



Juneau's Influence on Alaska Lawmakers

Description

Approved by Legislative Affairs Agency

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[Senior Voice](#)



Easter was on *April Fool's Day* this year and *Good Friday* was chosen as a great time to feature the *Annual Legislative Skits*. They began decades ago as a fundraiser for the *Democratic Party*. The show, which features staff making fun of their bosses, is now unaffiliated to any political organization but gives money to worthy causes in Juneau.

It's also a means to wring money out of special interest lobbyists.

Some readers might recall Alaska was in a crime crisis from laws changed in 2016 from those set during the early pipeline days—when criminal behavior from the Oil Rush caused rational people to decide we will not tolerate lawlessness.

As a state we were broke but we had traditional frontier values

[1]American Traditional Values

Being a people watcher myself, familiar with this Juneau tradition, I went to observe what I knew would be *The Beautiful People* in all their glory.

I don't begrudge a once funny *Saturday Night Live* television show—which over the years has become less funny. My sense of humor has ripened as I seek subtlety and double entendre over blatant ribald comedy. That's not SNL's fault; their advertisers are looking for a different customer base than cheap-skate old guys with good memories. These *Legislative Skits* use an SNL format to make fun of the legislature as an institution, to humorously portray familiar legislative situations from the past 74 days of session, and to take some cheap shots at legislators they could be certain would not be in attendance.

It is possible that **360north.org** *Gavel-to-Gavel* coverage of the legislature has become an Alaska soap opera; it cannot be a reality show. Calls come into our legislative office (Rep. Lora Reinbold) from constituents who are very tuned into what is going on in committees and on the floor of the *Alaska House of Representatives*. Thanks to the Legislative BASIS system, constituents are able to track bills and hear what changes are made in committees, before deliberation on the floor and either passage over to the **Alaska Senate** for consideration, or failure.

This has to be a good thing for our republic.

When Alaskans voted to move the capital out of Juneau during the 1980s, the act of doing that physically was thwarted by a committee dedicated to showing how much it would cost. No committee has since formed to show how much it has cost to keep the capitol in Juneau. The amount paid to keep Alaska lawmaking in North Seattle would be staggering.

[Alaska's Capital Move Efforts: O Ye, of Little Faith](#)

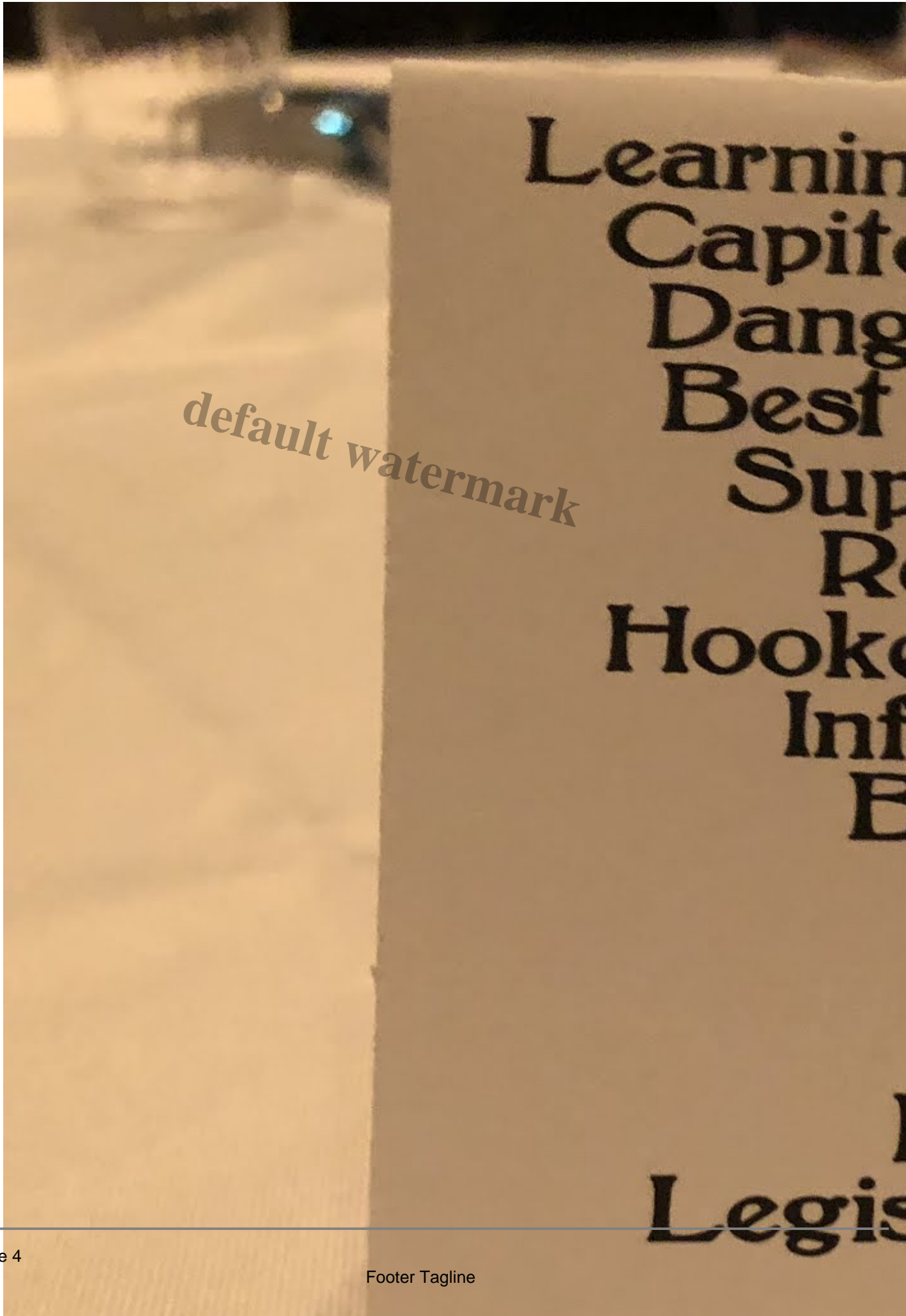
The argument then was that technology could provide access equivalent to actually being here. Don't you believe it.



