

Legislative Context & Process

2021 AASB Virtual Legislative Academy

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Senate Organization

- Organized as an “R” majority caucus with Sen. Lyman Hoffman (D-Bethel) joining the majority.
 - Sen. Peter Micchichi (R-Soldotna) - President.
 - Sen. Shelley Hughes (R-Palmer) – Majority Leader
 - Sen. Mia Costello (R-Anchorage) – Whip
 - Sen. Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak) – Rules Chair
- Majority – 14 Minority – 6
- Sen Tom Begich - minority leader

Senate Organization

Senate majority is organized as a non-binding caucus

- Important to understand this
- In a typical binding caucus, all members pledge to vote with the caucus on any substantive issue – primarily the budget.
- It appears the only way to form the "R's" into a majority was as a non-binding caucus. Sen. Shower (R-Wasilla) pre-filed a bill (SJR 3) calling for a constitutional amendment prohibiting binding caucuses.
- The non-binding caucus may cause a difficulty in passing a budget. Several ran campaigns on a "Statutory" PFD. The budget may be "held hostage" over the payment of a PFD.

Senate Finance Committee

- Sen. Bert Stedman (R-Sitka) Co-Chair (Operating Budget)
- Sen. Click Bishop (R-Fairbanks) Co-Chair (Capital Budget)
- Sen. Natasha von Imhof (R-Anchorage)
- Sen. Lyman Hoffman (D-Bethel)
- Sen. David Wilson (R-Wasilla)
- Sen. Donny Olson (D-Golovin)
- Sen. Bill Wielechowski (D-Anchorage)

Senate Education Committee

- Sen. Roger Holland (R-Anchorage) chair
- Sen. Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak) vice-chair
- Sen. Shelley Hughes (R-Palmer)
- Sen. Peter Micciche (R-Soldotna)
- Sen. Tom Begich (D-Anchorage)

House of Representatives

Current Status

- The House remains unorganized as of Friday. Rep. Josiah Patkotak (N/A – Barrow) elected as Speaker Pro Tempore.
- Ramifications of an unorganized House:
 - No pre-filed bills are able to be read across the floor;
 - No new bills are able to be introduced and read across the floor;
 - Committees are not assigned and so no bill can be assigned or considered – both House bills and Senate bills transmitted to the House;
 - The only floor action that can be considered is the election for Speaker of the House.

House of Representatives

Current Status, cont'

- House is frozen into inaction without a majority
- The make-up of the 20 – 20 split:
 - One side is made up of 20 Republicans – this includes all Republicans with the exception of Rep. Louise Stutes (R-Kodiak).
 - The other side is made up of 16 Democrats, 3 Non-Affiliateds (Independents), and 1 Republican (Rep. Stutes)
 - This has created a 20 -20 split and all tie votes fail creating the stalemate.

Legislative Meetings

- AASB has set up ZOOM meetings with legislators Feb 8-12.
- The meetings have been organized so that all districts represented by a group of legislators (Senators & Representatives) will meet via ZOOM.
- You have received an email informing you of the day/time for your district's meeting with your legislators and the ZOOM link
- Please be certain you log on to the ZOOM meeting. This may be your only opportunity to connect with your legislators and they need to hear your story.