

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:23 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Ms. Hamby and Ms. Sheehan,

Please forward the letter below to the members of the SOCC. Thanks for your help!

Best,
Jesse

January 3, 2022

State Officers Compensation Commission
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
P.O. Box 110201
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Chairman Ellis and Commissioners:

Thank you for inviting comments on proposed changes to legislators' pay and per diem. I appreciate the commission's diligence. Alaska columnist Paul Jenkins once wrote, "It is beyond unreasonable to expect all

lawmakers can afford to maintain two households during a session. It is silly and would change the character of the body.” He was right. So how best to pay and cover the expenses of legislators? After listening to the commission’s last meeting, I respectfully ask you to consider a few principles as you decide what course to take:

1. The State of Alaska should cover the costs of living away from home when it stations employees in another city.
2. Pay is a factor in determining which Alaskans can afford to serve.
3. Each legislator should be paid the same.

Principle one suggests the commission should be careful capping reimbursements. Instead of a flat dollar cap per year, consider reimbursing legislators’ actual costs of lodging and a reasonable rate for meals and incidental expenses. That rate could have a monthly limit to prevent gold plating. If the commission only sets an annual dollar limit, it hands future governors a financial club to swing at the legislature by threatening to keep them in special sessions – paid out of their own pockets.

Principle two means if the commission shrinks the reimbursement for working away from home, it should bump up the salary commensurately. Many, probably most, legislators sacrifice some income (along with family time and other opportunities) in order to serve. That’s not an inherent problem. But just like any profession, the lower the pay goes, the fewer people will consider that line of work. A decision that shrinks total compensation would also shrink Alaskans’ choices for who serves them. That would be a bad outcome for citizens.

Principle three calls on the commission to be cautious. Alaska used to acknowledge the fact most legislators live more frugally in Juneau than the federal per diem rate allows. Our state therefore paid legislators who live in the capital city a fraction of the per diem rate (which came as taxable income.) When that changed after 2018, the effective take-home pay for Juneau-based legislators dropped more than 20%. One Juneau legislator serving at the time was priced out of running for re-election, and Alaska voters lost the opportunity to decide whether they wanted him on the job. The change also opened a disparity in take-home pay between legislators who live in Juneau and those who represent other areas of the state. Obviously, Juneau-based legislators don’t need reimbursement for maintaining a second household or living away from home. But it is not appropriate to pay any one set of legislators less for the same service.

Whether the commission switches to reimbursing actual housing costs up to a limit or proceeds with some other adjustment, please keep apply these three principles. A thoughtful, fair approach will give Alaska voters the best shot at a legislature that truly represents them. Thank you again for your diligent public service.

All the best,

Jesse Kiehl

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:38 PM

To: Sen. Jesse Kiehl <Sen.Jesse.Kiehl@akleg.gov>

Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>

Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan

Director

Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby

Administrative Assistant 2

Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

Department of Administration

☎ 465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:23 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 29, 2021 4:50 PM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: RE: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Dear Katie,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposed compensation for State Legislators. The per diem should be capped but I believe \$10,000 - \$12,000 is not enough to cover expenses for 121 days.

Sincerely,

"Representing Your Interests"

SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON
DISTRICT I
Serving Spenard, Midtown and UMed
1500 W. Benson Blvd., Room 328
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-269-0174



AKSENATEDEMS.COM

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:35 PM
To: Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson <Sen.Elvi.Gray-Jackson@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan

Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:23 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 29, 2021 4:38 PM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>; Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Cc: Mike and Michelle Shower <dozerf22@hotmail.com>
Subject: Re: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Kate and SOCC members,

I have a question which must be asked. Is the intent of this initiative to create a political class where only the wealthy, retired or those who have a spouse with a high enough paying job are able to afford being a "citizen" legislator? It seems germane to the discussion because, quite frankly, this is the path the 2nd approach in your email pursues even if not intentional.

Let's discuss specifics. For example, I make a very good pay check as a Fedex pilot when the legislature is not in session and I can work my other job full time. I make virtually no money at that 2nd job while in session. Due to currency requirements as an airline pilot I lose, on average, about 5 months of income a year to the legislative job - and it's a significant cut to my family's income (even with the current per diem rates). I know of other legislator's in a similar situation. I also know many who can play legislator without any hit to their family's bottom line due to one of the 3 circumstances mentioned above.

No one who's paying attention questions the high expense of living in Juneau. Per diem exists for the simple reason to offset being forced to work somewhere else and support 2 households during that time. Your actual home and all the expenses which come with such - and your "away" home and the expenses in paying for those at the same time. There's nothing wrong with per diem, the federal government uses it, the state of Alaska uses it, the private sector uses it. People can't survive paying for two locations in most jobs unless they're compensated for having to "live" away from home, those bills don't stop coming.

