

SENATE JOURNAL

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

Juneau, Alaska

Thursday

February 20, 2025

Thirty-first Day

Pursuant to adjournment the Senate was called to order by President Stevens at 10:45 a.m.

The roll showed seventeen members present. Senators Dunbar, Merrick, Olson were excused from a call of the Senate.

The prayer was offered by the Chaplain, Major Petr Janousek, The Salvation Army. Senator Hoffman moved and asked unanimous consent the prayer be spread. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Gracious God,

Thank you for abundant riches of your word. Thank you, that I can use the text of Psalms 72 as a prayer for everyone here because it sounds so appropriate even though in the ancient days it was a prayer for the king. Psalm 72 says: "Give your love of justice to the king, O God, and righteousness to the king's son. Help him judge your people in the right way; let the poor always be treated fairly. May the mountains yield prosperity for all, and may the hills be fruitful. Help him to defend the poor, to rescue the children of the needy, and to crush their oppressors. May the king's rule be refreshing like spring rain on freshly cut grass, like the showers that water the earth. May all the godly flourish during his reign. May there be abundant prosperity until the moon is no more."

Amen.

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Senator Wielechowski led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Certification

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the journal for the thirtieth legislative day be approved as certified by the Secretary. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Standing Committee Reports

SB 98

The Labor and Commerce Committee considered SENATE BILL NO. 98 "An Act extending the termination date of the Board of Veterinary Examiners; and providing for an effective date."

Signing do pass: Senator Bjorkman, Chair; Senators Dunbar, Gray-Jackson. Signing no recommendation: Senators Merrick, Yundt.

The following fiscal information was published today:

Fiscal Note No. 1, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

The bill was referred to the Finance Committee.

EO 136

The Resources Committee considered EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 136 Establishing the Department of Agriculture and transferring functions of the Department of Natural Resources relating to agriculture to the Department of Agriculture and attached:

SENATE SPECIAL CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1
Disapproving Executive Order No. 136.

This does not reflect an intent by any of the members to vote for or against a special concurrent resolution in joint session.

Signing the report: Senator Giessel, Chair; Senators Dunbar, Myers, Hughes, Kawasaki, Wielechowski, Claman.

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SSCR 1

The Resources Committee considered SENATE SPECIAL CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1 Disapproving Executive Order No. 136.

Signing no recommendation: Senator Giessel, Chair; Senator Wielechowski. Signing do pass: Senators Dunbar, Kawasaki, Claman. Signing do not pass: Senators Hughes, Myers.

The following fiscal information was published today:
Fiscal Note No. 1, zero, Senate Resources Committee

The resolution was referred to the Finance Committee.

Introduction and Reference of Senate Resolutions

SJR 10

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 10 BY SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI,

Encouraging the United States Congress to award Hmong veterans of the Vietnam War the Congressional Gold Medal.

was read the first time and referred to the State Affairs Committee.

Consideration of the Calendar

Second Reading of Senate Bills

SB 60

SENATE BILL NO. 60 "An Act establishing May 12 as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Day of Recognition" was read the second time.

President Stevens stated SENATE BILL NO. 60 will advance to third reading on the February 24 calendar.

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SB 79

SENATE BILL NO. 79 "An Act relating to wage payments" was read the second time.

President Stevens stated SENATE BILL NO. 79 will advance to third reading on the February 24 calendar.

Citations

Honoring - Susan "Arhnaq" Malutin

Senator(s) Stevens

Representative(s) Stutes

Honoring - Lesli Loann Carl Sirstad

Representative(s) Story, Hannan

Senator(s) Kiehl

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the citations be adopted. Without objection, the citations were adopted and referred to the Secretary for transmittal.

Unfinished Business

SB 103

Senator Claman moved and asked unanimous consent to be shown as a cosponsor on SENATE BILL NO. 103 "An Act relating to certified nurse aide training; and providing for an effective date." Without objection, it was so ordered.

Recess

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess to the Joint Session. Without objection, the Senate recessed at 10:52 a.m.

After Recess**Joint Session in the House**

Speaker Edgmon called the House to order and in accordance with Uniform Rule 51 turned the gavel over to President Stevens, who called the Joint Session to order at 11:01 a.m.

The purpose of the Joint Session was to hear an address by the Honorable Nick Begich III, U.S. Representative.

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the roll call of the Senate be waived and all members be shown as present. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Representative Kopp moved and asked unanimous consent the roll call of the House be waived and all members be shown as present. Without objection, it was so ordered.

