



Daily News-Miner

THE VOICE OF INTERIOR ALASKA

Inside Today Construction Trades Council honors nearly 100 apprenticeship graduates. » A4

Murkowski: Focus needed on health bill

By Erin Granger
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Alaska Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski said stabilizing the health care market in the state and across the country should remain a priority even as the GOP-led House and Senate shift focus to the tax legislation.

Murkowski said focusing on health care reform may be even more important now that a repeal of parts of the Affordable Care Act is contained in Senate tax legislation, which repeals the ACA's tax

penalty on people who choose to not have health insurance.

"I have consistently said that passing Alexander-Murray is important to stabilizing the individual market and it may be particularly so if the individual mandate is repealed as included in the draft reported by the Senate Finance Committee last night," Murkowski said in a statement Friday, referring to health care



Murkowski

legislation proposed by Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander, of Tennessee, and Democratic Sen. Patty Murray, of Washington, the top members of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

Murkowski is a member of the committee.

While Murkowski has signaled the focus on health care is an important issue for her, she clarified that her support of the tax bill is still up in the air and not contingent on the passing of the health care legislation.

"One should not assume this is a precondition for my support for the tax bill," Murkowski said.

"Like many of my colleagues, I am reviewing the good work of the Finance Committee over the Thanksgiving holiday," she said. "I plan to look at the entire package before coming to any conclusion on the legislation."

Murkowski has been one of the Senate's wildcards on health care legislation. She was one of only three Republican senators to vote down the GOP

effort to repeal and replace the ACA earlier this summer.

Murkowski's latest comments come as the Congressional Budget Office released its analysis of the GOP tax bill and how its repeal of the coverage mandate and related penalty might affect health coverage across the country.

The CBO report states that the current Senate tax legislation would reduce the deficit by about \$338 billion between 2018 and 2027 and that

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GOOD MORNING



The weather.

Mostly clear. Highs around 3 below. Light winds. Tonight: Mostly clear. Lows around 11 below. Light winds. High today-3 Low tonight-9

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Aurora forecast.

Auroral activity will be active. Weather permitting, active auroral displays will be visible overhead from Utqiagvik to Anchorage.

This information is provided by aurora forecasters at the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. For more information about the aurora, visit <http://www.gi.alaska.edu/AuroraForecast>

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STONE THROWS

Vicky Persinger's rink forces third and deciding playoff in Olympic curling trials.

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SOURDOUGH JACK:

"I guess the Legislature is better than Hollywood. At least it stops making meaningless sequels."



PUPPET BUILDING



Above, students play with their puppets while visiting Artist In Residence Mary Maisch, right, works with second graders putting finishing touches on their stick puppets Friday morning at Arctic Light Elementary School on Fort Wainwright. "They're just fabulous," Maisch, who is at the school for three weeks, said of the puppets the students made. The Artist In Residence program is coordinated through the Fairbanks Arts and Cultural Education Program. The Fairbanks Arts Association in Education Program is part of the Alaska State Council on the Arts with funding support from the FNSBSD, the Alaska State Legislature, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Rasmuson Foundation and Fairbanks Arts Association are providing additional support with funding. ERIC ENGMAN/NEWS-MINER



A basket of nearly finished puppets is among the supplies.

Walker says no more sessions before January

By Erin Granger
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Gov. Bill Walker said he is discussing the state budget proposal for fiscal 2019 with his Office of Management and Budget, but it is unclear



Walker

whether the proposal will include new revenue or continue to spend out of savings.

Small technical sessions keep Legislature from adjourning early. » A3

Time is running out on the Legislature's fourth special session of the year, and Walker said in a meeting with the Daily News-Miner's editorial board Friday that his proposed payroll tax likely is dead. The tax was one of the subjects on the agenda for the fourth special session.

"I don't think it's going anywhere," Walker said. "The Senate majority has said nothing is going to happen on that."

Walker proposed a capped payroll tax prior to calling lawmakers back to Juneau to address the state's criminal justice system and growing budget issues.

With the due date for a fiscal 2019 budget proposal fast approaching, Walker said the work is nonstop. He said he will be working closely with OMB Director Pat Pitney on the numbers. "We're working Saturdays and Sundays on budget stuff," Walker said. "We've got our hands full."

The governor is required by state law to submit a proposed budget by Dec. 15 of each year.

The fourth special session ends Tuesday and Walker said he

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Man changes plea in 2015 shooting

By Dorothy Chomicz
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A Fairbanks man charged with the 2015 shooting death of a 21-year-old North Pole man changed his plea Thursday in Fairbanks Superior Court. The body of Todd Nosal was found May 15, 2015 on a dike near the Tanana River.

Nosal died as a result of gunshot wounds, and his death was ruled a homicide.

Yelisey Campbell, 25, was arrested and charged with first-degree murder and tampering with physical evidence Jan. 28, 2016, after Alaska State Troopers determined he killed Nosal after a disturbance at Campbell's home.

Campbell pleaded guilty to a reduced count of second-degree murder, which carries a sentencing range of 25 to 35 years of incarceration, according to Assistant District Attorney Risa Leonard. The state may argue that Campbell's actions were among the "most serious," conduct defined by the offense.

A presentence report will be prepared by the Department of Corrections. Campbell will be sentenced April 27.

An August 2015 driving while intoxicated case against Campbell was dismissed as part of the plea deal.

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Man convicted for stealing copper pipes

By Dorothy Chomicz
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A Fairbanks man accused of breaking into an eastside home, stealing copper pipes and cutting the catalytic converter off the homeowner's car was convicted of all charges by a Fairbanks jury Thursday.

Zachary Hockersmith, 35, was arrested a week after the June 20 incident and was charged with felony first-degree burglary, felony first-degree criminal mischief and misdemeanor third-degree theft.

According to a criminal complaint, the homeowner and his mother had viewed home sur-

veillance camera footage after the incident which showed a black Chevrolet truck driving into the driveway. The footage shows a man exit the truck, attach a tow strap to the homeowner's Ford Escort and pull it parallel to the road. The

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