

Legislative Update



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For immediate release:

Good Morning –

My grand-daughters school is on spring break, so they are all here in Juneau visiting me and their grandmother! On Wednesday, the two older ones (10 and 7) were Senate guest pages. The younger one told everyone the night before that, quote, she “had to go to work tomorrow so she had to go to bed early.” They both did an outstanding job! And of course, the Legislature exempts themselves from the child labor laws.

This week, the House will debate the FY11 Operating budget in the House chambers before passing the bill to the Senate. Next week, the Senate Finance Subcommittees will begin the process of closing out their respective department budgets. I plan on scheduling the operating budget for public testimony the week of March 22nd and will be sending out the official notification with details of dates and time.

Lyman

SB 168: Trauma Care Centers/Fund

SB 168, sponsored by the Senate Health & Social Services Committee, establishes a mechanism to provide a financial incentive for hospitals to become designated as certified trauma centers in order to encourage their participation in a statewide trauma system, with the goal of improving delivery of trauma care in the Alaska medical system.

This bill establishes a fund for reimbursement of trauma care for uninsured or underinsured patients, and allows designated trauma centers to apply for compensation of claims that are otherwise uncompensated by insurance or other funds. The Alaska Native Medical Center located in Anchorage is the only Level II Trauma Center in Alaska. The nearest Level I Trauma Center is in Seattle, Washington.

SB 168 is in the Senate Finance Committee and had its first scheduled hearing on Wednesday, March 10th. There is a companion bill in the House, HB 168, which is in the House Finance Committee.

Permanent Fund Dividend

Application Deadline

March 31, 2010

Apply on-line

<http://www.pfd.state.ak.us/>

SB 257: Youth Courts and Criminal Fines

SB 257 is sponsored by Senator Egan. The Alaska Youth Court has emerged as one of Alaska's most effective crime prevention programs. It has provided youth offenders and volunteers a better understanding of our legal system with an emphasis on accountability. It is the only diversion program available in District Court to enable individuals to have their cases dismissed without resulting in a criminal record. For many, this brief involvement in the justice system is a turning point in their young lives.

Funding for this program is comprised of a mix of state funds, the private sector, municipal grants, and federal funds. To help ensure continuation of Alaska's Youth Court program, SB 257 directs a source of funding from a portion of criminal fines. This bill will require the state to account separately for these fines. Consequently it will allow the legislature to appropriate up to 25% of criminal fines to support youth courts. Each youth court is adapted to fit the needs of the individual community. Youth volunteers participate in various roles while youth offenders receive an alternative sanction from the formal justice system.

SB 257 is currently in the Senate Finance Committee. There is a companion bill, HB 331, which is in the House Finance Committee.