



## Alaska's 29th Legislature Nears End

The 29th Alaska Legislature is quickly approaching the end of its second session, yet questions still linger over the source of funds to pay for state government in the absence of oil revenue.

The Governor is campaigning around the state in support of his proposals to use PFD earnings and judicious tax increases that will balance a trimmed Operating Budget by 2019. The Republican-controlled legislature has expressed little interest in the Governor's legislation despite support from all corners of Alaska under the banner of Alaska's Future ([www.akfuture.org](http://www.akfuture.org)).

Although actual appropriations to fund state government remain undetermined, FY2017 Operating Budget expenses have passed both chambers as HB 256/257 and now face a reconciliation process conducted by a six-member Conference Committee of appointees from the House of Representatives and the State Senate.

Operating Budget Conference Committee members from the House will be Rep. Mark Neuman (chair), Rep. Steve Thompson, and Rep. Les Gara. Committee members from the Senate will be Sen. Pete Kelly (chair),

Sen. Anna MacKinnon and Sen. Lyman Hoffman.

Language approving state employee contracts has not yet appeared in the FY2017 budget bills. ASEA's monetary terms in the coming fiscal year have not been controversial and legislative leaders have made assurances to include appropriate language before the budgeting process is complete.

Volatile oil prices and accompanying fiscal policies have literally gone from generating revenue sufficient to meet the State's entire operating needs a few years ago to zero—even less than zero as one analysis showed the value of tax credits to industry exceeding actual revenue to the State.

In light of the anticipated \$4 billion FY2017 Operating Budget deficit, a silver lining exists in opportunities to showcase good legislation that also offer savings to the State.

HB 280 and SB 88 are identical bills that would introduce a defined benefit (DB) retirement plan option for public employers and teachers. Tier III pension retirement benefits were replaced

Continued on page 2

## ASEA GGU Contract Ratification Election Results

The ASEA Election Committee conducted a ballot count for the ratification of the July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019 Tentative Agreement (Collective Bargaining Agreement) with the State of Alaska on April 8th. The Tentative Agreement was ratified by a vote of 1,396 to 487.

The Legislature still has to approve the monetary terms of the Tentative Agreement as required in the Public Employees Relation Act. We are in close contact with the legislative leadership and expect the monetary terms to be approved before they adjourn. You can access the election report by clicking on the following link: [http://afscmelocal52.org/asea-files/ratification\\_ASEA-SOA\\_8apr16.pdf](http://afscmelocal52.org/asea-files/ratification_ASEA-SOA_8apr16.pdf)

### What You'll Find in this Issue

#### COVER

♦ **Alaska's 29th Legislature Nears End**  
(continued on page 2)

♦ **Famous Words of Solidarity**

♦ **ASEA GGU Contract Ratification  
Election Results**

#### Page 2

♦ **Did You Know ?**

♦ **Alaska's 29th Legislature Nears End**  
(continued from page 1)

#### Page 3

♦ **Tracking Bills of Interest To ASEA  
Members**

#### Page 4

♦ **ASEA Health Trust News**  
**It's Fast & Easy to Submit Health  
Trust Forms Online**

♦ **AFSCME 42nd Convention Election**

♦ **Good Byes To ASEA Staff**

### Famous Words of Solidarity

*"The test for whether foreign investment is good for America should be whether it is likely to improve the skills and productivity of Americans." - Robert Reich*

*"So far as power is concerned, does anybody believe the premiums of insurance companies are almost all uniform by accident? It is an accident that if the price of gasoline goes up in one company, all the other prices go up the same rate in a matter of weeks?" - Jimmy Hoffa*

*"And, it seems to me just as proper to ask some questions about the role of the captains of American industry—those who pretend to be defenders of the enterprise—in seeking to destroy a labor movement that has always supported and promoted free enterprise -George Meany*

*(From Great Labor Quotations Sourcebook and Reader Peter Bollen)*

# Solidarity Update

## Did You Know?

### Did You Know That:

Seward's Day commemorates the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 and is celebrated as an Alaska public holiday on the last Monday of March.

William Henry the Secretary of State signed the treaty on March 30, 1867.

Purchase price was \$7.2 million and was referred to at the time by many as "Seward's Folly."



### Did You Know That:

Spring Break is also known as Easter Vacation, Easter Holiday, Spring Vacation and Mid-Term Break.

It is an academic tradition in various countries and happens anytime between March and April.



Japan, South Korea, German, Georgia, Portugal, Greece, Russia, United Kingdom, Sweden, Canada, Jamaica, Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia are a few of the other countries including the United States that celebrate Spring Break.

### Did You Know That:

April 1st, known as April Fools' Day is celebrated every year by playing practical jokes on people. The first April Fools' Day was recorded in Geoffrey Chaucer's, *The Canterbury Tales* in 1392. April Fools' Day is observed throughout the Western world.



