



Senator 

  
Cathy Giessel  


*Representing Eagle River Valley, South Fork,  
Stuckagain Heights, South Anchorage, Indian,  
Bird, Girdwood, Whittier, Portage, and Hope*  
  
  


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**27<sup>th</sup> Legislature Second Session**

February 7, 2012

Dear Neighbors,

I am excited to say that we are back in the swing of things here in Juneau. Session has gotten off to a fast start, but I wanted to take a moment to update you on the status of some of the pieces of legislation I've introduced, as well as some other upcoming events:

- SB 144 reestablishes the Alaska Immunization Program, which provides vaccines to underinsured children, and uninsured and underinsured adults. The bill has passed out of the Health and Social Services Committee, and I am hopeful that it will be heard by the Finance Committee soon.
- SB 181 closes areas in the Glacier and Winner Creek drainages of the Girdwood area to new mining. This creates an opportunity for Girdwood to further develop, expand, and realize its potential as a year-round destination for myriad recreational activities. I'm looking forward to a hearing in the Senate Resources Committee in the coming weeks.

- SCR 16 establishes May 2012 as Celiac Disease Awareness Month. Celiac Disease is often referred to as gluten intolerance and likely affects over 5,000 Alaskans. Those with the genetic disorder have to follow strict dietary restrictions. The resolution passed out of Senate State Affairs today.

It is a pleasure to serve and represent District P. I look forward to hearing from you as the session continues.

Sincerely,

## Quick Links:

[The Alaska State Legislature](#)  
[Senate Republican Caucus](#)  
[State of Alaska](#)

## Contact your Congressional Delegation:

Senator Lisa Murkowski  
Anchorage Office:  
907-271-3735  
<http://murkowski.senate.gov/>

Senator Mark Begich  
Anchorage Office:  
907-371-5915  
<http://begich.senate.gov/>

Congressman Don Young  
Anchorage Office:  
907-271-5978  
<http://donyoung.house.gov/>

## Watch the Legislature Online:

<http://alaskalegislature.tv>

Watch live or archived media at:  
<http://gavelalaska.org>

If you do not wish to receive  
future emails from Senator Cathy  
Giessel, please click [here](#).

## Upcoming Meetings – please note revisions since previous newsletter.

Rabbit Creek/South Anchorage Town Hall: *Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>*

*10-11:30am @ Rabbit Creek Community Church*

Eagle River Town Hall: *Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>*

*2-4pm @ Chugiak Senior Center*

Girdwood Town Hall: *Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>*

*11am-12:30pm @ Meadows Community Room*

South Anchorage Town Hall: *Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>*

*10-11:30am @ Chapel of the Cross Nazarene*

Eagle River Town Home: *Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup>*

*2-4pm @ Eagle River Town Center*

## Healthy Futures Challenge

Healthy Futures Challenge is a grassroots initiative that is partnering with Providence Health & Services Alaska, and the Department of Health and Social Services to encourage Alaska's children to build the habit of daily physical activity. The three-month challenge begins this month, and uses incentives, activities, and parental involvement to motivate children to get and stay active. Here's more about the challenge:

- **Who:** All Alaska elementary school children, kindergarten through sixth grade.
- **What:** During the challenge period, children in participating schools will keep a log of the physical activity they do outside gym class. Each month, they'll turn in the log at school. School staff and volunteers will track the children's progress. Healthy Futures will mail prizes to the school at no cost to the teachers or staff, and staff will hand them out to children.
- **When:** February, March and April 2012
- **Where:** Primarily through Alaska schools, with the help of Healthy Futures, the Department of Health and Social Services, school staff, teachers and parents across Alaska



More information can be found at: [www.healthyfuturesak.org](http://www.healthyfuturesak.org)

## Visiting with Chief Bill Chadwick



I had a wonderful visit from Girdwood Volunteer Fire Department Chief Bill Chadwick. Chief Chadwick is a dedicated public servant and very committed to excellence for the community of Girdwood!

He told me about a program that the Girdwood FD is implementing. They partnered with Home Depot to distribute free smoke detectors, CO detectors and home escape ladders. The Girdwood firefighters make home visits to talk with residents, evaluate possible fire hazards and distribute the detectors.

Chief Chadwick shared a pearl of information that I did not know about CO detectors: The detection mechanism in them deteriorates over time and the CO detector needs to be replaced every 7 years! Good to know!

If you live in Girdwood, give the firefighters a non-emergency call, and enjoy a home visit and learning from them! (907) 783-2511

### **New Legislation: SB 146 – Four Valley’s Community School Snow Classic**

I am pleased to report that SB 146 will be heard by the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee this week. Four Valleys Community School, Inc. (FVCS) is a nonprofit organization that annually offers more than 250 classes and sponsors community events. While most of the participants are Turnagain Arm area residents, people from neighboring communities such as Anchorage, Eagle River, and Homer have participated in FVCS events. FVCS also supports athletes and local high school graduates with scholarships. Senate Bill 146 would allow FVCS to conduct a “snow classic” to raise funds for their organization. The snow classic would be operated much like other contests. As with the Nenana Ice Classic, contestants would buy a ticket and guess the depth of snow accumulated by a specific date and time on Mount Alyeska. The winner would receive half of the net proceeds from the fundraiser. My office has been working with the Girdwood community on this bill for quite some time now, and we’ve received over 70 letters of support! I appreciate the efforts of all of those who helped!



**I always love receiving visitors! From L to R: Sandra Lemke, Mayor Peter Micciche (Soldotna), David Schoderbek, Dora Soria, Peter Bradshaw.**

### **Mayor’s Education Summit Community Conversations**

In January, Mayor Sullivan announced a series of community conversations during which citizens will have the opportunity to discuss the reform scenarios that emerged from his [Education Summit](#).

Participants in the six February community conversations will discuss the approach and steps they think Anchorage should take, including the choices and trade-offs that will be required, in order for Anchorage's schools to become among the nation's best.

Dates and locations of the Conversations are:

1. **Wed., Feb. 8, 2012**, Bayshore Club House, 3131 Amber Bay Loop, 5:15 p.m. check-in, 5:45 p.m. start
2. **Thurs., Feb. 9, 2012**, Eagle River Lions Club, Mile 1.5 Eagle River Rd., 5:15 p.m. check-in, 5:45 p.m. start
3. **Sat., Feb. 11, 2012**, Spenard Recreation Center, 2020 W. 48th Ave., 9:30 a.m. check-in, 9:45 a.m. start
4. **Wed., Feb. 15, 2012**, Alaska Native Heritage Center, 8800 Heritage Center Dr., 5:15 p.m. check-in, 5:45 p.m. start
5. **Thurs., Feb. 16, 2012**, Campbell Creek Science Center, 5600 Science Center Dr., 5:15 p.m. check-in, 5:45 p.m. start
6. **Wed., Feb. 22, 2012**, Anchorage Senior and Activity Center, 1300 E. 19th Ave, 5:15 p.m. check-in. 5:45 p.m. start