In 2018 Legislative Affairs Agency paid for the tickets for some staff who wanted to attend this event.

The band began the evening's festivities with a song called ***Learning to Lie***. It was an appropriate beginning given our state's current economic situation and legislative coalitions grandstanding on how to address the challenge before returning home to face voters. From the song: *Well some say cut and some say spend; some say raid, some say defend. If I tell the truth I'll lose my fans, but I think I have a plan. I'm learning to lie and double down so I don't get run out of town. I'm learning to lie about these things because the truth really stinks.*

Another song about Sen. **Mia Costello**, who originally supported the crime bill SB 91, assigned motives to her change on that support: *This law needs repealing Mia can't you see? Girl, we just can't tolerate lower sentencing. When you told me it's not safe at night, you convince me to move further right.*



I look at this kind of change by an elected official as instructional; they must respond to concerns from voters who elected them to represent their districts in Juneau. On the other hand, being in Juneau and subjected to the influences inherent in this place, creates a dichotomy for anyone elected to represent interests of their districts when here.

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These skits demonstrated this dilemma. There is no pretense of fairness or balance; everybody conservative is fair game, anyone liberal gets a pass. To really be balanced the organization of these theatrical antics should have to feature skits by thespians of equal conservative/liberal persuasions. I don't know if the liberals could tolerate such a balance and I don't know if conservatives would care to present mockery of political opponents in this kind of forum.

These skits were much tamer than in past years, but they were mostly one-sided. One of them portrayed Republican conservative, Rep. **David Eastman** as being homosexual. He has a traditional family with three children. Members of the *Majority Caucus* were generally given a pass on criticisms of their stands or styles. A proposed \$500,000 study of *Effects of Vitamin D*, by former Republican from Homer, Rep. **Paul Seaton**, was given slight mention while some Republican women, like Sen. **Shelley Hughes** were mocked unmercifully. Chugiak Rep. **Dan Sadler** was selected as someone "most likely to be playing the ukulele on a beach," while Eagle River Rep. **Lora Reinbold** was referenced as *The Conservative Leader* of the House.

It could have been worse, but establishing half of the

skits presented by liberals and half by conservatives,

would be much more interesting.

Juneau is a hostile workplace for conservatives. The local community believes having the capital politically aligned with Seattle is their entitlement; the bureaucracy is infested at all levels with liberal groupthink, and the mainstream media strives for superficial happytalk over reporting about pragmatic lawmaking for Alaskan needs.



Richard Mauer

✓ VERIFIED

📺 Political Reporter, [KTUU-TV \(Anchorage, AK\)](#)

📍 Anchorage

📺 Politics, U.S. Regional

As seen in: [KTUU-TV \(Anchorage, AK\)](#), [KTOO Public Media](#)

Now reporting for KTUU channel 2 after several decades at the Anchorage Daily News

Mauer didn't cover the Alaska Legislature again after this session ended.