President Stevens appointed Senator Yundt and Representative Elam to escort U.S. Representative Nick Begich III to the Joint Session.

The Senate Sergeant at Arms, Matt Simpson, announced the Honorable Nick Begich III's entrance to the House Chamber.

Representative Begich was escorted to the rostrum and welcomed by President Stevens and Speaker Edgmon.

Representative Begich delivered his address. This address appears in Senate and House Joint Journal Supplement No. 4.

Following his address, there was a question and answer period. Representative Begich received a standing ovation.

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Joint Session stand in adjournment. Without objection, President Stevens adjourned the Joint Session at 11:47 a.m.

After Recess**In the Senate**

The Senate reconvened at 11:51 a.m.

Announcements

Announcements are at the end of the journal.

Adjournment

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment until 11:00 a.m., February 24, 2025. Without objection, the Senate adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

Liz Clark
Secretary of the Senate

Announcements

Americans with Disabilities Act Notice - Persons with disabilities who require special accommodation or alternative communication formats to access committee meetings may contact the appropriate committee office or the Legislative Information Office in their community. Reasonable advance notice is needed to accommodate the request. For further information, call the ADA Coordinator at 465-3854 Voice/465-4980 TDD.

STANDING COMMITTEES

+ indicates teleconference

= indicates bill previously heard/scheduled

COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Feb 25 **Tuesday** **Beltz 105 (tsbldg)** **1:30 PM**
No Meeting Scheduled

EDUCATION

Feb 21 **Friday** **Beltz 105 (tsbldg)** **3:30 PM**
-- MEETING CANCELED --
+= SB 41 PUBLIC SCHOOLS: MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION
-- Public Testimony --
+= SB 22 FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS
-- Public Testimony --
+= SB 23 CIVICS EDUCATION
-- Public Testimony --
+ SB 82 EDUCATION:SCHOOLS; GRANTS; FUNDING; DEBT
-- Invited & Public Testimony --
Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled
Streamed live on AKL.tv

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EDUCATION (continued)

Feb 24	Monday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
+ SB 82	EDUCATION:SCHOOLS; GRANTS; FUNDING; DEBT		
+ SB 41	PUBLIC SCHOOLS: MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION		
	-- Public Testimony --		
+ SB 22	FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS		
	-- Public Testimony --		
+ SB 23	CIVICS EDUCATION		
	-- Public Testimony --		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 26	Wednesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
+ SB 93	EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 28	Friday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

FINANCE

Feb 20	Thursday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
+	Presentation: Alaska Municipal League		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 21	Friday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
	No Meeting Scheduled		
Feb 24	Monday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
+ HB 65	RAILROAD CORP. FINANCING		
	Overview: Governor's Amendments		
	Office of Management and Budget		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

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FINANCE (continued)

Feb 25	Tuesday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
+		Presentation: Department of Transportation Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	
Feb 26	Wednesday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
		For Juneau, Southeast, Prince William Sound, Kodiak Sign up by 10:15am	
+= SB 56		APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET; CAP; SUPP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+ SB 57		APPROP: CAPITAL/SUPPLEMENTAL/FUNDS -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 58		APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+ SB 59		APPROP: SUPPLEMENTAL; FUND CAP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	
Feb 26	Wednesday	Senate Finance 532	1:00 PM
		-- Please Note Time Change --	
		For Fairbanks, Interior, Copper River Valley, Offnets Sign up by 2:15pm	
+= SB 56		APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET; CAP; SUPP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 57		APPROP: CAPITAL/SUPPLEMENTAL/FUNDS -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 58		APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 59		APPROP: SUPPLEMENTAL; FUND CAP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	

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FINANCE (continued)

Feb 27	Thursday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
		For Nome, Bethel, Kotzebue, Utqiagvik, Unalaska, Dillingham, Offnets Sign up by 10:15am	
+= SB 56		APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET; CAP; SUPP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 57		APPROP: CAPITAL/SUPPLEMENTAL/FUNDS -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 58		APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 59		APPROP: SUPPLEMENTAL; FUND CAP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	
Feb 27	Thursday	Senate Finance 532	1:00 PM
		-- Please Note Time Change --	
		For Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Kenai Peninsula Sign up by 2:15pm	
+= SB 56		APPROP: OPERATING BUDGET; CAP; SUPP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 57		APPROP: CAPITAL/SUPPLEMENTAL/FUNDS -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 58		APPROP: MENTAL HEALTH BUDGET -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --	
+= SB 59		APPROP: SUPPLEMENTAL; FUND CAP -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	
Feb 28	Friday	Senate Finance 532	9:00 AM
		No Meeting Scheduled	

