



Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • August 31, 2004

Governor Proves Again: He Does Appointments Wrong

ANCHORAGE – House Democratic Leader Ethan Berkowitz (D-Anchorage) reacted with strong disapproval to Governor Murkowski's rejection of three judicial nominees to fill a vacancy on the Anchorage Superior Court. The non-partisan Alaska Judicial Council, following a process outlined in the Alaska State Constitution, forwarded the names. Every previous governor – filling every previous judicial vacancy – had followed this method.

"The Alaska Constitution clearly outlines an apolitical process for judicial nominations," said Berkowitz, "one designed to provide a high-quality, independent judiciary. Without explanation, the governor provoked a constitutional crisis. The Murkowski Administration's decision is wrong on the constitution, wrong on the merits, and bad for Alaska. It is a disrespectful assault on the judicial branch and erodes the checks and balances that protect Alaska's people from governmental abuses of power."

Berkowitz found it ironic that Governor Murkowski continues to find ways to make problems with his appointments.

Berkowitz called for the Governor to follow the law defined in the constitutional process and to provide a clear explanation for his actions.

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Sen. Bettye Davis, Sen. Johnny Ellis, Sen. Kim Elton, Sen. Lyman Hoffman, Sen. Hollis French, Sen. Gretchen Guess, Sen. Georgianna Lincoln, Sen. Donny Olson, Rep. Ethan Berkowitz, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Eric Croft, Rep. Les Gara, Rep. Max Gruenberg, Rep. David Guttenberg, Rep. Reggie Joule, Rep. Mary Kapsner, Rep. Beth Kerttula, Rep. Albert Kookesh, Rep. Carl Moses