



This Week in Juneau

Energy and education continue to dominate the conversations and hearings in the legislature. During a Joint Resources committee hearing, ENSTAR testified that they will begin to see natural gas shortfalls in 2025 instead of 2027 and the need to expand their natural gas storage. ENSTAR stated that large-scale imported natural gas will likely only start being available in 2030. Legislators are calling for every option to be on the table to address the looming energy crisis facing South Central Alaska.

The House and Senate Resources committees held a joint hearing for an update from Cook Inlet natural gas producers. The largest producer in the Cook Inlet, Hilcorp, is committed to developing new wells; however, the lack of more drilling rigs is causing delays. The smaller producers, HEX and BlueCrest Energy, illustrated the need for capital to expand operations and the limiting factor of only having one drilling rig in the inlet. The day after the joint hearing, Senator Giessel introduced a bill on natural gas storage, SB 220.

The focus on the energy crisis extends beyond natural gas to the necessity for upgrades to the rail belt electrical transmission grid. During a press conference, Governor Dunleavy discussed the potential for a General Obligation bond to be passed during this session. Several Senators expressed support for the use of a GO bond to fund the \$206 million needed to match federal funds for transmission upgrades. This week illustrates the efforts by legislators to find solutions in the energy sector for the short and long term.

Next week, US Senator Lisa Murkowski will give her annual address to the legislature, and the Senate will begin hearing resolutions to disapprove the Governor's Administrative Orders.

Committee Meetings Next Week

House Labor and Commerce

Feb 12 Monday 3:15 PM

HB 179 – EMPLOYEE RIGHTS, EMPLOYER SPEECH

HB 289 – BUSINESS LICENSE FEES -- Public Testimony --

HB 200 – GAMING; ELECTRONIC PULL-TABS

Feb 14 Wednesday 3:15 PM

HB 251 – EXEMPTIONS FOR HOMEMADE FOODS

HB 192 – DELIVERY/PICK UP OF ALCOHOL; LICENSING

Feb 16 Wednesday 3:15 PM

HB 200 – GAMING; ELECTRONIC PULL-TABS

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