I have repeatedly mentioned, and in my first response to the initial request for feedback, I believe per diem is too high for legislators in Juneau. At the same time, it can't be so low, or capped so low, you are literally pricing people out of being able to serve because the financial hit is so hard an average citizen not in one of those special categories can't afford it. I find it hard to believe the intent of the board is to create a special political class because serving as an Alaskan legislator can equal financial disaster for a working class citizen.

As I spoke to in my first response a \$10,000 or \$12,000 per diem cap is not unreasonable for what has become an average 4 month regular session in Juneau, if, you instead bump up yearly pay to offset the lower per

diem. But it is unreasonable if the pay is going to stay at \$50,400 a year. Why? You just proposed a roughly \$26,000 a year pay reduction. That's nearly 1/3rd of a years average pay, including per diem, for a legislator.

Lower per diem is fine if you instead cap it at a reasonable rate and put some portion of what would have normally been in the per diem pay into regular pay. The higher regular pay helps legislators survive paying for living in Juneau during session while still getting a reasonable per diem. It also helps legislators throughout the year since their pay for the job is spread out more evenly than low pay out of session and very high pay with high per diem but only during session. Let's face reality - my pay check is about \$1100 every two weeks from the state after deductions, not exactly "making bank". Neither can I pay for my current home and expenses on the current state pay with a capped per diem while not working my 2nd job - you'd literally be financially coercing me out of being a legislator.

This is the salient point - it's not survivable pay when having to provide a home in district all year while having to provide a place to live in Juneau for 1/3rd of the year - when combined with the hit to income those of us who must still work a 2nd job take - while losing pay from our other job while in session.

Keep in mind, a legislator's job doesn't end out of session. I'm often busier at home depending on what's happening than I am in session. Take this week what happened with the roof collapse of the only grocery store in Delta Junction with severe winter storms, I've spent a majority of this week on the phone, on the computer and social media trying to help coordinate response's and providing information.

My proposal on the first email was still a pay cut as I agreed with the \$74,000 number and a \$10,000 per diem cap. That's less than what a legislator would make today under the current rules but fits within the construct of the "possible" I outline above. I hope the board promotes an honest narrative because many people have taken from this effort there is going to be a "massive" pay raise for legislators if the first proposal passes - but this is as I point out - a false narrative. Either version proposed is a pay cut and this second one is a severe pay reduction.

I still propose a reduction in per diem but in a way which allows regular citizens the opportunity to serve and not put their family into financial distress.

Establishing a political class who are the only ones able to afford serving as a legislator is a disturbing path which I imagine most Alaskans would disagree with - if - they are presented the truth.

Respectfully,

Mike Shower
Senate District E

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:42 PM
To: Sen. Mike Shower <sen.mike.shower@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan
Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:23 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2021 4:20 PM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Hi Kate,

Please see below response from Sen. Gary Stevens regarding the 2nd SOCC letter.

Thank you and happy holidays!

Katie Hamby

Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

From: Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2021 4:16 PM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Cc: Matheny, Katrina M (LEG) <katrina.matheny@akleg.gov>
Subject: RE: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Dear Katie:

I answered your earlier request with my feedback. I still believe it is wrong to keep legislative salaries where they now are while reducing per diem. As I've considered the Commission's letter I wanted to add a few thoughts.

I believe legislative service to be an honorable, ethical and meaningful calling. Commissioners may think the Governor, whoever he might be, should always have control over the legislature. I don't agree with that opinion.

In a Republic such as ours there must be a strong, hardworking, respected legislature which is even more answerable to the public than the Governor. I believe legislatures are the laboratory of Democracy.

Our primary job is creating an annual budget and passing well considered legislation. Every bill is thoroughly analyzed in each body, amended along the way to make the bill better. It is a time consuming process involving thoughtful comments from experts, administrators and the public. It is crucial we are able to question the administration and expect straight answers, often at the request of the public who have no other way to get answers from the administration.

We are a citizen legislature which implies that it is not a full time job. But I can assure you to be an effective legislator it is much more than part time. I'm in my office during the interim here in Kodiak almost every day and often on weekends. I receive and place numerous telephone calls from home with fellow legislators, staff and members of the public. This is not an 8 to 5 job as some of you may experience. A legislator is always on call at any time of the day or night. We have to tolerate the abuse of a few people who just don't understand the issues or have forgotten the rules of civility. The majority of the public are reasonable and willing to listen even if in the end we may agree to disagree. When we are in Juneau I usually arrive at the office by 7 or 7:30 am and seldom go home before 5 or 6 pm. Evenings are often filled with teleconferences helping communities and agencies in my district understand what is happening in Juneau.

