



PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION UPDATE

As the presidential confirmation hearings continue, AFN has been working with our Alaska senators on identifying our federal priorities. Broad priority categories as put forward by NCAI and AFN are:

- Infrastructure
- Education
- Sovereignty
- Over Regulation
- Economic Development

Other priorities include support of veterans, job creation and tribal contracting.

TRUMP CABINET NOMINATIONS

- Senators Murkowski and Sullivan have voted in favor of the following Trump Administration nominees thus far: Mike Pompeo (CIA Director), John F. Kelly (Homeland Security Secretary), James Mattis (Defense Secretary), and Nikki Haley (Ambassador to the UN).
- Secretary nominees who were approved by committee vote and will be the next to move to a full Senate vote are: HUD Secretary nominee Ben Carson, Transportation Secretary nominee Elaine Chao, Commerce Secretary nominee Wilbur Ross, and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos. Senator Murkowski has indicated she will vote against DeVos when the full Senate votes, while Senator Sullivan has announced he will vote for her.
- The most controversial Secretarial nominees, who will face some resistance (but are very likely to be confirmed) are: State Department Secretary nominee Rex Tillerson, Attorney General nominee Jeff Sessions, Labor Secretary Nominee Andy Puzder, and Treasury Secretary nominee Steve Mnuchin.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

CAAN

February 17th

Convention Committee

February 20th

AFN Board

February 21st

Strategic Planning Retreat

April 3rd-5th

- As Chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Murkowski oversaw the confirmation hearing of Representative Zinke (R-MT) who has been nominated to serve as Secretary of the Interior. In her statements, Murkowski secured a commitment from Zinke to review all Obama Administration executive actions that took resource-rich Alaskan lands and waters off the table for development. She also discussed the need for fish and wildlife management that better meets the needs of subsistence users and the need to build an evacuation road from King Cove.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION STAFFING UPDATE

The White House has hired an individual of Navajo descent who helped lead the Trump campaign in Alabama as the new Associate Director for Tribal Intergovernmental Affairs (the position formerly held by Raina Thiele). The Administration has also installed an interim Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior, Ben Keel, who was is a Chickasaw who was actively involved in the Trump campaign. AFN and NCAI have been offering Alaskans' resumes to the Administration for consideration for various Administration posts.

In addition to building new relationships and developing partnerships, AFN is working on strengthening existing relationships with career professionals in several agencies that impact Alaska Natives. The slow appointment of political staff at the agencies has led to a more prominent role for permanent career staff in the early days of the Trump Administration.

STATE/TRIBAL CHILD WELFARE COMPACTING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Last fall representatives from the Tribal/State Collaboration Group (TSCG) approached the Council for the Advancement of Alaska Natives (CAAN) about improving the outcomes of Native families and children. TSCG is a conglomerate of tribes, tribal organizations, Native entities and the Office of Children's Services (OCS). CAAN is a committee of AFN composed of all of the regional Native non-profit organizations and a few other entities that service Native peoples or rural Alaska.

One idea was to transfer more control over child welfare services to tribes and tribal organizations through a 'compact.' TSCG identified Myra Munson, a former Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Commissioner and well-respected tribal attorney, as the ideal candidate to draft the compact due to her extensive background in negotiating similar agreements with the federal government. OCS stated that it hoped to develop a template compact in partnership with tribes and tribal organizations by mid-October, which individual tribes could then adapt to suit their needs.

This month, CAAN accepted TSCG's invitation to join tribal child welfare leaders on the tribal negotiating team. The following members also contributed financially to the cost of retaining Ms. Munson, which OCS will share equally:

- Aleutian Pribilof Island Association
- Association of Village Council Presidents
- Bristol Bay Native Association
- Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

- Chugachmuit
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- First Alaskans Institute
- Kawerak, Inc.
- Maniilaq, Assoc.
- Tanana Chiefs Conference

CAAN looks forward to providing regular updates on this historic opportunity as the negotiation process moves forward. **Please contact Nicole Borromeo for more information at (907) 263-1310 or nborromeo@nativefederation.org.**

2017 CONVENTION

The 2017 Convention dates are October 19-21 at the Dena'ina Center in downtown Anchorage, with the tribal conference on October 18 at the Egan Center on 5th Avenue. Several convention work flows will begin earlier in the year, including the theme and keynote speaker selection, President's Awards nominations, artist and exhibitor registration, and delegate registration. Sponsorship development has already begun, with several meetings and early commitments.

