



BUSINESS to BUSINESS

ALASKA CHAMBER

DECEMBER 2015

FALL EVENTS REPORT: Renovate. Innovate. Repeat.



Alaska Airlines CEO Brad Tilden delivers the keynote address at the Chamber's annual fall meeting in Fairbanks.

Alaska Chamber

"While the State must certainly learn to live within its means, we can all benefit from understanding how successful businesses reinvent themselves to run more efficiently." — Rachael Petro

Words of wisdom from former Alaska Chamber President and CEO Rachael Petro in her opening address to assembled business leaders, policy makers and public officials in Fairbanks at the Chamber's 2015 Fall Events. The fall events are an opportunity for pro-

professionals and entrepreneurs in all industry verticals and from across the state to meet and unite in common purpose.

Local chambers break from their dedicated focus on regional economies to share success stories and discuss the challenges at play in Alaska's communities. Our state and federal officials address the business issues at play in Juneau and Washington, D.C. And the captains of Alaska industry find common ground on policy positions that impact the success of Alaska's private sector companies.

Reinvention and efficiency are part and parcel of profitable enterprise, and the Chamber combined these basic business principles to inspire an appropriate theme for this year's conference: Renovate. Innovate. Repeat.

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PHOTOS/FRANK FLAVIN
Gov. Bill Walker meets with attendees at the Chamber's annual fall conference.

PHOTOS/FRANK FLAVIN
Walsh Sheppard Vice President Stephen Howell and Sen. Lisa Murkowski.



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2016 Fall Events: Conference, Policy Forum, Awards Gala

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Thayer named new Alaska Chamber President and CEO

The Alaska Chamber is pleased to welcome life-long Alaskan Curtis Thayer as its new President and CEO. Thayer replaces Rachael Petro, who moved out of state after guiding the Chamber for nearly five years.

As President and CEO, Thayer will oversee the Chamber's operations as well as work with staff to ensure Chamber programs and services run with a high degree of excellence that its membership has come to expect.

"Alaska is at a unique crossroads. The price of oil is at a 20-year low, the proposed gas line is a moving target and the State must manage shrinking budgets.

Thayer is strong leader who will ensure the 'Voice of Alaska Business' is heard and policies

are adopted to attract investments and grow jobs.

The Chamber has seen steady growth in the past five years. We have Rachael to thank for this and wish her all the best," said Chamber Board Chair Casey Sullivan.



THAYER

Thayer brings over 20 years of experience in the private and public sectors, and has unique qualifications, connections and perspectives that will be of great value to the diverse membership, Sullivan said.

Thayer served as commissioner of the Alaska Department of Administration and as the deputy commissioner of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

Prior to joining state government, he was spe-

cial assistant to Congressman Don Young. He also brings private-sector experience, having served on the management team of Alaska's largest utility, ENSTAR Natural Gas, as well as with the Alaska Gas Pipeline Team.

He owned his own small business and is licensed in real estate. A graduate of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Thayer has served on many boards, both public and non-profit, and was selected as a "Top Forty under 40" community leader.

"I'm looking forward to rolling up my sleeves and collaborating with the talented team and the board of directors to ensure Alaska has a healthy and productive business environment," Thayer said. "As we start a new chapter in Chamber history, we have great challenges but extraordinary opportunities."

Times, they are changin'

By Casey Sullivan
Chair, Alaska Chamber

Fall is always an eventful season for the Alaska Chamber. It's a time for our members to gather in one of Alaska's vital business communities to discuss the issues of our time and decide the course of the Chamber's advocacy platform.

This year was much the same as Fairbanks hosted hundreds of business leaders, the governor and presentations from each of our federal delegates. And I heard a pervasive undercurrent woven throughout all of the policy discussions, member conversations and at the Chamber board meeting — an un-

derlying theme of change. Change for the Chamber and for Alaska as a whole.

Passing the torch

This is my first opportunity to contribute to Business to Business as Chairman of the Chamber. And before I go any further, I have to



SULLIVAN

thank Brad Osborne, President of NANA Oilfield Services, for his tireless service as chair these past two years.

I'll mention this in a moment when I talk about the State's budget challenges, but we don't always find what we're expecting when assuming leadership positions. Brad accepted his chair appointment with plans to advance

a slate of pro-business policies, comprehensive changes to our workers' compensation system and regulatory reforms. Impressively, the Chamber has performed on those issues despite a prolonged and unexpected battle on business taxes and tumbling oil prices.