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HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Feb 20	Thursday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
	-- MEETING CANCELED --		
	-- Agenda Change --		
	Presentation: Alaska Primary Care Association		
	Nancy Merriman, CEO, Alaska Primary Care		
	Association		
	Lisa Aquino, CEO, Anchorage Neighborhood Health		
	Center and APCA FQHC Payment Taskforce Chair		
	Joshua Gilmore, CEO, Sunshine Health Center and		
	APCA Board Chair		
	<Above Item Removed from Agenda>		
+ SB 9	SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 25	Tuesday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
+ SB 9	SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
+ SB 83	TELEHEALTH REIMBURSEMENT RATES		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 27	Thursday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
+ SB 9	SURRENDER OF INFANTS; INF. SAFETY DEVICE		
+ SB 89	PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT SCOPE OF PRACTICE		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
+ SB 88	CHILD PLACEMENT; DILIGENT SEARCH		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
	SENATE RESOLUTION: CRISIS CARE		
	<Pending Introduction & Referral>		
	SENATE RESOLUTION: MEDICAID FUNDING		
	<Pending Introduction & Referral>		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

JUDICIARY

Feb 21	Friday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
	-- MEETING CANCELED --		
+	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

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JUDICIARY (continued)

Feb 24	Monday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+	Presentation: Alaska Court System Overview Nancy Meade, General Counsel, Alaska Court System Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 26	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 28	Friday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+ SB 100	THEFT: ORGANIZED; MED. RECORDS; MAIL -- Testimony <Invitation Only> -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		

LABOR & COMMERCE

Feb 21	Friday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	1:30 PM
	No Meeting Scheduled		
Feb 24	Monday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	1:30 PM
+= SB 39	LOANS UNDER \$25,000; PAYDAY LOANS -- Public Testimony <Time Limit May Be Set> --		
+ SB 24	TOBACCO/NICOTINE/E-CIG AGE; E-CIG TAX -- Testimony <Invitation Only> -- **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 26	Wednesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	1:30 PM
	-- Continued from 02/19/25 -- + Presentation: How Workers' Compensation Works Chuck Collins, Director of Division of Workers' Compensation + SB 54 EXT ARCH, ENG, SURVEY BRD; REG INT DESIGN -- Testimony <Invitation Only> -- **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 28	Friday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	1:30 PM
	No Meeting Scheduled		

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RESOURCES

Feb 21	Friday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
	No Meeting Scheduled		
Feb 24	Monday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
+ = SB 61	ELECTRONIC DEVICE RECYCLING -- Invited & Public Testimony -- Presentation: Alaska Mining Update Alaska Miners Association Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled -- Invited & Public Testimony -- **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 26	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
+ = SB 47	CHUGACH STATE PARK EASEMENTS -- Invited & Public Testimony -- Presentation: Launch Alaska Update Launch Alaska and Portfolio Companies Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled -- Invited & Public Testimony -- **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		
Feb 28	Friday	Butrovich 205	3:30 PM
+ SB 97	BIG GAME PERMIT PROGRAM -- Invited & Public Testimony --		
+ SB 105	STATE LAND FOR RECREATIONAL CABIN SITES -- Invited & Public Testimony -- Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		

STATE AFFAIRS

Feb 20	Thursday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
+	Presentation: Adding a faculty member to the UA Board of Regents Jill Dumesnil - Statewide President, United Academics Jackie Cason - UAA Faculty Senate President		
+	Presentation: Department of Law Overview Functions and current litigation Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		

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STATE AFFAIRS (continued)

Feb 25	Tuesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
+ = SB 43	WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH		
	-- Public Testimony --		
+ SB 40	HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
+ SJR 6	WASHINGTON D.C. STATEHOOD		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
+ SJR 10	HMONG VETERANS; CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL		
	-- Invited & Public Testimony --		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
Feb 27	Thursday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	3:30 PM
	Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

TRANSPORTATION

Feb 20	Thursday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+	Presentation: Winter Road Maintenance		
	Andy Mills, Special Assistant, Commissioner's Office		
	Jason Sakalaskas, Maintenance and Operations Chief, Northern Region		
	Burrell Nickeson, Maintenance and Operations Manager, Central Region		
	Brad Bylsma, Director, State Equipment Fleet		
	Christine Langley, Director, Data Modernization and Innovation Office		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		
Feb 25	Tuesday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+	Presentation: Alaska Trucking Association 2025 Priorities		
	Jamie Benson, President/CEO		
	Streamed live on AKL.tv		