- "Save the Date" e-flyer has been sent out via email and social media
- DCCC contract including use of Egan center is signed

STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

The AFN Executive Governance Committee is planning an AFN Board Retreat in Girdwood, AK on April 3-5. The Executive Governance Committee will present a draft agenda at the February 21st AFN Board meeting in Juneau. The retreat would start with a dinner the evening of the 3rd and conclude early on the 5th for those who need to catch planes.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

CAAN

CAAN has spent much of the new year trying to get the tribal/state child welfare compact opportunity off the ground (see above), and assessing early **reports** of a restructuring of the federal government. Policy work on the committee related resolutions from the 2016 Convention is also underway, as is identifying CAAN's 2017 state and federal priorities.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE

The committee is working on 2017 theme proposals and keynote speakers, short lists of which will be presented to the board at the February 21 meeting for selection votes.

A local diversity in community group, Bridge Builders, has proposed an “Anchorage Welcomes AFN Delegates” ceremony for the evening of Wednesday, October 18, the day before the Convention begins.

A downloadable video of the [2016 Convention Powerpoint recap](#) with narration is available on AFN’s Vimeo site for board members to share.

EXECUTIVE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The AFN Executive Governance Committee met on January 13th and reviewed the original charter of the Committee as well as the current structure of AFN. In preparation of the meeting, AFN staff drafted six strategic option papers for the Committee to discuss. The Committee recommended AFN staff combine the six option papers into one strategic plan for 2017. Below are the six options presented in the papers:

- (1) Option: Supporting transformational change. Setting the stage for collaborative partnership-based approaches to problem solving. Direct staff to develop a paper and further materials for consideration.
- (2) Option: Expanding Opportunities for the Next Generation – Economic Growth, Educational Opportunities, and Leadership Models for the Future. Direct staff to develop further for the next meeting.
- (3) Option: Public-private partnerships in infrastructure. Examine options in infrastructure initiatives, innovation for economic development, supporting alignment for success. Direct staff to develop further for the next meeting.
- (4) Option: Expanding Compacting & Contracting. On both the federal and state level, develop a strategy to accomplish in this changing environment. Direct staff to put together some targeted strategies for consideration.
- (5) Option: Total re-engagement with the State of Alaska. Focus on the state fiscal crisis and enacting laws and regulations, which have long been Native priorities. Direct staff to develop a strategy for consideration. AFN staff already beginning to work on for presentation to the February Board meeting.
- (6) Option: Engagement strategies for the new Trump Administration. Direct staff to prepare a series of strategies for discussion at the retreat. Invite expert speakers to ensure a broad perspective of options.

LEGISLATIVE & LITIGATION COMMITTEE

The AFN Legislative and Litigation Committee met on January 24th. Department of Corrections Commissioner Williams briefed the AFN L&L Committee on different strategies he is working on to address the staggering number of inmate deaths last year, including eradicating drugs in prison, an oversight group that has direct lines into the department at the commissioner’s office level, and exploring contracting out of probation/parole supervision to local and tribal governments.

The L&L Committee also reviewed the recommendations of individuals to federal and state positions. Below are the names AFN recommended:

- Richard Allen for United States Attorney for the District of Alaska
- Magistrate Wells for Kenai Superior Court
- Chris Cooke for Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Board
- Stosh Hoffman for State of Alaska Board of Game
- Ted Spraker for State of Alaska Board of Game
- Dave Brown for State of Alaska Board of Game
- Karen Linnell for State of Alaska Board of Game

The AFN L&L Committee additionally supported Representative Westlake's legislation to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

NEWS ROUNDUP

<http://www.alaska-native-news.com/legislation-introduced-to-establish-indigenous-peoples-day-in-alaska-26432>

<https://www.trahantreports.com/2017/01/22/day-one-a-damatic-restructuring-of-government-budget-cuts-ahead/>

<https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2017/01/24/southcentral-sues-its-partner-in-tribal-health-over-alleged-power-grab-tied-to-pay-raises/>

<https://www.adn.com/politics/2017/01/17/trumps-interior-secretary-nominee-might-just-grant-murkowskis-every-wish/>

<http://www.alaskapublic.org/2017/01/04/study-finds-disturbing-trend-in-mortality-rate-in-kusilvak-census-area/>

<https://www.adn.com/nation-world/2017/01/05/obama-administration-moves-to-protect-some-of-the-most-remote-areas-of-alaska/>

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/16/us/politics/mick-mulvaney-office-management-budget-trump.html?_r=0

<https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/rural-alaska/2017/01/10/state-signs-landmark-deal-with-tribe-to-allow-tribal-prosecution-of-low-level-crimes/>