

Subject: Senate Majority Organization
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From: "Hughes" [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED],
[REDACTED],
[REDACTED],
[REDACTED]

TO: Returning Republican Senators and Republican Senators-elect

I've been in touch with all of you but once again, congratulations on your races.

Now the fun begins!

Because we are all Republicans, I believe we should make all efforts to work together the best we can – otherwise, what does the R after our name mean?!

Although conversations have been underway for months to the contrary (as well as accelerated efforts recently) to assemble a bipartisan majority that would **exclude** certain Republicans, a path forward to form a Senate Majority organization to include all 11 Republicans **exists**. It would involve bringing in 2-3 Democrats as has been done in the past. It would also require agreement at the outset on some rules.

As the basis for this conversation, it is important first to note that we have fewer senators who support the statutory PFD this upcoming session than last; in fact, it is a significant minority. For this reason, the PFD amount should no longer be a point of contention among Republican senators nor a roadblock to organizing. Those preferring a more moderate PFD have numbers on their side, so we should not continue to let this issue fracture Senate Republicans!

For a Republican Majority to function well and to ensure a responsible budget is passed, the following structure would work:

- A. Agree on a cap to the operating budgets for FY24 and FY25 (perhaps what James Kaufman included in his HB4006).

- B. Put the PFD in its own separate budget bill each year to allow each senator the freedom to vote according to their district without putting them into an unnecessary and untenable position.

If we could agree on these two simple and reasonable tenets above, our next step would be to find policy priorities around which Republican senators could coalesce for the betterment of Alaska.

Our Senate Republicans have some excellent proposals, and we as a caucus could select one or several to get behind as priorities. Here are a few ideas:

- Click and others want to tangibly pave a way to incorporate microreactors on the railbelt and in rural Alaska to provide more affordable energy.
- Bert and others have ideas to make the ferry system modern and affordable.
- David and others are interested in addressing healthcare costs.
- James and others have ideas regarding efficiencies and accountability in our departments.
- Gary and others want to advance solutions in addition to Read by Nine to improve student outcomes.

We should have discussions about these and/or other policies and decide on one or a couple ready for primetime that we want to back and promote.

A Republican Senate majority can happen if each of us decides we want it to work and takes the steps to ensure it does. Our caucusing together, and then in turn working with the House and the Governor, would provide the best outcome for Alaska.

Best regards,

Shelley

Shelley Hughes