

And now...a flurry of election bills in the House

March came in “like a lion,” and showed no indication that it was going out “like a lamb!” The House has taken up a number of election related bills. All were “heard and held” for future consideration. The budget is now coming into full focus, and the news is definitely challenging. So it is anticipated that the majority of the actions will be about the budget. This will, however, include more discussions on the Base Student Allocation.

What to know: Highlights in March

Lunch With the League: (March 24th)

The Alaska League has started a new option for our members: “Lunch with the League.” We will be Zooming events from 12-1 pm and lining up speakers and information for you. Please get your lunch, sit down and let’s talk!

At the most recent “*Lunch with the League*” Zoom call, Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins spoke to the group about advocacy. A very timely topic. One of the items he mentioned was that physical mail is visible to the other legislators and often gets in the hands of the Legislators directly. Regarding emails, some legislators read their emails, but others have their legislative staff screen them and raise it to them or just tally the opinions. Something to consider.

Matt Lichtenstein then spoke about the legislative website (akleg.gov) - what it contains, and how best to use it. Most of the hearings are recorded, and you can listen to them live or recorded (we try to provide links in this newsletter as well.) The floor sessions (full legislature) are displayed when they are live, but if you want to find a recorded floor session, don’t forget you need to go to the Gavel to Gavel website to find them there.

Ballots & Voting:

On March 28th, the House State Affairs committee held a hearing on both **HB 1** Repeal Ballot Measure 2 Voting Changes. Rep. Rauscher stated that there has been an “overwhelming outpouring of support” to repeal this ballot measure. There is also a petition going around right now looking for signatures of people who also want this repealed.

Ballots & Voting continued:

The League came out in support of Ballot Measure 2, so it seems we have some work to do to help educate the public why we believe it is still the best way for us to hold elections.

HB 37 was introduced. Here is a link to the [testimony](#). From the sponsor statement:

“House Bill 37 seeks to ensure that every eligible Alaskan voter has the opportunity to participate in Alaska’s elections in a safe, secure, and accessible manner while ensuring valid votes are not rejected due to minor, correctable errors. HB 37 accomplishes this by modernizing Alaska’s elections, eliminating the witness signature requirement, establishing a signature verification system, creating a ballot curing process, and implementing same-day voter registration, among other changes.

The purpose of HB 37 is to remove barriers to the ballot box at every stage of Alaska’s election process while promoting transparency and bolstering the integrity of Alaska’s elections.”

The LWVAK has written a [letter of support](#). Take some time and read our support. We also encourage our members to support this bill also. Other groups writing in support of this bill included the [ACLU Alaska](#), and [Secure Democracy USA](#). Sue Sherif from the LWVAK spoke in support of this bill as did Secure Democracy, and the Alaska ACLU. Ballot curing was an important point, as was eliminating the witness signatures and for the Department of Elections to provide prepaid return envelopes. The bill was heard and “held” so we will see if it comes up again this session.

On March 30th, the House State Affairs Committee heard the following election bills: HB 129, HB 130, HB 131, HB 132. All were presented by House Judiciary by Rep. Vance. [HB 129](#) is focused on Voter Registration, and it showed no fiscal note impact. [HB 130](#) focuses on Election Interference and Fraud, [HB 131](#) - Voter Machines and Vote Tally Systems, and [HB 132](#) focuses on Elections Ballot Voting and Security. All of these bills have been held for future information and testimony. Follow the links on these bills to read more detail on all of these bills. Or listen to the [testimony on March 30th](#). We will be watching these, and will let you know if there is any further movement on any of them.

Alaska Legislative Updates

Senate:

Updated Legislation: No new or updated legislation that we are tracking. [SB52](#) - Increase Base Student Allocation moved to Senate Finance Committee.

House:

Updated Legislation: No new or updated legislation that we are tracking.

Governor's Office:

No new or updated legislation that we are tracking.

Judicial System:

We have added HB 82 to our watchlist of legislation.