I've appreciated Brad's steady hand and rational, optimistic approach to significant challenges. Because of his efforts, I take over as chair with a strong board and a Chamber with an inspiring and credible voice.

My thanks to Brad for his dedication to the Chamber, and we look forward to his continued guidance for many years to come.

New energy, fresh ideas

We also thank and send our best wishes with Rachael Petro this fall. Rachael's five years as

President and CEO of the Alaska Chamber have been transformative for the organization, and with change comes opportunity.

One of my first responsibilities as chairman was to lead the search for a new executive to drive the Chamber's pro-business mission. And folks, we've found ourselves a good one.

Curtis Thayer is a life-long Alaskan with decades of shared experience in private business and public service. As a former commissioner of the Alaska Department of Administration, Curtis is uniquely poised to champion Alaska's business community on top Chamber priorities like State spending and workers' compensation reform.

Curtis has spent the majority of his professional life employing Alaskans and working to improve

the economic landscape in this state. Please join me in welcoming Curtis onboard, and the Chamber is lucky to have him at the helm.

Alaska's new normal

The elephant looming over every policy discussion these days is the State's budget woes. Remember when I mentioned that life doesn't always deliver on our expectations? Well no one could have anticipated the price of oil tumbling as low as it has, or that it appears to be settling in at the current depressed levels. Certainly not a first-term governor with an administration predicated on the construction of an in-state gas line. And while low oil prices aren't responsible for the State's budget plight, reduced revenues have most certainly brought the breakneck pace of State spending to critical, defining moment.

But I also said that change creates opportunity. So while the State wrestles to get it's financial house in order, Alaska businesses maneuver to take advantage of fuel, shipping and travel that is suddenly more affordable that it was just a few short years ago. Companies are also capitalizing on the Chamber's record of pro-business success.

I'll give you just one example. It's been more than 15 years since Seabourn brought a ship into Alaska waters. Starting in 2017, the ultra-luxury cruise line is back. Alaska has opened the door for new and returning business. Our retailers, manufacturers, and employers in all industries need to ensure that the doors stay open, now more than ever.

Times are changing. It's very unlikely that tomorrow will bring exactly what we expect. But we have renewed energy and fresh ideas at the Chamber, and we're thankful the years of dedication and hard work that have placed us firm-footed on a solid foundation.

Let's face it. Phone conferences and video chats are one thing...



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Finding strength in membership

By Pete Nolan

Membership Director, Alaska Chamber

You may have heard the analogy that one twig can easily be snapped; one hundred twigs bound together are strong. One sheet of paper can easily be torn, but a telephone book?

Every person who does business in Alaska is like that one twig, or that one page. Your Alaska Chamber is the twine providing support. It is the binding that creates the book. It's single purpose is to protect and improve Alaska business — your business.

We are all aware of the harsh fiscal issues we face as a state and as a population. Will there be an income tax? A sales tax? Or is it easier in an election year to simply raise business and license fees or perhaps add new taxes on business?

We know that we need our united strength now more than ever. That strength is grounded in your state Chamber.

Each new Chamber business adds to your strength, both in Juneau and in Washington, D.C. New members come from everywhere throughout the state, from Ketchikan to Barrow.

They are major national and international retail businesses including Sportsman's Warehouse, Walmart and Cabela's. They are statewide and national service businesses such as Stewart Title, Wells Fargo and First National Bank Alaska. They are local industry leaders like Spenard Builders Supply, Moose's Tooth, Denali Brewing

Company and The Hangar on the Wharf.

Our members work throughout the state and include Lynden, TOTE Maritime Alaska, NANA Development Corporation, Oracle, Boeing and many others. They are large publicly held corporations like FedEx, and small businesses like Hale and Associates, Regal North Commercial Business Services, Seekins Lincoln Ford, the Alaska Club and Landmark Aviation.

