

Too Bold? Rep Lora Reinbold speaks out on SB 91, Education, and the Budget

Description

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Reinbold For Alaska

Trying to catch Rep. Lora Reinbold to interview for a story is a

challenge. But pinning her down on the issues is a snap. She is outspoken on many issues, voting on principle, while some other elected officials play it safe.

[1]In This Race for Senate Reinbold beat Rep. Dan Saddler. Read my Updated story about Born-Again Dan!

Reinbold is currently an Alternate member of both the **House Education Committee**, and **Select Committee On Legislative Ethics**. She is a full member on **Law (Finance Subcommittee)**, **Judiciary (Finance Subcommittee)**, **Military & Veterans' Affairs (Finance Subcommittee)**, **Judiciary, Rules, Armed Services, and Military & Veterans' Affairs** committees.

Reinbold voted against the crime omnibus bill SB 91.

Rather than proceeding carefully, with thoughtful consideration of the consequences to the public, SB 91 represents a reckless and irresponsible overhaul of the entire foundation of our criminal justice system, wrote Reinbold in an opinion piece May 10, 2016. At that time she saw no point in pursuing sweeping criminal justice overhaul. Today she stands vindicated at demands now that the passed SB 91 will be repaired or replaced.

Her opponent, Dan Saddler had voted for SB-91.

Over the last 20 years, government in Alaska made a decision to hold criminal offenders accountable for their crimes by creating meaningful prison sentences, thus crime rates have dropped by 42%, explained Reinbold. If we still had the same levels of crime as we had in 1995, an additional 15,000 Alaskans would be crime victims every single year. When we look back at that strong record of success, we need to be certain that any changes we make to the criminal justice system will improve the lives and safety of law-abiding Alaskans.

Rep Reinbold says she believes that Government's most important mandate is public safety. After studying SB 91 during the spring of 2016, talking intently with public safety officials and prosecutors, she fought the passage of SB 91. She believes this bill was built on a faulty foundation with regard to **Alaska Constitution** requirements for public safety.

I refuse to give in to those organizations, like the **Pew Foundation**, the so-called **Criminal Justice Program at UAA**, and the **Criminal Justice Commission's** claimed **Criminal Justice reform**," said Reinbold. For them, the criminal is at the center of the reform—not concerns of law-abiding citizens and the businesses we treasure in our community. Rather, (they believe) victims' rights must be at the center of any justice reform that is implemented into public safety policy."

Standing against unfunded Federal Mandates

Some wondered during her first years in the House if Lora Reinbold was too bold. For one example, she took a bold stand against the education reform known as **Common Core**. Created as an initiative of the **National Governor's Association**, the idea of *centralizing educational curriculum nationally for consistent outcomes* has never set well with those who would rather see local control and higher

expectations over emphasis on process.

One of my top issues has been cutting ties to failed federal education programs and not implementing a one size fits all (or none) Common Core, explained Reinbold. I believe each child is unique and the gifts given to them need to be discovered by talented teachers.

Research shows parents' involvement in the education of their children is key to success in school. Reinbold is fervent in defending parental rights even in the public education process.

I did symposiums across the state to help parents understand the flaws in the **Common Core** initiative, she continued. *This helped expose the organization behind that experimental movement.*

The first key piece of legislation Reinbold got passed as Chair of the **Regulatory Review Act** was the **Regulatory Reform Transparency Act**. It was in response to the request by local business owners who complained of costly regulations.

Reinbold also exposed the PFD restructure and helped block a very controversial regulation that allowed spending state education dollars on elections.

Busted from the Majority Caucus

In March of 2015, just before midnight in Juneau, Reinbold stood to speak out against a state budget the majority had ready to pass. She said cuts were not deep enough given the state is facing an estimated \$3.5 billion budget deficit. She was a single Republican vote against that budget. The budget passed 25-14 and her punishment was immediate.

I voted NO on the budget after almost two years of trying to cut the budget from within the caucus, she explained. The warnings were there that tough times were ahead, but many in the legislature ignored the warnings, and helped escalate the fiscal crisis.

Despite penalties, Rep Reinbold believes she kept promises she made to try to reduce the massive footprint of State government regardless of the majority caucus pressure to go along with big spending. She was re-elected, and that caucus is now largely in the minority.