**April Fools**

## Alaska's 29th Legislature Nears End

Continued from page 1

by Tier IV defined contribution (DC) retirement accounts for new public employees and teachers beginning July 1, 2006. New and existing employees (since July 1, 2016) would be offered a choice of either plan for their retirement contributions.

The pending DB option legislation is modeled after a bill introduced two years ago with the same intent. Though a fiscal note won't be released for HB 280/SB 88 until an actuarial analysis is complete, the legislation from 2014 was projected to save the State some \$10 million annually compared to the DC retirement program.

Both bills received hearings in the last four weeks. HB 280 moved out of its first committee and waits for further consideration in the House Labor & Commerce Committee before reaching House Finance and a floor vote. SB 88 has not received recommendations from the State Community & Regional Affairs Committee despite having been heard twice. Its next committee before a floor vote is Senate Finance. A motion before the Senate to move the bill forward by waiving the Community & Regional Affairs Committee referral failed by a 13-4 vote on March 28.

The DB retirement option bills HB 280 and SB 88 are sponsored by Juneau lawmakers Rep. Sam Kito III and Sen. Dennis Egan, respectively.

Two Retirement Incentive Program (RIP) bills have been introduced this session. HB 211 sponsored by Fairbanks Democrat Rep. Scott Kawasaki and HB 368 sponsored by Rep. Shelley Hughes from the Mat-Su Valley were referred to the House State Affairs Committee.

HB 368 received a hearing on March 29 and was demonstrated to be a non-starter due to its furlough language, changes to employee healthcare contributions for non-represented employees, micromanagement of special

assistants in Commissioners' offices and other issues.

HB 368 has not yet received individual recommendations from committee members and the bill will require hearings in two more committees before a floor vote can be taken.

HB 211, a true RIP bill, provides a simple framework for public employees and teachers who are nearing retirement and whose early eligibility for benefits would save money for the employer. Candidates for the RIP, being at least 50 years in age and having 20 years or more years (17 or more for peace officer and firefighters) in a defined benefit retirement system (Tiers 1-3), could qualify for three years of service credit toward retirement benefits. HB 211 has not yet been heard in the House State Affairs Committee. ASEA members interested in a RIP are encouraged to contact Committee Chair Rep. Bob Lynn, a Republican from Anchorage, to request that HB 211 be given a hearing.

Despite a history of higher cost and poor policy, a state procurement privatization bill was introduced by Sen. Lesil McGuire. SB 195 would consolidate procurement across state government—with a telling exception for the Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities in the bill from the Anchorage Republican.

Ten years ago a pilot program under HB 313 to privatize procurement in DOT was a well-documented failure. Independent research prepared for the Div. of General Services shows that the procurement demonstration actually cost the state more than \$1 million.

Procurement privatization has a dismal track record in Alaska and SB 195 is crafted to avoid comparisons to the state employees in DOT who saved \$900,000 and \$1.75 million in two samples compared to the contractor's performance—despite the contractor being granted multiple exemptions from following the State's procurement code.

# Solidarity Update

## Tracking Bills Of Interest To ASEA Members

The ASEA Political Action Committee (PAC) is an opportunity for all members to participate in political action at the state and local level. ASEA's Bill Tracking includes ASEA PAC recommendations regarding the benefit of legislative bills to public employees and all Alaskans.

The pending legislation below is a fraction of the many bills reviewed by ASEA PAC Directors. PAC Directors also solicit and evaluate responses from legislative and local office candidates to provide a list of endorsements to the ASEA membership.

If you are not already a contributor the ASEA PAC or to the Public Employees Organized to Promote Legislative Equality (PEOPLE),

please consider enrolling. A membership in PEOPLE automatically makes you a member of the ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Political Action Committee.

As a member of the PAC, you can be elected to serve on it's Board of Directors. PAC by-laws have been amend to allow every PAC member to serve as a Director for their district. For more information contact the ASEA Juneau Office at 463-4949 or (800) 478-0049 toll free.

Please note all members are reminded to use personal email accounts when communicating with PAC directors, legislators and candidates for public office, or when sending emails containing messages of a political nature.

