



Visiting students Cheryl Tunguing, Lovina Lomack, Verner Wilson, and Rochelle Greenley caught up with Rep. Kapsner at the House Chambers.

News From MARY

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Camai!

This week I'm delighted to have another group of district Close-Up Students visiting the Capitol and learning about the legislative process. Because there was a spurt of activity on subsistence this past week--with the Anchorage vote, the House Resources Committee hearing, and the Governor's Special Session announcement--having young people from the district feels timely for me. After all, the decisions we make in the legislature are not just about how we spend money this year or the laws we make to change our daily lives; we are steering the State toward a future these young people will inherit. How we address the divisions in the State of Alaska and assure protection of rural subsistence is vitally important to that future.

As I reflect on what was said and done last week, having these young people from home in and around the offices and hallways reenergizes me for the debates ahead. And it gives me an opportunity to talk with them about their views of the issue as well--and helps keep me focused on our priorities at home.

Mary

House Resources Holds One Subsistence Hearing

On Friday, April 5, the House Resources Committee held its first hearing on the subsistence resolutions introduced in the Twenty-Second Legislature.

Three resolutions and one bill were calendered. HJR 41 by the Governor, HJR 4 and HB 14 by Rep. Davies (D-Fairbanks), and HJR 11 and HJR 29 by Rep. Dyson (R-Eagle River). Testimony focused on HJR 41, introduced by the Governor, which is the result of the work by the 2001 Subsistence Summit and Drafting Committee.

Testimony offered largely mirrored prior debates on the issue. A number of proponents for a constitutional amendment noted the April 1 advisory vote in Anchorage in which 72% of voters said they want to vote on the question.

Most who testified argued for a constitutional amendment as the first step in regaining state management. Others scolded or urged lawmakers to resolve the impasse because it continues to divide Alaskans.

Opponents of a constitutional amendment rally around arguments of equal access to the resources for all Alaskans.

The text of all bills (and the minutes of committee hearings when they are completed) can be found on the Legislature's web site at:

www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/

Please feel free to call my office with questions at any time (1-800-323-4942).

Special Session on Subsistence - May 15

The Governor announced on Friday he will call a special session on subsistence on May 15. He noted "increased momentum" among Alaskans for a subsistence solution and suggested the minority of legislators who have blocked action can no longer avoid it.

Because a constitutional amendment alone will not accomplish the state's goal of regaining management of resources on federal lands, the Governor's working group also recommended changes in state law to assure compliance with Title VIII of ANILCA. Those recommendations can be found on the Governor's subsistence summit web site at:

www.gov.state.ak.us/subsistencesummit/

U. S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Oversight Hearing on Subsistence - April 17

Senator Daniel Inouye, Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs has scheduled an oversight hearing on subsistence hunting and fishing issues in Alaska on April 17 at 2:00 p.m. (10:00 a.m. Alaska time).

Representatives of many organizations are planning to be in Washington, D.C., to testify. The hearing is scheduled to be broadcast live, and would be accessible to those with computer net access (requires real player software). You can check it out at:

<http://indian.senate.gov/nsindex.html>