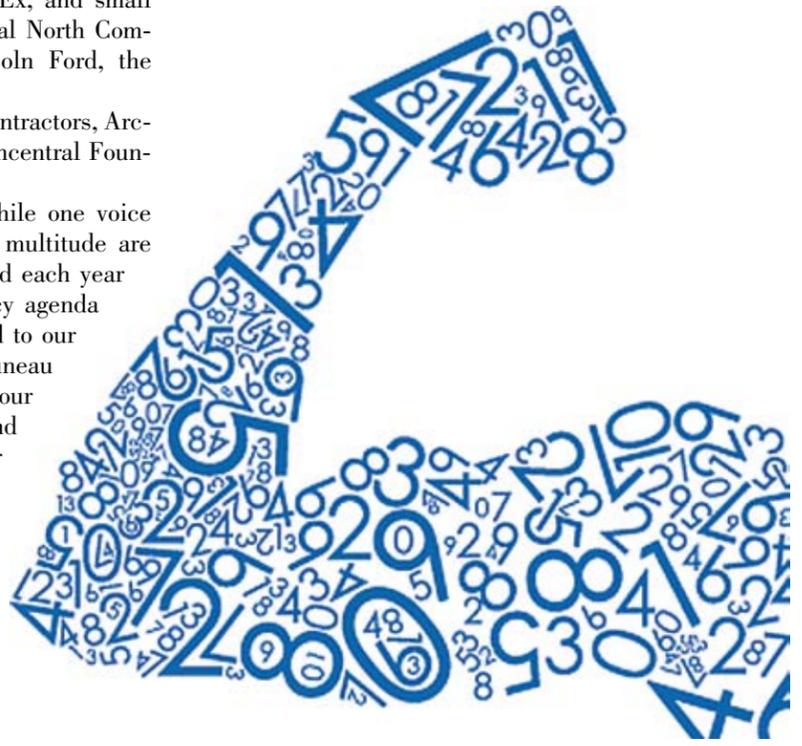
They are the Associated Builders and Contractors, Arctic Slope Native Association, and the Southcentral Foundation. Our members are everywhere.

These professionals understand that while one voice can easily be dismissed, the voices of a multitude are impossible to ignore. They are leaders, and each year they gather together to prioritize the policy agenda that your state Chamber will carry forward to our government. Chamber members travel to Juneau during the Legislative session, forwarding your business concerns to our elected leaders and helping to craft legislation that allows our free enterprise system to thrive.

If you know other professionals who should be taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the state Chamber, take a moment to contact your membership director and pass on the referral. And if your business is not already participating in your state Chamber, then now is the time. There is strength in

numbers, and our voice will be heard.

Pete Nolan is the Membership Director for the Alaska Chamber. He can be reached at (907) 278-2733 or via email at pnolan@alaskachamber.com.



Welcome New Members

Alaska Enterprise Solutions

Founded in 2012, Alaska Enterprise Solutions (AES) is Alaska's Professional Xerox Sales Agency. Staffed by former Xerox employees, AES is committed to continuing the Xerox tradition of offering the best office solutions and document management to their clients. Visit them online at aesalaska.com.

Alaska Media Strategies

Alaska Media Strategies (AMS) provides strategic communications counsel to Alaska businesses, political campaigns and non-profits. Owner Tim Woolston has 30 years experience in Alaska communications, as a journalist, consultant and owner of one of the state's largest PR and advertising firms, Northwest Strategies, which he recently sold. AMS Co-owner Kristina Woolston has more than 10 years managing government relations for Chenega Corporation, one of the largest Alaska Native Corporations.

GCR Tires & Service

Located in Fairbanks, Alaska, GCR Tires & Service offers a full range of tires and solutions. A division of Bridgestone America's Tire Operations, GCR Tires & Service has the right mix of service, new tire and re-tread knowledge to ensure the ongoing success of their customers. Their extensive network of tire stores provides greater availability for customers to purchase tires and related services. Visit them online at gertires.com.

Hale & Associates

One of the largest privately owned insurance brokerage firms in Alaska, Hale & Associates are ready to go to work providing avenues of coverage for whatever exposure your business might encounter. Visit them online at hale-insurance.com.

Herrington & Company

As the premier real estate

agents in Anchorage, Herrington & Company provides its clients with all of the resources and information needed to buy or sell real estate. They work with buyers and sellers in Anchorage, Chugiak, Wasilla, Eagle River, Palmer, Girdwood and the surrounding areas and have had extensive training in the latest real estate marketing strategies. Visit them online at herringtonandcompany.com.

Kenai Physical Therapy, Inc.

Kenai Physical Therapy (KPT) provides overall wellness and rehabilitation treatments for patients of every age group. KPT uses the most current and effective treatment techniques to provide each patient with one on one care. Visit them online at facebook.com/kpthomer.