In a March 23, 2015, opinion piece in the **Alaska Dispatch News** Reinbold wrote: *When I joined the caucus, I agreed with the guiding principles that we collaboratively set: to live within our means, save for future generations, identify the core functions of government, and develop a long-term plan for Alaska. It was precisely these closely held principles that caused me to vote against a budget that simply does not reflect the fiscal crisis at hand. I believe that the published guiding principles of the caucus should take precedence over an unwritten rule. It is important that the caucus establish an agreed-upon fiscal goal to work toward rather than requiring members to make blind allegiances to an open state checkbook.*

[2]Reinbold Commentary In ADN: Vote of Principal Against Unsustainable Budget

Reinbold was stripped of committee memberships of all except the House Community and Regional Affairs Committee. She has however been a member of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Joint Armed Services committees and is particularly proud of her efforts on behalf of what she calls “our cherished veterans.”

Midway through her second term, Reinbold says her legislative priorities remain, 1) public safety, 2) protecting Alaskans pocketbooks by reducing the footprint of Denali sized government in Alaska, 3) protecting constitutional rights, 4) empowering parents and encouraging their direct involvement in students’ education, 5) encouraging Alaskans to be independent from government dependency to master our collective destiny, and 5) protecting the founding fathers’ principles, which have led to America’s success.

Who says that is too BOLD?

References:

[1]In This Race for Senate Reinbold beat Play-it-Safe, Go-Along-To-Get Along Rep. Dan Saddler. Read my story about Born-Again Dan!
<https://donnliston.net/2023/03/eagle-rivers-born-again-legislator/>

[2]Reinbold Commentary In ADN: Vote of Principal Against Unsustainable Budget
www.adn.com/commentary/article/rep-reinbold-vote-principle-against-unsustainable-budget/2015/03/23/

Opinions

Rep. Reinbold: A vote of principle, against an unsustainable budget

By [Lora Reinbold](#)

Updated: June 29, 2016Published: March 23, 2015

I took a solemn oath to defend and uphold the constitutions of the United States and Alaska. My responsibility is to those sacred documents and to the people of Alaska, particularly all of you, my constituents in Eagle River. Those bonds are stronger than any I shared with the House Majority Caucus here in Juneau. If there is ever a conflict between my oath to the constitutions and promises I made to my constituents versus the caucus here in Juneau, I will choose my oath to the constitutions and my promises to the people.

Eagle River did not send me to Juneau to follow in tow with politics as usual, they sent me here to make the difficult decisions necessary to get Alaska on the right path. As a fiscal conservative, I am dedicated to creating a sustainable budget, in order to provide a stable and prosperous future for

Alaska. As our oil revenues diminish, it is the men and women of this great state who will bear the cost of big government.

As many of you may have heard, earlier this month I voted against an unsustainable operating budget. I knew this decision likely meant an end to my membership in the caucus, but I firmly believe it was worth the cost. My voice in the Legislature is now louder and clearer than ever.

When I joined the caucus, I agreed with the guiding principles that we collaboratively set: to live within our means, save for future generations, identify the core functions of government, and to develop a long-term plan for Alaska. It was precisely these closely held principles that caused me to vote against a budget that simply does not reflect the fiscal crisis at hand. I believe that the published guiding principles of the caucus should take precedence over an unwritten rule. It is important that the caucus establish an agreed upon fiscal goal to work toward rather than requiring members to make blind allegiances to an open state checkbook.

In the weeks to come, I intend to empower you, the people, with knowledge as I pursue my legislative priorities. I will continue toward grass-roots education reform, and act on the ideas that Alaskans are bringing to the table. I will seek opportunities to work across party lines to limit government spending in order to ensure we have essential government services for generations to come. Together we can create a more transparent government that is responsive to the people of Alaska.

I have enjoyed hearing from many of you after my vote. Your overwhelming support has served as a strong reminder that my anchor is back home in Eagle River, not here in Juneau. As the session continues, I encourage you all to stay in touch with the Legislature. Down here at the Capitol it is critical that we hear the voices back home. As a good friend used to say, "If you want your government to leave you alone, don't leave your government alone."

Please call my office with any suggestions, questions, or comments. You can reach me by phone at 622-8950 or by email rep.lora.reinbold@akleg.gov.

Rep. Lora Reinbold is a lifelong Alaskan. She has represented Eagle River since 2012 as a Republican in the state House. She previously held the following positions: vice chair of the Education Committee, co-chair of the Joint Armed Services Committee, membership on Legislative Council and Rules Committee. She is currently a member of the Community & Regional Affairs Committee.

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