

# Legislative Newsletter

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## The Alaska 33rd Legislature Begins this week!

Welcome to the League of Women Voters of Alaska \*new\* Legislative Newsletter! The Alaska State Legislature 2023 session opens this Tuesday – January 17<sup>th</sup>. The sessions will be in full swing this year and the Capitol is open for visitors. This newsletter will be published bi-weekly - every other week on Sundays during the legislative session.

Our legislative priorities and focus areas remain centered around voting rights and access, but that may shift depending on the bills proposed and your input.

### Introduction to this Newsletter

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This newsletter will provide **Action Alerts** where LWVAK has identified a need for concerted action. These Alerts will provide information so you can contact your own state Representatives and Senators on bills requiring input from the community. Legislators have told us how valuable massive responses are in supporting or killing a bill. Sometimes our emails were the only ones they received on some issues and they absolutely made a difference.

If you find a bill of interest to you or one recommended by us, you may provide written and oral testimony at a Committee hearing. We'll try to give you information on times and places. Be sure to check the day of the meeting, there is the chance that the meeting may be postponed. **The most effective testimony is when you speak for yourself and explain your personal interest in the bill.** If the LWVAK State Board decides to provide testimony representing the League, they will do so in accordance with League positions, and after communications to the members.

**In the Status and Actions Needed** section below, you can follow links to our updates on the bills as we track them throughout the session. You can also **contact us** to ask questions or volunteer to help!

**Calendar and Events** will list upcoming legislative process dates, and events you can share and attend.

### Status and Actions Needed

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The 32nd Legislature ended last May “Sine Die” – this Latin phrase means that all pending legislation also ended with it. So, each two year period brings a new round of issues and bills. You can follow the links to the Bill information to read the full text.

There are a number of good articles already released regarding the pre-filed legislation. To read more about them, here are a few links: [Short Summary of bills - Alaska Beacon](#), [Senate priorities - Kenai KSRM](#), [More on Bills Filed-Alaska Beacon](#) or follow the links below to read the full text.

## House:

This year's election brings 19 new House members into the group of 40, although two of them are former legislators. As of sending this newsletter, there has been no majority determined.

### *Pre-filed Bills in the House to watch: (follow the links to the full bill)*

At this point, it is still too early to predict which bills will move forward, and even less assurance that they would pass the Senate. We will be watching these and weighing in if they start to move forward.

BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	BRIEF SUMMARY (read more online)
<a href="#">HB 1</a>	REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2 VOTING CHGS	REP RAUSCHER	Ballot measure 2 repeal.
<a href="#">HB 4</a>	ELECTIONS: REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2	REP VANCE	Ballot measure 2 repeal.
<a href="#">HB 24</a>	GOV APPOINT BRD OF GOV. OF AK BAR	REP RAUSCHER	Changes the membership of the Alaska Bar and requires the members to be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the legislature.
<a href="#">HB 34</a>	CONFIRMATION/QUALIFICATIONS OF JUDGES	REP RAUSCHER	Amends the selection and retention of judges, modifies the qualification of the supreme court justices, superior and district court judges, and magistrates...
<a href="#">HB 36</a>	APOC; REFERENDA/RECALL; CONTRIBUTIONS	REP SCHRAGE	Provides for campaign finance contribution limits including for initiatives and referendums.
<a href="#">HB 37</a>	ELECTIONS, VOTING, BALLOTS	REP SCHRAGE	Allows for election day registration and use of electronic signature. Prohibits the physical display of images of marked ballots...<read more>

## Senate:

There are seven new senators out of their 20, but one is a former senator and three are former House members. The Alaska Senate has organized around a 17-member bipartisan supermajority with all nine Democrats and eight of 11 Republicans. The bills with sponsors in the majority have a better chance of moving forward.

### *Pre-filed Bills in the Senate to watch: (follow the links to the full bill)*

BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	SUMMARY
<a href="#">SB 1</a>	ELECTIONS: BALLOT, VOTING, SECURITY	SEN. SHOWER	Requires the director of elections to adopt regulations providing for ballot security and chain of custody system.
<a href="#">SB 2</a>	REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2 VOTING CHGS	SEN. SHOWER	Repeals Ballot Measure 2
<a href="#">SB 5</a>	VOTER REGISTRATION	SEN. SHOWER	Requires the director of elections to send notices to those registered voters not domiciled in the state and adopt regulations for regular review and updates of the master register.
<a href="#">SB 6</a>	VOTING MACHINES AND VOTE TALLY SYSTEMS	SEN. SHOWER	Requires voting machines to meet the US Election Assistance Commission's guidelines and certified by the commission.
<a href="#">SB 7</a>	ELECTION INTERFERENCE, FRAUD, MISCONDUCT	SEN. SHOWER	Adds the intentional opening or tampering with absentee ballots or election machinery to the list of crimes of unlawful interference with an election

BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	SUMMARY
<a href="#">SB 17</a>	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS	SEN. KAWASAKI	Establishes Campaign Finance limits for individuals, nongroup entities, groups, and joint campaigns...
<a href="#">SB 19</a>	ELECTIONS; BALLOTS	SEN. KAWASAKI	Requires the director to provide postage-paid return envelopes for absentee ballots, examine each ballot and whether the signature is consistent with voter registration records...
<a href="#">SB 29</a>	CIVICS EDUCATION; EST AK CIVICS ED COMM	SEN. STEVENS	Requires school board to develop civics education curriculum and graduation requirement for high school students...
<a href="#">SB 31</a>	SELECTION AND REVIEW OF JUDGES	SEN. SHOWER	Requires voters retention of magistrates and places the same statutory provisions for district judges on magistrates.

### **Governor's Office:**

As Director of Elections, Gail Fenumiai retired on December 9th. We'll be waiting to see how the new Lt. Governor, Nancy Dahlstrom will fill the position.

### **Judicial System:**

Judges who are up for retention were on the ballot in 2022. This year, voting on judges lagged behind the votes of the other candidates. The LWVAK will be discussing this issue throughout this session, and will welcome your input. See the [KTOO article](#) about this.

### **Calendar and Events**

- January 17th - First day of session

### **Other Ways to Follow the State Legislature**

One good way to get more information is to watch [Gavel to Gavel](#), Alaska's public affairs network. Another great way is to use the Alaska State Legislature site - [akleg.gov](#). There is so much information on the state site, that we will do all we can here to highlight the critical activities. But, should you wish to be notified on specific bills, there is a tool named "BTMF" (Bill Tracking Management Facility). Look under the "OF INTEREST" section. You can sign up, and then you will be notified of the status of that bill as it moves thru the legislative process.

You are encouraged to invite others to take action by sharing this Legislative Newsletter, Action Alerts, and Calendar Events. Expanding the League's impact helps us to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy as a community! We'll keep these links accessible here for you.

- Alaska State Legislature website, [akleg.gov](#)
- Alaska State's Gavel to Gavel public affairs TV network, [www.ktoo.org/gavel/](#)

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