As a retired Professor I will certainly finish my term of office no matter what you may do to legislative salary and per diem. I left a tenured position to serve in the Alaska Legislature and I have no regrets, believe me. I do worry though for some members of the legislature, particularly the younger ones with family at home. Many of them are separated from their family for month while having to maintain two households, and are not able to fulfill a full time position elsewhere while serving in the legislature. As Senate President, I had a legislator who tried his best to maintain his attorney firm in the evenings after legislative work was done. I admired him for his tenacity. He did a great job as a legislators despite the strain it must have personally cost him. Every election year we have legislators who decide to retire because they get burned out, overly stressed or feel underappreciated.

The public expects a lot of their legislators and well they should. They deserve hard working, honest legislators who are attentive to the legislative process, participate in debate and discussion, study the issues at hand, make every attempt to honor what the public wants, and communicate with people back home through the media. I believe they deserve to be paid fairly.

It is an honorable, demanding and fulfilling job. I have the impression some commissioners may not agree with what I have just said. But in my humble opinion, they could not be more wrong. Please do not drive good legislators out of office. It would be a disservice to Alaska and Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Senator Gary Stevens

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:44 PM

To: Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>

Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>

Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan

Director

Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby

Administrative Assistant 2

Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

Department of Administration

☎465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:24 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Sen. Tom Begich <Sen.Tom.Begich@akleg.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 23, 2021 1:59 PM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Cc: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Subject: RE: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Dear Director Sheehan:

Please find below my comments regarding the State Officers Compensation Commission's proposal to leave legislators' salaries status quo, while capping per diem.

It is my belief that a reduction in either salaries or per diem will discourage candidacies for office for those of us who have chosen to run and do not have independent wealth. This will have a dampening effect on public service by reducing the widest, and most diverse, possible number of candidates who might consider running for elected office. To focus on the per diem issue, especially when the legislature was not responsible for calling any of the last four special sessions (as they were all called by the Governor), would be an unfortunate restriction and shift the balance of power from the co-equal balance between these branches of government - the legislature and the administration - toward the administration. This is neither conducive to effective making of public policy, nor good for the body politic as a whole.

Consequently, I oppose these recommended changes and respectfully request that current levels for both remain in force. I would oppose these changes should they come before the legislature this session.

Thank you for taking my comments.

All my best,

Tom Begich
Senate Minority Leader
Senate District J - Anchorage

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:33 PM
To: Sen. Tom Begich <Sen.Tom.Begich@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan
Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:24 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: Concerns about pay structure proposal

From: Rep. Zack Fields <Rep.Zack.Fields@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 9:46 PM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: Concerns about pay structure proposal

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Hi Kate,

I understand you're collecting comments on the proposed salary changes? If that's wrong I apologize, and if so here are my thoughts:

I have serious concerns with the salary commission's proposal to modestly raise legislators' salaries but nearly eliminate per diem, which has the net effect of making compensation unlivable for lower and middle class legislators, especially those with families. If the legislature was in sole control of the length we're in session, this proposal might make some sense. But that's not the reality--the last few years (not to mention the Constitution) have shown clearly that the Governor determines how much we're in Juneau. Nearly eliminating per diem in this context would make it incredibly difficult for working class people to be in the legislature and come anywhere close to supporting their families. (And I say this as someone who always claims one of the lowest amounts of per diem).

The reality is that being a legislator is a year-round job. For one thing, special sessions have become the norm, and expenses in Juneau are astronomical during the summer when many of these special sessions take place. In addition, most legislators work throughout the most of the year researching and developing legislation, providing constituent services, and so on. Any change to salary and per diem should also take into account expenses and foregone revenue for families. For legislators with families, the costs of relocation and special sessions are even more extreme. These costs include not just legislator travel, but for special sessions can include higher child care costs. We have to be a place that is open to families, because parents' perspectives are needed in the legislature.

As former Senator Johnny Ellis articulated, it is imperative that the legislature be open to Alaskans, whether rich, poor, or middle class. We can't represent the state if being a legislator is only financially viable for independently wealthy and retired individuals.

For much of Western history, we've debated who should be represented in a democracy. It's not a democracy if, by either law or practice, representation is limited to those with wealth. A living wage, including for cost of living, and including for those who have families, is essential to ensure our legislative representatives reflect Alaskans more broadly--and that includes representation from all income levels. The salary proposal being considered would reduce working class representation in the legislature, to the detriment of the entire state, and that proposal should be rejected.

Zack Fields
House District 20

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:24 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

From: Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 5:10 PM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: RE: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Kate,

There are pros and cons to every aspect of the current and proposed legislative pay and per diem structure. I'm going to trust the commission's experience and wisdom in making the right decision. I have no input at this time.

Thank you, and I hope you and your family have a very merry Christmas.