Landmark Aviation

An aviation services company, Landmark Aviation offers a wide variety of services including aircraft sales, charter and management business, ground services and maintenance for charter and private aircraft. Visit them online at landmarkaviation.com/fbo/anc.

Regal North Commercial

A full service commercial boutique in Anchorage, Alaska, Regal North Commercial provides comprehensive client services spanning the entire brokerage process. Visit them online at regal-north.com.

Oracle

With more than 380,000 customers — including 100 of the Fortune 100 — and deployments across a wide variety of industries in more than 145 countries, Oracle offers an optimized and fully integrated stack of business hardware and software systems. Visit them online at oracle.com.

Sportsman's Warehouse

An outdoor sporting goods re-

tailer, Sportsman's Warehouse operates in 18 states across the

United States. Find hunting, fishing and camping products for ev-

ery skill level. Visit them online at sportsmanswarehouse.com.

“ Luke listened.
He understood. He got it. ”

Bob MacKinnon and Chris Harmon, Owners/ Alaska Electric

Luke Fanning
Southeast Regional Manager

Five years ago, Bob MacKinnon and Chris Harmon proposed a new business in Juneau: Alaska Electric. With solid resumes in hand, they put together a strong business plan tailored to the opportunities and challenges of Juneau's economy. But after talking with various lenders about a new business loan, the responses were not encouraging.

Then they called Luke Fanning at First National Bank Alaska. Luke got it.

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Announcing the 2015 Top Business Award Recipients



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

Bill Bivins Small Business of the Year: Date-Line Digital Printing

The recipients for the Bill Bivins Small Business of the Year, Local Chamber of Commerce of the Year, William A. Egan Alaskan of the Year and North Star Award were announced on Wednesday, October 14 at the Alaska Chamber's annual Awards Gala in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Bill Bivins Small Business of the Year

Date-Line Digital Printing is the recipient of the Bill Bivins Small Business of the Year award. Established in 1993, the award pays tribute to businesses that exemplify leadership, ethics and organization. The Fairbanks-based partnership of Geoff Welch and Travis Lewis exemplify the community commitment of Alaska small businesses. Date-Line is notable for the "Thanks Fairbanks" program, sharing thousands of free Thank You cards with Fairbanks community.

Local Chamber of Commerce of the Year

The Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center is the recipient of the Local Chamber of Commerce of the Year award. The award recognizes consistent community involvement and excellent business reputation. Established in 1954 and predating statehood, the Kenai Chamber is an active advocate on business issues effecting local community and the state. The Chamber is proud to recognize the Kenai Chamber for

providing practical business support, relocation assistance and service to visitors of the Kenai Peninsula area.

William A. Egan Outstanding Alaskan of the Year

Charles "CB" Bettisworth is the recipient of the celebrated and prestigious William A. Egan Alaskan of the Year award. The award is presented to individuals who have made substantial and continual contributions of statewide significance while working in the private sector. Born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska, CB has inspired a new generation of architects. He is an active Rotarian, public servant, businessman and true Alaskan.

North Star Award

The Chamber presents the North Star Award to an individual or organization in Alaska who actively develops and pursues the betterment of all Alaska residents. These individuals and organizations provide significant contributions to the future of the Great State of Alaska. This year's recipient has been Alaska's guiding star in a very special way, serving as President and CEO of the Chamber. The Chamber is proud to present this rare honor to Rachael Petro in recognition of her determined support of Alaska business to the betterment of each Alaskan and our great state.



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

Local Chamber of Commerce of the Year: Kenai Chamber of Commerce and Visitors' Center

The Chamber's board of directors also recognized Gary Brackett of the Tacoma-Pierce County for his 38 years of service at the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and decades of active partner-

ship with Alaska. Gary has attended more than 25 annual Chamber conferences since 1988, raising awareness of the Tacoma-Alaska connection with the slogan, "Alaska, Tacoma's North Star!"



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

North Star Award: Rachael Petro



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

William A. Egan Outstanding Alaskan of the Year: Charles "CB" Bettisworth

Positions adopted at the 2015 Policy Forum

At the 2015 Policy Forum members of the Alaska Chamber voted to adopt four new policy positions adding to its already robust advocacy agenda. Held annually, the Policy Forum establishes positions for the upcoming year based on proposals submitted by members of the Chamber.