An event involving **KTUU Capital Reporter, Richard Mauer** on March 14, 2018 demonstrates how self-important and humorless some of these people can be. I documented our interaction and present my reflection here:

I was wrapping up a 1,200 word transcript of Rep. Reinbold's floor speech today about 6:45 pm when Richard Mauer came to our office and introduced himself.

I reached out and shook his hand, told him my name, saying "yeah, I know who you are. I've followed your work."

He continued: "Would it be possible to interview Rep. Reinbold tomorrow about HB 75?"

[2]HB 75 Sponsor statement

This guy makes me feel like I need to take a shower after shaking his hand. Why would he be in Rep. Reinbold's office at this time of day except to try and catch her exhausted from a day of meetings and a floor session?

He could have called for an appointment.

I said "I'll tell her you would like to do that." The way I said it and what I had already said caused Mauer to do a double-take and HE asked my name again. I responded: "DONN LISTON, two on the Don't forget."

***Obviously, this hack wanted to mouse-trap my boss,
and the fact I knew it threw him off his game***

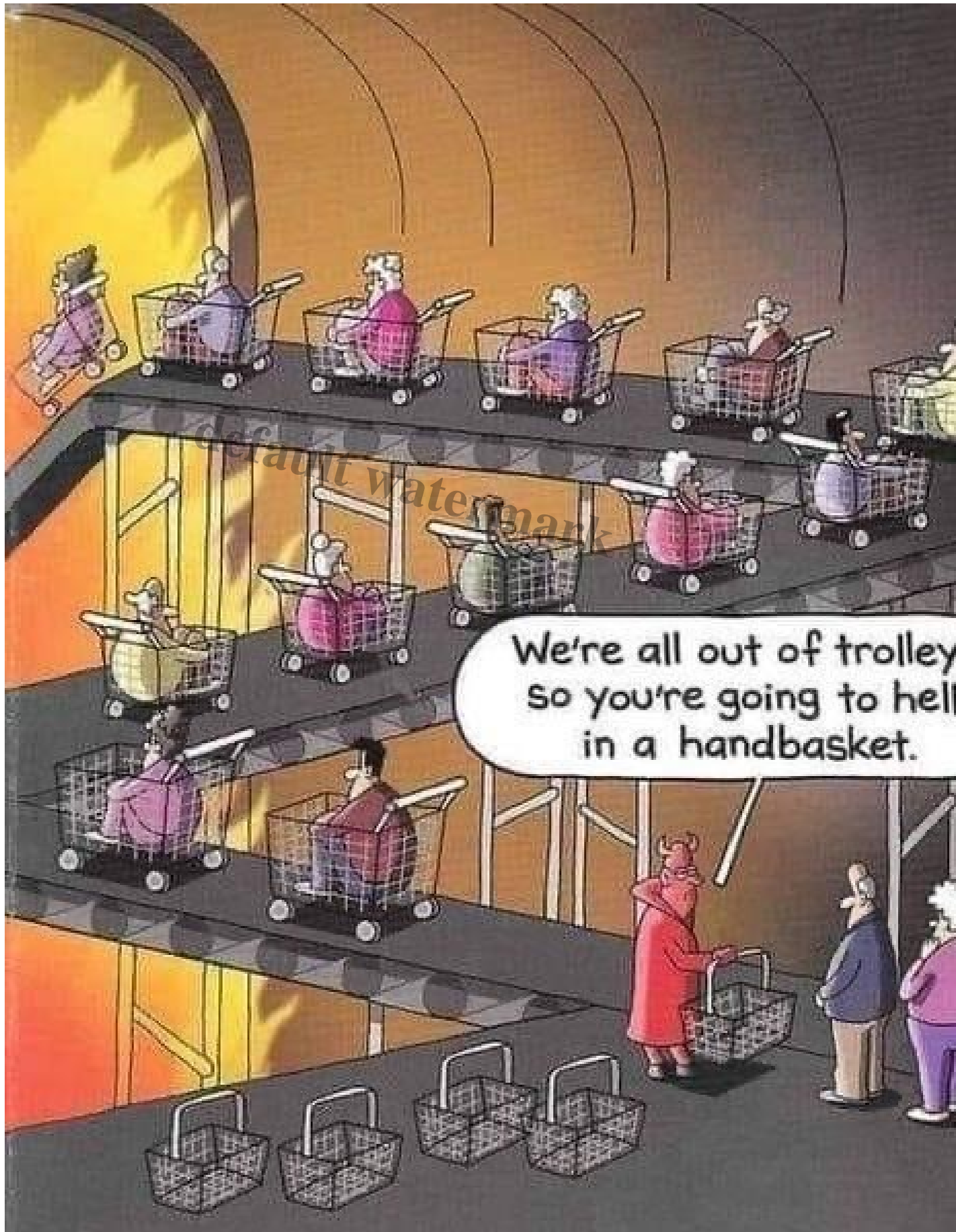
This caused Mauer to really get his back up, and he blathered: *You're full of shit.* I laughed, and he said it again: *YOU'RE FULL OF SHIT!*

My final reply: "More fake news, Pal; you have no way of knowing the levels of my bowels!"