Natasha

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 3:44 PM
To: Sen. Natasha Von Imhof <Sen.Natasha.VonImhof@akleg.gov>
Cc: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan
Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:25 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input
Attachments: SOCC -2nd Letter Seeking Input.pdf

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 8:28 AM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Hi Kate,

Please see response below from Sen. Gary Stevens,

Thank you,

Katie Hamby

Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

From: Sen. Gary Stevens <Sen.Gary.Stevens@akleg.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 5:07 PM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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If you leave the salary where it is and reduce per diem I believe in the future you will see fewer qualified candidates running for office. If that's your goal you might well succeed.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 21, 2021, at 3:43 PM, Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov> wrote:

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan
Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:28 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input
Attachments: SOCC -2nd Letter Seeking Input.pdf

From: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:25 PM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: FW: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

Hi Kate,

Please see response below from Rep. Sara Rasmussen.

Thank you,

Katie Hamby

Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎465-4425

From: Rep. Sara Rasmussen <Rep.Sara.Rasmussen@akleg.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 21, 2021 4:23 PM
To: Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov>
Subject: Re: 2nd SOCC Letter - Seeking Input

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Hi Katie,

My previous opinion remains unchanged for this proposal. It appears the commission wants to transition legislating into an incredibly expensive hobby only accessible to a few ultra wealthy Alaskans.

The proposal before the commission now will undoubtedly force our legislature into a composition solely of retired independently wealthy Alaskans. I prefer we have competitive wages for our professionals, most of us have attained at least some level of college, and offset the incredibly high costs associated with living in Juneau and maintaining a residence in our home district.

I heard the comments made that our legislative salary is the highest among all other legislatures and I would remind the members that Alaska is the only state in the nation that requires a ferry or plane to access our Capitol, because of that unique position we must consider the compensation, in our desire for a diverse representation for all Alaskans. Please don't make a decision rooted in emotion and look at the actual numbers and costs associated with this role.

Sara

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 21, 2021, at 4:06 PM, Hamby, Katie C (DOA) <katie.hamby@alaska.gov> wrote:

Dear Legislator,

Please see the attached letter from the State Officers Compensation Commission. Please provide feedback directly to Kate Sheehan by December 31. Thank you for your time and I hope you have a happy holiday season.

Kate Sheehan
Director
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Thank you,

Katie Hamby
Administrative Assistant 2
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration
☎ 465-4425

Brill, Camille R (DOA)

From: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA)
Sent: Monday, January 3, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Brill, Camille R (DOA)
Subject: FW: Legislator Salaries and Per Diem Expenses 2021/2022

From: Michael Tavoliero <michael.eaglexit@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 20, 2021 7:25 AM
To: Sheehan, Kate E (DOA) <kate.sheehan@alaska.gov>
Subject: Legislator Salaries and Per Diem Expenses 2021/2022

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Dear Kate,

I understand that the preliminary proposal was for a salary of \$74,500 and an annual expense cap of \$5,000 per year.

That's a total compensation of \$79,500 per year, which is significantly higher than the average total compensation for legislative members nationally.

If the current legislator salary is \$50,400, my understanding is that is still higher than the national average of \$34,000.

We are in a time of belt tightening as well. There is no logical, fiscal, or economic reason to increase their compensation. With the national average substantially lower, I believe the real argument is to lower it.

In 2006, the public voted to change the legislative session to 90 days. At the current legislator salary is \$50,400, that would translate to \$16,800 a month which seems more than adequate. Further, if we use the 120 day session we are still at \$12,600 a month.

My recommendation is keep their salary at \$50,400, but cap their annual expenses (per diem) at \$12,000. This will give them a total compensation of \$62,400.

I believe this is balanced.

It allows up to \$12,600 a month for a 120 day session which is significantly more than the average. Also it provides \$12,000 in expenses tax free.

This is a more than adequate expense account for 120 days.

Again in application whether we accept the 90 day session or the 120 day session, individual legislators will have adequate funds for the session.

Best Wishes,

Michael Tavoliero

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THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
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December 21, 2021

Greetings legislator,

The State Officers Compensation Commission is meeting to discuss pay and benefits granted to legislators. As you are aware, I sent you a letter on December 6 requesting feedback on their preliminary proposal. The Commission would now like input from you on the proposal of leaving the salary the same as it currently is (\$50,400 per year) and capping the per diem at either \$10,000 or \$12,000 per year. Please respond directly to Kate Sheehan, Director of the Division of Personnel and Labor Relations. All feedback will be discussed at the next meeting scheduled for January 4th at 10 am. Public testimony will also be taken at that time. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Sheehan

Kate Sheehan
Director

On behalf of SOCC members:

Johnny Ellis, Chair
Kurt Olson
Carrigan Grigsby
Lee Cruise