

SESSION ADDRESS:
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
(907) 465-4925
Fax: (907) 465-3517
Toll Free: 1-800-821-4925

Senator Gary Stevens

Alaska State Legislature

INTERIM ADDRESS:
112 Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
(907) 486-4925
Fax: (907) 486-5264



February 10, 2009

The Honorable Sarah Palin, Governor
State of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0001

Dear Governor Palin:

In light of the press coverage of Senate Resolution 5, which was passed by the Senate last Friday, I want to clarify my understanding of the intent of the sixteen Senators who approved the resolution.

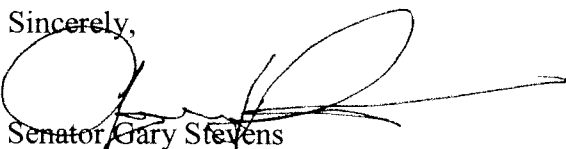
The Legislature is a co-equal branch of government with the administrative branch. As the State Superior Court affirmed, the legislature has the power to subpoena witnesses. A legislative committee issued subpoenas last fall to which the witnesses subpoenaed did not respond. As a co-equal branch of government, the legislature must officially acknowledge and memorialize our constitutional role as a body with the power to, when necessary, subpoena testimony from individuals on matters of public import.

In introducing this resolution, the Senate had no intention of surprising anyone. Contrary to what some media reports have indicated, simple Senate resolutions do not require committee hearings. I chose not to give this resolution a committee hearing because I wanted to avoid providing anyone the opportunity to grandstand and divert attention away from the issue here: a simple clarification of the constitutional balance of powers between and among the co-equal branches of government.

I, like many Alaskans, was disappointed last fall with the way this matter became unnecessarily politicized during the national political campaign. We did not intend to "smear or assault" any of the witnesses; we want to put this behind us and move forward on issues of importance to all Alaskans.

Please feel free to contact me anytime if I can be of any service to you.

Sincerely,



Senator Gary Stevens
Alaska State Senate President