

Alaska State Legislature



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House Passes Bipartisan Education Funding

JUNEAU — A bipartisan plan to fund education and meet critical infrastructure needs was attached to Senate Bill 283 tonight and passed unanimously by the House of Representatives. The compromise amendment – offered by Republican and Democratic leadership – increases the education foundation formula base student allocation to at least \$4,588. The \$419 increase per pupil counteracts years when inflation eroded the value of education dollars.

The increase also covers gaps in PERS/TRS retirement funds. The education amendment, which also includes infrastructure grants to municipalities and unincorporated communities across the state, was attached to the “reverse CBR sweep” appropriations bill, SB283, and moves now to the Alaska Senate for concurrence.

“This is a comprehensive effort to negotiate legislation that addresses the educational needs of Alaska. It's a bipartisan solution to an issue that matters to us all,” said Speaker of the House Pete Kott (R-Eagle River). “Our result closely mirrors a package that has been put forth by our colleagues in the Senate. We have worked closely with them to ensure that Alaska’s school districts have the resources they need to meet both their immediate and longer term goals.”

“Tonight we broke a stalemate over education funding,” said House Democratic Leader Ethan Berkowitz (D-Anchorage). “We can move ahead when we work together.”

Negotiations of this magnitude are traditionally reserved for the end of session, but House leaders felt it was important to get past budget negotiations and look to finding a long-range fiscal plan for Alaska.

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