

Bill Thomas 24-31 January 2016

Sunday (24 January 2016) This is the proposal from Governor to use permanent fund to help run the State. There are 3 bills out which all allows spending of fund. There is a group called Alaska's Future, that has everyone in a tizzy. It's a coalition of Business's, regional corporations, Unions and former politicians. They didn't adopt a certain bill, but like the idea of using the Permanent fund. Southeast Conference and AML have not committed to this plan. I meet with Southeast Conference and asked if they are asked to join try and get ferry funding and revenue sharing. This group has the potential to create a lot of confusion on the hill. Will be about 2 million dollars spent to get the idea across the State and form letters signed to support their effort. I'll be watching this group to try and get our priorities funded.

Monday (25 January 2016)-No meeting calendared that we are monitoring. Spent the day talking to whoever would talk. The in the building was about the new group called Alaska's Future. This is a group of Business's, Native Regional Corporation's, Union organizations and ex-Politian's. Their goal is to get the get the Legislature to take earning from the Permanent Fund and put the money in the operating budget to help run the State. Their fear is that to many cuts in the operating budget will put the State into a recession, because of the layoffs needed to trim the budget. This group hired 2 outside consultants to put an organization together to influence the Legislature and try to get Alaskans to sign block letters supporting the effort. This group plans to hire 200 people to get these letters signed. Stories are they have 2-3 million dollars for this effort .This has people upset because the 2 consultants have run Super-Pacs during the last election. There are 3 bills introduced to get into the fund, and they have not picked a bill. I Will keep an eye on this group.

Tuesday- Early morning meeting with Finance Sub-committee for Department of Transportation budget about the Alaska Marine Highway. Same person was drilling Captain Neusell again. Obvious she isn't a supporter. Senate State Affairs had a meeting on SB 128 and about Sovereign Wealth Funds & Rule-Based Resource. Big words for a Permanent Fund. This is one of bills that group mentioned above maybe watching. Think I sent you the overview. Will resend in case I didn't. This has potential to fix a lot of issues we may have.

Wednesday-No committee meetings on issues I'm following. Just talked all day

Thursday-Attended a Fisheries Committee meeting about Young Fishermen coming into fisheries, and problems they have getting into a fishery. Haines has 60 gillnet permits, troll permits and a bunch of halibut Quota owners. Was requested by the Chair to testify about my experience in the fishing industry. (Not as a young fisherman) The International Halibut Commission as at the Centennial Hall so I checked in to see what was happening, the Advisory Committee was making recommendation to the Commission on how much to increase the quota, it was increased by 6%.

Friday-Flew to Haines on last flight as I was informed I had Minor Offense meeting on Friday and forecast was for snow. I met with the Interim Manager and received direction to work on getting Chilkoot Rd. assigned to DNR and promote the Champs program for museums. I am planning on calling in on the teleconference on this issue schedule for the following Tuesday.