Alaska Legislative Meetings Scheduled for week of April 3rd

These meetings. From the BTMF system on the **bills we are tracking** for the upcoming week:

The bill [SB 97: Teacher Recruitment; Lump Sum Payment](#) has been scheduled for a meeting Senate Education ~ Apr 3 2023 3:30pm
To see the bill go to [SB 97](#)

Note: Due to the upcoming holidays, many bills will be taken up again after April 11th.

To see the bills we are tracking and where they are in the process, check the details on [the VotingRightsAlaska.org Legislation page](#).

Legislative Calendar and Events

In case you missed it:

- On Feb. 22nd - **US Senator Lisa Murkowski** gives her [annual address](#) to the legislature.
- Past events: On Feb. 7th - **US Senator Dan Sullivan's** gave his [annual address](#).
- And on Feb. 17th - **US Rep. Mary Peltola's** gave her first [annual address](#).
- April 16th - 90th day of the session (By law (AS 24.05.150))
- May 17th - 121st day of the session (Per the Alaska Constitution)

It is anticipated that the legislature is going to go past the 90th day of the session and go until May 17th this year. It is possible that the session *may* go into a special session, depending on budget negotiations.

Wrap Up

How are we doing?

We have received word that some League members across the state are not receiving this newsletter. If you hear from anyone who isn't seeing these, please have them send an email to our lwwak@lwvalaska.org email and we'll look into it. Remember, these are also posted on VotingRightsAlaska.org as well.

The League always needs volunteers! Writing letters, talking to your legislators, and helping out by giving us your feedback - it doesn't have to be a total commitment. We would LOVE to hear from you. Please encourage others to take action by sharing this Legislative Newsletter, Action Alerts, and Calendar Events. Contact us at lwwak@lwvalaska.org, and/or work to get the word out with your local leagues.

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/

League of Women Voters of Alaska

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BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	COMMITTEE REFERRAL(S)
SB 1	ELECTIONS: BALLOT, VOTING, SECURITY	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary, Finance
SB 2	REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2 VOTING CHGS	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary, Finance
SB 5	VOTER REGISTRATION	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary
SB 6	VOTING MACHINES AND VOTE TALLY SYSTEMS	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary
SB 7	ELECTION INTERFERENCE, FRAUD, MISCONDUCT	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary

BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	COMMITTEE REFERRAL(S)
SB 17	CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS	SEN. KAWASAKI	State Affairs, Judiciary
SB 19	ELECTIONS; BALLOTS	SEN. KAWASAKI	State Affairs, Finance
SB 29	CIVICS EDUCATION; EST AK CIVICS ED COMM	SEN. STEVENS	Education, Finance
SB 31	SELECTION AND REVIEW OF JUDGES	SEN. SHOWER	State Affairs, Judiciary
SB 52	INCREASE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION	SENATE EDUCATION	Education, Finance
SB 61	US PRESIDENT ELECT. POPULAR VOTE COMPACT	SENs. WIELECHOWSKI & GRAY-JACKSON	Judiciary, State Affairs

BILL	SHORT TITLE	SPONSOR(s)	COMMITTEE REFERRAL(S)
HB 1	REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2 VOTING CHGS	REP RAUSCHER	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 4	ELECTIONS: REPEAL BALLOT MEASURE 2	REP VANCE	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 24	GOV APPOINT BRD OF GOV. OF AK BAR	REP RAUSCHER	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 34	CONFIRMATION/QUALIFICATIONS OF JUDGES	REP RAUSCHER	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 36	APOC; REFERENDA/RECALL; CONTRIBUTIONS	REP SCHRAGE	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 37	ELECTIONS, VOTING, BALLOTS	REP SCHRAGE	State Affairs, Judiciary
HB 65	INCREASE BASE STUDENT ALLOCATION	REP ORTIZ	Education,
HB 82	SELECTION AND REVIEW OF JUDGES	REP RAUSCHER	Judiciary, Finance
HB 106	TEACHER RECRUITMENT-LUMP SUM	At the request of the GOVERNOR	Education, Judiciary, Finance
HB 105	SEX/REPRODUCTION EDUCATION; SCHOOLS	At the request of the GOVERNOR	Education, Judiciary, Finance