Mauer stormed out of the office and in December produced a patronizing report about Alaskan's affinity for guns. In it Rep. Reinbold was not ridiculed for standing for her constituent's Second Amendment rights.

[3]KTUU Story by Richard Mauer: Know your Gun Rights

That was then and this is now. Despite refusing to follow statutory law regarding payment of the **Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend** opening the door for passing the largest budget in State history last session to assure jeopardy of the fund we can all know the goal of statehood to manage our own destiny as a state has failed. 63 years later everything is controlled by Seattle through elected officials who are able to suspend everything in their home district to enter the tender clutches of Juneau for months in a year. Due to our small population educating future generations in one of the worst education systems in the United States, most of our lawmakers place along with their media enablers on the conveyor belt should be in handbaskets.



akleg.gov

References:

[1]American Traditional Values

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_frontier#:~:text=In%20his%20%22Frontier%20Thesis%22%20\(%20](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_frontier#:~:text=In%20his%20%22Frontier%20Thesis%22%20(%20)

Through treaties with foreign nations and native tribes, political compromise, military conquest, the establishment of law and order, the building of farms, ranches, and towns, the marking of trails and digging of mines, and the pulling in of great migrations of foreigners, the United States expanded from coast to coast, fulfilling the ideology of Manifest Destiny. In his "Frontier Thesis" (1893), Turner theorized that the frontier was a process that transformed Europeans into a new people, the Americans, whose values focused on equality, democracy, and optimism, as well as individualism, self-reliance, and even violence.

[2]HB 75 Sponsor statement

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

HB 75 – Extreme Risk Protection Order - Sponsor Statement - 2.19.18

House Bill 75 creates an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) – a tool to empower families and law enforcement to remove guns from individuals experiencing an elevated risk of endangering themselves or others. With high suicide rates and high rates of domestic violence and sexual assault, Alaska needs this kind of common-sense measure that is temporary in nature and limited in scope to help people suffering from a mental health crisis.

The bloody Valentine's Day shooting in Parkland, Texas was the 18th school shooting of 2018. The violence erupted at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, when a 19-year-old gunman returned to the high school where he had once been expelled for disciplinary problems. He wore a gas mask as he stalked into the school carrying a rifle, ammunition cartridges and smoke grenades, then pulled a fire alarm, prompting students and staff to pour from their classrooms into hallways. He killed 17 people and injured more than a dozen others. Lives lost include:

Alyssa Alhadeff, 14
Scott Beigel, 35
Martin Duque Anguiano, 14
Nicholas Dworet, 17
Aaron Feis, 37
Jaime Guttenberg, 14
Chris Hixon, 49
Luke Hoyer, 15
Cara Loughran, 14

Gina Montalto, 14
Joaquin Oliver, 17
Alaina Petty, 14
Meadow Pollack, 18
Helena Ramsay, 17
Alex Schachter, 14
Carmen Schentrup, 16
Peter Wang, 15

Closer to home, Esteban Santiago, 26, an Iraq war veteran who lived in Anchorage, is accused of killing five people and injuring six others in a mass shooting at a Florida airport on January 6, 2017. He recognized his own illness, went to the FBI in Anchorage to ask for help, received treatment and was hospitalized, but he was never adjudicated mentally ill. If he had, under federal law, he would not have been allowed to have a firearm. Instead, Alaska police eventually returned his gun because they had no legal authority to withhold it.

This legislation doesn't infringe on the Second Amendment. The individual can retrieve his/her firearms when the high-risk behavior is no longer a threat. California, Indiana, Connecticut, Oregon, and Washington have established these orders, and 18 other states are considering similar measures. It's time to pass common-sense public safety legislation in Alaska.

Be afraid, be very afraidâ?!

[3]KTUU Story by Richard Mauer: Know your Gun Rights

<https://www.alaskasnewssource.com/content/news/Know-Your-Rights-Guns-502733031.html>

Category

1. Alaska Elected Officials
2. Alaska Legislature
3. ALASKA! GOVERNMENT

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