

Legislative Update



2023 Legislative Priorities

With the COVID-19 pandemic past its peak, Alaska’s hospitality industry continues to face significant ongoing challenges to their operations. Two of the greatest issues business owners are facing in 2023 are ongoing labor shortages and liability insurance rate hikes. The following are Alaska CHARR and the hospitality industry’s 2023 legislative priorities that would help mitigate these issues.

Updating AS 04 to Allow Persons Aged 18-20 On-premises for Alcohol Service and Other Employment

In many other states, persons aged 18-20 are allowed to sell or serve alcohol, and more states are joining that list as they experience the same ongoing hospitality labor shortages that Alaska is experiencing. Employers are unable to promote or retain quality employees who are 18-20 because they are unable to take or deliver alcohol orders. Alaska is not competitive with other states in that regard, including those with more conservative alcohol laws like Washington state which recently updated its laws to allow young adults to sell or serve alcohol.

Moreover, other businesses that support the hospitality industry – including food distributors, cleaners, and restaurant suppliers – are experiencing similar labor shortages and often hire younger people to deliver products and provide services. Those vendor employees are currently prohibited from entering the premises of liquor licensees, creating challenges for both the hospitality businesses and their vendors.

Alaska CHARR is asking that the Alaska Legislature pass legislation that would allow for persons 18-20 to serve and sell alcohol or enter and remain on a licensed premises for other employment purposes, including under employment by a vendor or support business

Shared Liability for Liquor Licenses

Alaska has the third worst rating of any state for providing liquor liability insurance, primarily due to the current strict liability law which puts sole liability on a business and zero liability on a consumer. Insurance providers are pulling out of Alaska, resulting in businesses around the state being told that they either cannot obtain liability insurance at all, or seeing rate hikes as much as 700% in a single year. As a result, businesses are having to choose either to not carry liability insurance or to close their doors – neither of which is good for public safety or the economy.

Alaska CHARR is asking that the Alaska Legislature pass legislation that would make Alaska a shared liability state – consistent with nearly all other states – placing at least some responsibility on the consumer for his/her own actions.

This Week In Juneau

The Alaska CHARR board was in Juneau this past week for our legislative fly-in. Board members met with legislators to discuss the industry's on-going issues and the importance our businesses have on our communities.

Education funding was a focus for the legislature this week. The House and Senate Education committees held a joint hearing for the Fiscal Year 2023 Report presentation by the State Board of Education. The House Education and Ways and Means committees also held a joint hearing for a presentation on the impacts of education on the state's economy.

This week the House Finance subcommittee chairs presented the closeout reports to the full finance committee. The House Finance committee will begin hearings on the full budget next week. The Senate Finance committee held hearings with presentations on Alaska's economy and the State's efforts to assume 404 Primacy. Next week the Senate Finance committee will hear a bill relating to the Permanent Fund Dividend which has yet to be introduced and will also hear a presentation on the Willow project from the Department of Revenue and Natural Resources.

Bills of Interest Introduced this Week

HB 117 Cannabis Regulation

By House Rules

Referred to House Labor & Commerce and Finance Committees

HB 119 Marijuana Tax

By House Rules

Referred to House Labor & Commerce and Finance Committees

Committee Meetings Next Week

House Labor and Commerce

Mar 22 Wednesday 3:15 PM

HB 117 – CANNABIS REGULATION

Mar 24 Friday 3:15 PM

HB 119 – MARIJUANA TAX

Consideration of Governor's Appointees:

Board of Pharmacy - Sara Rasmussen;

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board - David Koch;

Marijuana Control Board - Chris Jaime

Senate Labor and Commerce

Mar 24 Friday 1:30 PM

SB 89 – AGE FOR TOBACCO/NICOTINE/E-CIG; TAX E-CIG

House Judiciary

Mar 20 Monday 1:00 PM

Presentation: Governor's Council on Human & Sex Trafficking Stat, Dept of Public Safety

HB 68 – CRIME OF SEX/HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mar 22 Wednesday 1:00 PM

HB 68 – CRIME OF SEX/HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Mar 24 Friday 1:00 PM

HB 68 – CRIME OF SEX/HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Senate Judiciary

Mar 20 Monday 1:30 PM

Presentation: Discussion of Court Rules and Grand Jury by Alaska Court System & Department of Law

Mar 24 Friday 1:30 PM

Presentation: Alaska Victimization Survey by Dr. Ingrid Johnson, Assistant Professor, Justice Center, University of Alaska Anchorage

Upcoming Alaska CHARR Events

SHE (Strength, Heart, Excellence) - Women of Hospitality - Monday May 8

Welcoming all women of hospitality in Alaska.

[Click here for more information.](#)

2023 Selman Memorial Golf Tournament - Friday June 23, 2023

Save the Date: [Click here for more information.](#)

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