### Pending Bills Supported by the ASEA PAC

Bill No.	Short Title	Sponsor(s)	Status	Next	PAC Position
<a href="#">HB 3</a>	WORKERS' COMPENSATION DEATH BENEFITS	JOSEPHSON, LYNN	(H) L&C	(H) FIN	Support
<a href="#">HB 22</a>	PROBATION AND PAROLE OFFICERS' CASELOADS	TUCK	(H) STA	(H) FIN	Support
<a href="#">HB 66</a>	INS. FOR DEPENDS. OF DECEASED FIRE/POLICE	MILLETT	(H) L&C	(H) FIN	Support
<a href="#">HB 245</a>	PERM. FUND: DEPOSITS; DIVIDEND; EARNINGS	GOVERNOR	(H) FIN	(H) RLS	Support
<a href="#">HB 280</a>	TEACHERS & PUB EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT PLANS	KITO	(H) L&C	(H) FIN	Support
<a href="#">HB 307</a>	WORKERS' COMP; INDEP. CONTRACT.;PENALTIES	LEDoux	(H) L&C	(H) RLS	Support
<a href="#">SB 9</a>	ELECTION PAMPHLETS	MICCICHE	(H) RLS	FLOOR	Support
<a href="#">SB 12</a>	PAID SICK LEAVE	WIELECHOWSKI	(S) L&C	(S) FIN	Support
<a href="#">SB 88</a>	TEACHERS & PUB EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT PLANS	EGAN	(S) CRA	(S) FIN	Support
<a href="#">SB 122</a>	EQUAL PAY & MINIMUM WAGE ACT	ELLIS	(S) STA	(S) L&C	Support
<a href="#">SB 128</a>	PERM. FUND: DEPOSITS; DIVIDEND; EARNINGS	GOVERNOR	(S) FIN	FLOOR	Support

### Pending Bills Opposed by the ASEA PAC

Bill No.	Short Title	Sponsor(s)	Status	Next	PAC Position
<a href="#">HB 47</a>	PERS CONTRIBUTIONS BY MUNICIPALITIES	FOSTER	(H) RLS	FLOOR	Oppose
<a href="#">HB 81</a>	EXEMPTION: LICENSING OF CONTRACTORS	TILTON	(H) FIN	FLOOR	Oppose
<a href="#">SB 74</a>	MEDICAID REFORM; TELEMEDICINE; DRUG DATABASE	KELLY	(H) RLS	(H) RLS	Oppose
<a href="#">SB 195</a>	CONTRACTS TO PROVIDE STATE PROCUREMENT	MCGUIRE	(S) STA	(S) FIN	Oppose
<a href="#">SJR 3</a>	CONST. AM: MEMBERSHIP OF JUDICIAL COUNCIL	KELLY	(S) JUD	(S) FIN	Oppose

# Solidarity Update

**ASEA HEALTH TRUST NEWS**



## It's Fast & Easy to Submit Health Trust Forms Online

Participant Questions	Your Health Trust Benefit Forms	What You Need to Do
<b>Where do I find Health Trust forms?</b>	All the forms you may need are available on the Health Trust website at <a href="http://aseahealth.org">aseahealth.org</a> .	Go to the "FORMS" button at the top of the home page. Select the category and then choose the form you need.
<b>How do I submit forms online?</b>	Many forms can be completed securely online. Your personal information is protected because you must login to use this feature. The forms with a blue arrow can be submitted online.	Click on the blue arrow.. The form will automatically fill with your personal information. Complete the form and click the submit button.
<b>How do I turn in forms that cannot be submitted online?</b>	Some forms are not set up to submit online, but you can still fill it out online and then either fax or mail it to the Health Trust Administrator.	Click on the PDF symbol to display the form. Save it as a document on your computer then type in the required information.
<b>How do I find and print an EOB on the website?</b>	All enrolled members can view claims activity and an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for each claim that has been processed.	Go to the "YOUR ACCOUNT" button at the top of the page and sign in to access your personal information. Select "Claims Summary" to view all claims activity. On the far right of each claim entry is an EOB link. Select this link to view the EOB.

Note: If you are using a newer version of Adobe Acrobat (e.g. Adobe Reader XI,) you may not be able to fill out PDF forms and submit them online. Please note that the website administrator is aware of this problem and is working on a solution. In the meantime, you can print and complete forms and then fax or mail them to the Health Trust Administrator.

## AFSCME 42nd International Convention Election

The AFSCME 42nd International Convention will be held in Las Vegas on July 18 - 22, 2016. Thousands of AFSCME delegates will gather to determine a path for our union for the next two years.

Attendees to the convention will have the opportunity to learn more about labor history, political and legislative fights for fairness, workplace efficiencies and discover what other locals are doing across the country.

The ballots with candidate statements for this election will be mailed to your home address Friday, April 22nd and will be counted on May 23rd.



*"Your participation will shape the union's strategy and goals during this challenging time in our history. It is time to pull together and recommit ourselves to defending working families. It is time to be inspired. It is time to forge new bonds with your AFSCME sisters and brothers."* - Lee Saunders, AFSCME Int'l President

## ASEA Local 52 Says Good-Bye To Three Staff Members

ASEA Headquarters Anchorage said good-bye to long time Accounting Tech Melanie Harris on February 17th. Melanie worked at the Anchorage Headquarters Office for 13 1/2 years.

ASEA Fairbanks Business Agent Kelly Brown retired on March 4th. Kelly was a Business Agent for 10 years took a break and returned for a second time for another 5 1/2 years, making her tenure a grand total of 15 1/2 years!

George Zuke worked in the Anchorage Headquarters first as an Organizer/Business Agent and then as a full time Business Agent and was employed at ASEA for 12 years.

We wish them all well as they enter into retirement and begin their new chapters in their lives. They will be missed.