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City of Unalaska Legislative Report **2/16/25**

The legislative landscape this session reflects an atmosphere of collaboration and urgency, with education funding, energy issues, and critical infrastructure projects like Alaska LNG taking center stage. Lawmakers will need to navigate these complex issues through strategic discussions and negotiations if they are to address the state's pressing fiscal obstacles while providing for the needs of Alaskans.

The community engagement seen during the Education Committee hearings highlights the demand for investment in education despite the state's financial constraints. Students expressing their need for better resources, support services, and improved facilities are a clear signal to lawmakers. Finding solutions that balance educational enhancement with fiscal responsibility will be crucial moving forward.

Discussions surrounding Representative Kopp's bill HB 78, which aims to address public sector recruitment and retention challenges, have sparked significant interest from various stakeholders, including unions and worker advocacy groups. They argue that reforming the retirement plan could help retain and attract talented workers who seek stability in their future. The contention will continue to focus on potential increased costs to employers. The proposal is designed to be more sustainable and manageable considering the state's fiscal challenges.

Senator Yundt's introduction of SB 92 has received much chatter this week, especially considering the history of previous attempts to levy a corporate income tax on oil and gas producers. This bill proposes to extend Alaska's 9.4% corporate income tax to companies within the oil and gas sector generating annual revenues exceeding \$5 million. Historically, such measures have struggled to gain traction, often facing resistance from various factions within the Legislature.

Meanwhile, both the House and Senate Transportation Committees continue to drill down with the Department of Transportation in efforts to find a solution to the extreme delay in project delivery causing major concern among Alaska Contractors.

The next few months will be pivotal in determining not only the success of these proposals but also the overall direction of Alaska's governance in the face of significant challenges.



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Upcoming Schedule

Description	Date, Time & Location
BARNES 124 -HOUSE LABOR & COMMERCE -- Please Note Time Change -- *+ HB99 MONEY TRANSMISSION; VIRTUAL CURRENCY TELECONFERENCED -- Testimony -- + HB60 PROCURE PREF: AGRIC. & FISH PRODUCTS TELECONFERENCED -- Testimony -- + Bills Previously Heard/Scheduled TELECONFERENCED **Streamed live on AKL.tv**	Fri 2/21/25 9:00 AM

Bill	Title	Prime Sponsor	Status & Upcoming Hearings	Position
HB 13	Municipal Property Tax Exemptions	GRAY	(H) REFERRED TO COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS (1/22)	

HB 18	Vehicles/boats: Transfer On Death Title	RAUSCHER	(H) Heard & Held (2/13)	
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HB 26	Statewide Public & Community Transit Plan	MINA	(H) REFERRED TO COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS (1/22)	
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HB 31	Vessels: Registration/derelict Fund	STUTES	(H) REFERRED TO FINANCE (2/12)	
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HB 78	Retirement Systems; Defined Benefit Opt.	HOUSE FINANCE	(H) Heard & Held (2/11)	
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HB 78 is a bill that allows certain employees to opt-in to the defined benefit retirement plan. The bill impacts municipalities as it affects the retirement plans of their employees. The legislation applies to teachers and public employees who first became members of the defined contribution retirement plan after June 30, 2006, and before July 1, 2025.

SB 10	Paid Family Leave/wage Replacement Insur.	DUNBAR	(S) REFERRED TO LABOR & COMMERCE (1/22)	
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SB 50	Municipal Comprehensive Plans: Housing	DUNBAR	(S) REFERRED TO LABOR & COMMERCE (2/12)	
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SB 50 amends Alaska Statute 29.40.030(a) to require first and second-class boroughs to include a housing plan in their comprehensive plans. The bill aims to guide physical, social, and economic development in these boroughs, addressing housing needs and providing recommendations for implementation of the comprehensive plan.

SB 79	Payment Of Wages; Payroll Card Account	SENATE LABOR & COMMERCE	(S) REFERRED TO RULES (2/14)	
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SB 79 is a bill that relates to wage payments in Alaska. The bill amends existing law to allow employers to pay employees' wages by crediting a payroll card account, but only if the employee has voluntarily authorized the credit or has not authorized deposit of their wages. The bill requires employers to notify employees of their wage payment options, payroll card terms and conditions, and fees associated with the payroll card.

The bill aims to provide employees with greater flexibility and protection in receiving their wages, while also allowing employers to use payroll card accounts as a convenient and cost-effective way to pay employees.