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TRANSPORTATION (continued)

Feb 27	Thursday	Butrovich 205	1:30 PM
+	Overview: Metropolitan Planning Organizations Aaron Jongenelen, Executive Director/MPO Coordinator, AMATS Jackson C. Fox, Executive Director, FAST Planning Kim Sollien, Executive Director, MVP **Streamed live on AKL.tv**		

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEES

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Feb 25	Tuesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	2:00 PM
+	Department Overview		

LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Feb 27	Thursday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	2:30 PM
+	Department Overview Dan DeBartolo, Admin Service Director		

MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Feb 25	Tuesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	1:30 PM
+	Department Overview Craig Christenson, Deputy Commissioner Bob Ernissee, Admin Services Director		

NATURAL RESOURCES

Feb 25	Tuesday	Beltz 105 (tsbldg)	2:30 PM
+	Department Overview Brent Goodrum, Deputy Commissioner		

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SPECIAL COMMITTEES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ARCTIC AFFAIRS

Feb 20 Thursday Beltz 105 (tsbldg) 1:30 PM

+ Presentation: The Wilson Center
Shannon-Elizabeth O'Hare, US Polar Leadership
Project Coordinator, Wilson Center
Presentation: Denali Commission
Julie Kitka, Federal Co-Chair, Denali Commission
Streamed live on AKL.tv

Feb 27 Thursday Beltz 105 (tsbldg) 1:30 PM

+ SJR 9 RECOGNIZING ALASKA/CANADA RELATIONSHIP
-- Invited & Public Testimony --
Streamed live on AKL.tv

JOINT COMMITTEES

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET & AUDIT

Feb 26 Wednesday Senate Finance 532 5:30 PM

+ I. Call to Order
II. Approval of the Agenda
III. Approval of Minutes
a. January 29, 2025
IV. Executive Session
a. Preliminary Release of Department of Family
and Community Services, Office of Children's
Services (OCS) Implementation of Foster Care
Reform Laws, Part 3
b. Update on the Special Audit titled, "Oil and
Gas Production Tax Audit Process"
c. Consideration of Contract Award
d. Legal Update
V. Committee Business
a. FY24 Legislature Audit
VI. Adjourn

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OTHER MEETINGS

JOINT SESSION

Feb 20	Thursday	House Chamber	11:00 AM
+	Annual Address by Nick Begich III, U.S. Representative		
Mar 18	Tuesday	House Chamber	11:00 AM
+	Annual Address by Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senator		
Mar 20	Thursday	House Chamber	11:00 AM
+	Annual Address by Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senator		

MISCELLANEOUS MEETINGS

Feb 24	Monday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
	Lunch & Learn Presentation: Alaska Trucking Association Industry Overview Jamie Benson, President/CEO Sponsored by Senator Bjorkman and Representative Carrick		
Feb 26	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
	Lunch & Learn Presentation: 2025 Report Card for Alaska's Infrastructure American Society of Civil Engineers - Alaska Section as part of the Alaska Professional Design Council annual Legislative Fly-In David Gamez, Tor Anderzen, Greg Kinney Sponsored by Senator Kaufman		
Mar 05	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
	Lunch & Learn Presentation: Safeguarding Alaska's Natural Resources from Foreign Malign Influence Tyler Vose, Founder & CEO, Denali Defense Solutions Dal Rae Beach, COO Sponsored by Senators Shower, Yundt and Representatives Vance, Allard		

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MISCELLANEOUS MEETINGS (continued)

Mar 19	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
Lunch & Learn Presentation: Alaska Travel and Tourism Alaska Travel Industry Association Sponsored by Senator Merrick			
Mar 31	Monday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
Lunch & Learn Presentation: Alaska's Workforce Future Alaska Workforce Alliance Jose Owens, American Marine International Carol Wren, BBNC and AWA Executive Director Sponsored by Senator Merrick			
Apr 01	Tuesday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
Lunch & Learn Presentation: Alaska is an Aerospace State Dr. Bob McCoy, Director, UAF Geophysical Institute Sponsored by Senator Kawasaki			
Apr 09	Wednesday	Butrovich 205	12:00 PM
Lunch & Learn Presentation: Alaska Commission of Postsecondary Education Sponsored by Senator Tobin			