Support reduction of spending to sustainable levels

The Alaska Chamber supports limiting total FY 2016 Unrestricted General Fund, spending to \$4.5 billion or less.

Support leverage of available funding for transportation infrastructure including efficiencies, maintenance and enhancements



The Alaska Chamber supports leverage of existing and future state funding sources to the maximum extent possible, while pursuing alternative funding sources and

mechanisms that will ensure the greatest possible benefit to Alaska's infrastructure.

Maximizing repairs and upgrades with available funding, and leveraging other funding sources, should be a priority approach given the budget restrictions faced by Alaska.

The State of Alaska should evaluate its transportation funding, design, construction and maintenance practices to identify and adopt the more efficient and cost-effective method available.

Support and maintain a positive investment climate that provides certainty and stability for continued success for statewide oil and gas activities



The Alaska Chamber encourages the Administration, the Alaska Legislature, and State of Alaska agencies to maintain a positive investment climate, and discour-

ages any proposals that fundamentally change or alter the Alaska oil and gas fiscal system for statewide oil and gas activities. The State is urged to avoid taking action that could stymie development, decrease opportunities for new production, and negatively impact jobs and local economies.

Support Repeal or Mitigation of the 'Cadillac Tax' Provision of the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act



The Alaska Chamber supports repeal of — or efforts to mitigate — the negative effects of the 'Cadillac Tax' provisions contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Events Continued from Page 1



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

Conference attendees visited University of Alaska President Jim Johnsen for a reception during the fall event.

The state of Alaska business

The Chamber's 2015 pro-business agenda was spearheaded by a pair of innovative keynote speakers and addresses from the three members of Alaska's congressional delegation.

Brad Tilden, CEO of Alaska Airlines, spoke about his airline's philosophy of continual reinvention and individual responsibility at every level. Tilden's leadership recently ensconced him as one of Fortune's Top 50 People in Business while giving every Alaska Airlines employee authority and responsibility for the performance of the company.

Best-selling author Jim Mathis encouraged conference attendees to consider the way that modern companies succeed in an increasingly consumer-driven marketplace. State of Alaska officials and public servants would do well to

take note of transformative, private sector reinventions that have aligned service delivery with market expectations.

Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan and Rep. Don Young — this year's recipient of the U.S. Chamber's Spirit of Enterprise award — presented attendees with a united front against continued federal over-reach. The current administration continues to encumber Alaska lands with federal withdrawals and regulatory programs like Waters of the United States. The Alaska congressional delegation spoke with a single voice supporting access to Alaska resources.

All work and no play...

The Chamber's fall events provide a forum for Alaskans to build a strategy for economic growth within the state. They are also a time for Chamber members to explore part of our wonderful state. For nearly 25 percent of conference attendees, the fall events were their first opportunity to experience Fairbanks.

Chamber members joined University of Alaska President Jim Johnsen and Sen. Lisa Murkowski at the president's residence near the University of Alaska campus. Fairbanks Chamber Executive Director Lisa Herbert and her talented staff connected visiting professionals with local business and restaurants to engage in a bit of local commerce. And at the Chamber's annual Awards Gala, individual Alaska business leaders, small businesses and local chambers were acknowledged for their contributions to Alaska's private sector success.

Alaska's economically impaired public sector

Underlying all of the discussions in Fairbanks this year was unease about the State's continuing struggle to do what Alaska businesses do every day — to live within its means.

The Chamber's Policy Forum is an annual forum where members advance policy positions for adoption by the businesses community as a whole. This year, in addition to new positions on infrastructure, resource development and healthcare, the Chamber revised its long-held position on sustainable State spending.

Gov. Bill Walker shared his hopes for the upcoming legislative session, with new revenues to ease the threat that State spending levels pose to Alaska's reserve funds.

The administration hasn't proposed a plan to Alaskans or the Legislature yet, and it's unclear if the state will commit to a sustainable budget or who will be targeted to bridge the revenue gap.

The road ahead

Alaska's businesses have once again established sustainable State spending and comprehensive reform of Alaska's onerous workers' compensation system as top policy priorities. With all the uncertainty surrounding the state's budget, it's unlikely that there will be room in the 2016 legislative session for much else.

