



Alaska State Legislature

Representative Matt Claman

February 2021 Community Council Update

State of the State — Governor Dunleavy delivered his 2021 State of the State [address](#) virtually this year. The governor focused on three main topics: the Permanent Fund Dividend, constitutional amendments to limit state spending and require public approval for tax increases, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The governor again proposed overdrawing the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve to pay a \$5,000 dividend and again suggested legalized gaming as a way to bring revenue to the state. He also proposed increased funding for home schools. The governor's budget and 10-year plan do not represent a responsible fiscal plan for Alaska. [I took a few minutes to reflect on the governor's address](#) and the financial challenges we face during the upcoming legislative session. Visit the [Rep. Matt Claman YouTube page](#) to view.

Vaccine Distribution — Recently, the Department of Health and Social services made two announcements: (1) Alaska now has more people who have been vaccinated with their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine than residents who have tested positive for COVID-19; and (2) Alaska is currently ranked first among states for the percentage of people per capita who have been given at least one shot.

Numerous updates have been made to the [State Vaccine Website](#). DHSS announced that more vaccine appointment slots were **added Thursday, January 27**. To see if you are eligible for the vaccine and to sign up for an appointment, visit covidvax.alaska.gov or call 1-907-646-3322.

Alaskans have another resource to contact for assistance in scheduling a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. Four full-time Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) staff are ready to assist and can be reached at: 1-855-565-2017 (choose option #1). Phone lines are manned from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Alaskans who are [eligible](#) to receive the vaccine are still encouraged to contact their local public health office or primary care provider, as well, for information. Please don't hesitate to contact my office with questions or concerns.

Alaska Budget Choices — Getting Alaskans involved in the budgetary process is the best way for the public to understand the tough financial decisions that Alaska faces as we move forward. Commonwealth North launched a website to help Alaskans better understand the State's financial challenges. The website www.akbudget.com presents Alaskans with an opportunity through answering 28 questions to make revenue and spending choices to address the projected \$1.3 billion shortfall in the fiscal year 2022 budget.

My staff and I went to the Commonwealth North website and found it to be accurate, informative, and easy to follow. I encourage everyone to take 5 minutes to work through the exercise and share their thoughts on what it shows about Alaska's financial challenges.

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