now stood as a testament to their hard work and the committee's commitment to excellence—and happily added that she would be living in one of them during the next session.

Addressing her fellow committee members, she expressed deep appreciation for their commitment to making the committee a priority. She recognized their attendance, thoughtful input, and dedication to the meetings, which had been instrumental to their collective success. She also took a moment to acknowledge Senator Hoffman, who was not present but had never missed a meeting, thanking him for his insight, collaboration, and unwavering dedication to their mission. She reflected on how, together, the committee had tackled complex issues, from ensuring the safety of staff and constituents to upholding the clear division between the legislative and executive branches of government. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead the committee alongside her Vice Chair, Kevin McCabe, and his amazing staff, particularly Angie Stephl, recognizing the privilege of working with such a devoted team.

Looking to the future, she shared her excitement about seeing how the committee would continue to evolve. She expressed her honor in remaining part of the important decisions that would come before the Legislative Council as a member of the prestigious committee. She concluded by thanking everyone once again for the opportunity to serve as Chair, for the memories they had created, and for the collective efforts she was confident would have a lasting impact.

SENATE PRESIDENT STEVENS said that Senator Gray-Jackson has done an excellent job as Chair. He continued that she has been fair, judicious, wise, and kept all members in the loop and concluded by thanking her for her Chairmanship.

[3:21:43 PM](#)

With no further comments the meeting adjourned at 3:21pm.