Alaska businesses, however, are aligned on both state and federal issues. Our workers and employers will continue to capitalize on opportunities in our free markets. And the Chamber is committed to champion the cause of fiscal sustainability and pro-business reform.



PHOTO/FRANK FLAVIN

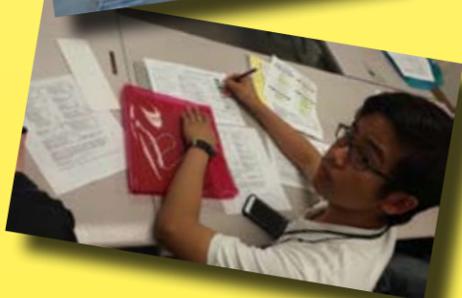
Alaska U.S. Rep. Don Young shows off his Spirit of Enterprise award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Alaska Business Week 2016

July 16 - 23, 2016
Alaska Pacific University
Anchorage, AK



Alaska Business Week (ABW) is a one-week summer program teaching Alaskan high school students the basics of business, leadership and entrepreneurship. Participants live on a college campus, and work as teams with the guidance of a mentor from the business community. After completing the program, students have a competitive edge on workplace readiness, college preparation, and overall life success.



Register online at
alaskachamber.com/ABW



For More Information Contact:
Nicole Schuh, Program Director
(907) 278-2744 or nschuh@alaskachamber.com

Who will follow in our footsteps?

You don't know what you don't know

Alaska's youth are bombarded with educational opportunities. Camps, programs and curriculum preaching everything from athletics to activism vie for student attention, both during the school year and throughout the summer break.

The business community is tapped to sponsor a great many of these educational efforts. However, when it comes to informing our young Alaskans about the basic principles that support our private sector companies, we are woefully decades behind the curve.

Succession planning

A 2015 report prepared by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation cites two approaches companies might take to instill the skills and values needed to create high-performing young employees and entrepreneurs.

The first is an individual process of creating internal internship and workforce development programs.

The second is a more broad-reaching approach of forming educational partnerships to develop sustainable pro-business communities.

This second, grassroots approach to business education is where Alaska – and the U.S. business community as a whole – has been outpaced. Programs like Alaska Business Week (ABW) are the business community's opportunity to close that educational gap.

Some of Alaska's youth grow up working in a family business. Most, however, don't have exposure to business concepts like profit, capital investment, or personnel management. How can we expect young people entering the workforce to understand fundamental business principles when no one has ever taken the time to teach them?

Business pays the way for Alaska's schools and for so many camps and programs. Popular programs like Trail-side Discovery in Anchorage and Victory Bible in the Matanuska Valley have more counselors than our business camps have students. Fine arts camps like the impressive program in Sitka reach hundreds of kids each year.

The communities that support these operations have resources and a common desire to teach young Alaskans about what they value. It is far past time for Alaska's employers to bring our substantial resources to bear in support of programs like ABW, Alaska Resource Education, the Alaska Council on Economic Education and Alaska Entrepreneurship Week.

Internal internship programs are important, allowing us to train promising young talent. And shared investment in our statewide programs is our opportunity to train entire generations of Alaskans.

Reducing injury rates for workers and costs for employers

By Heidi Drygas
Commissioner, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Recently, the Workers' Compensation Board adopted a new fee schedule for medical procedures. This is just the latest in a series of steps that the state of Alaska has taken to strengthen our Workers' Compensation system. Our objectives are simple: reduce injury rates for workers, reduce expenses for employers, and maintain access to medical care for injured workers.

Workers' Compensation may sound dry, but no subject is more important to a worker injured on the job. Workers' Compensation policy is critical for our business climate. High Workers' Compensation costs reduce the attractiveness of Alaska for entrepreneurs, so we have an economic interest in reducing both injury rates and costs.

The new medical fee schedule recently adopted by the Workers' Compensation Board is Alaska's latest reform. With endorsements from the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association, Alaska Chamber, and other organizations, the new medical fee schedule is expected to

save money for employers, while covering medical costs for injured workers.

I applaud the hard work of the Medical Services Review Committee and the Workers Compensation Board to update Alaska's new fee schedule. This was a difficult task, no doubt. Through an ongoing collaboration with stakeholders, we will continue our department's efforts to reduce both on-the-job injury rates and employers' costs while maintaining access to medical care. These kinds of reforms will make Alaska an even better place to do business while protecting individuals' fundamental health care rights.

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