



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Matt Claman

May 2021 Community Council Update

House Passes Education Funding — In April, the House passed [House Bill 169](#), a bill that forward funds K-12 education for the 2021-22 and the 2022-23 school years. HB 169 passed 26-to-14 with unanimous support from the [Alaska House Majority Coalition](#) along with several members of the minority caucus. As the legislature continues to work on the budget, Alaska's students, teachers, and parents deserve certainty that our schools will have the resources they need, year in and year out. This vote shows broad agreement that we need to fulfill our constitutional obligations by investing in strong public schools.

HB 169 does not increase K-12 funding. It simply commits to following the statutory base student allocation formula in FY2022 and FY2023. If approved by the Senate and the Governor, HB 169 will make sure teachers do not receive pink slips this year or next.

Legislature Passes Emergency Declaration Extension — On March 26, the House passed [House Bill 76](#), legislation that provides public health leaders with the tools they need to address the COVID-19 pandemic and keep Alaska on a path toward economic recovery. On April 28, the Senate passed HB 76 and the House accepted the Senate's changes. The bill now goes to the governor's desk. HB 76:

- Protects \$8 million in monthly federal food assistance to COVID-19 impacted Alaskans;
- Ensures the state is eligible for future federal aid and reimbursement for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) costs;
- Limits the governor's ability to spend federal funds without legislative approval;
- Continues off-site testing and vaccination sites and allows healthcare and mental health providers to deliver telehealth services; and
- Allows airport testing for travelers coming to Alaska from out-of-state.

Operating Budget & American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) — On March 11, President Biden signed ARPA into law. This bill is a \$1.9 trillion stimulus act for the United States, and Alaska expects to receive \$1.36 billion in total funds from ARPA, with more than \$1 billion going to the State of Alaska for disbursement. [States and local governments may use these funds to:](#)

- Respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the negative economic impacts of the pandemic;
- Cover premium pay to workers performing essential tasks during the pandemic;
- Cover government revenue losses that are due to the pandemic; and
- Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

There are often restrictions attached to federal funding, including ARPA. On May 10, we expect to receive guidance on how we may spend these funds from the U.S. Treasury, and this information will affect the final details of this year's operating budget.

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