



# Rep. Bryce Edgmon's *Legislative Update*



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## Development Plan for Maritime Careers Completed

I want to let you all know about the recently finalized [Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan](#). More than two years in the making, this is an important milestone in the Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime Initiative (FSMI), which the University of Alaska launched in 2011.

In 2012, I passed [House Concurrent Resolution 18](#), which called on the Legislature to support FSMI and its goals to strengthen programs, training, and other resources to help young Alaskans into gainful, life-long careers in commercial fishing.

Subsequently, Sen. Lyman Hoffman and I accepted UA President Patrick Gamble's invitation to join the FSMI Industry Advisory Committee. This allowed us to stay well informed during the Advisory Committee's creation of the Maritime Workforce Development Plan.

The hard work of the more than 20 members of the Advisory Committee—led by Kris Norosz of Icycle Seafoods and Fred Villa of UA—and of the UA FSMI Leadership Group—led by Paula Cullenberg of Alaska Sea Grant—has resulted in comprehensive strategies to prepare Alaskans for rewarding, high-skill careers not only in fish harvesting but also in the seafood processing and maritime shipping industries.

The publication of this work marks the beginning of a new important phase for FSMI—putting the Alaska Maritime Workforce Development Plan into action. Please follow the links below to look over the plan and additional info about the initiative.

And please help get the word out in your communities about this resource and the great career opportunities it is designed to create.

For the Fisheries, Seafood, and Maritime Initiative Home Page:  
<http://www.alaska.edu/fsmi/>

For the Plan itself: [http://www.alaska.edu/files/fsmi/AK-Maritime-Workforce-Dev-Plan\\_Low-Res\\_5-22-14.pdf](http://www.alaska.edu/files/fsmi/AK-Maritime-Workforce-Dev-Plan_Low-Res_5-22-14.pdf)

## 2014 House Bush Caucus



At the end of the legislative session the House Bush Caucus presented retiring Kodiak Representative Alan Austerman with a Rie Munoz print. From left to right: Rep. Neal Foster (D-Nome), Rep. Edgmon, Rep. David Guttenberg (D-Fairbanks and beyond), Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins (D-Sitka), Rep. Cathy Munoz (R-Juneau), Rep. Paul Seaton (R-Homer), Rep. Peggy Wilson (R-Wrangell), Rep. Eric Feige (R-Chickaloon), Rep. Bob Herron (D-Bethel), Rep. Alan Austerman (R-Kodiak), Rep. Ben Nageak (D-Barrow), and Rep. Sam Kito III (D-Juneau).

### Rep. Edgmon on the Untimely Death of Fisheries Journalist Bob Tkacz

Regardless of our political stripes, we're all part of an extended family in Juneau during the three months that make up the legislative session. Often, those of us who live and breathe the daily rituals of the capitol get to know each other at a level that strips politics down its most basic element, which is about people and knowing what makes them tick.

But there are some whom you will remember more than others.

That's why the sudden passing of veteran reporter Bob Tkacz impacted me as much as it did. We last spoke in April, when I complimented him on the snazzy suit he was wearing on the last day of session. He said he always dressed up for the last day and why, after all these years, didn't I know about his tradition? This bluntness was vintage Tkacz. He was never one to skirt around what he wanted to say.

I was there for his first year in Juneau in the early nineties and remember thinking, this guy pushes the limits way too far. What kind of journalist can survive by accosting everyone? But survive he did, outlasting many counterparts in the pressroom and a succession of governors, legislators, and hundreds of others who came and went.

He became a fixture in the capitol. And if his aim was to leave a legacy I'd say judging by the many sentiments expressed after his passing that he succeeded more so than he ever envisioned.

With Bob gone the commercial fishing industry in Alaska has lost a true friend. I can't imagine he made a lot of money writing his weekly Laws for the SEA newsletter during session, but for over 20 years he wrote with gusto about committee hearings and bills and political shenanigans, sometimes inserting a little more of a twist than the way I remembered things.

But as someone who for the past eight years has represented many communities built around commercial fishing, I scoured virtually every article he wrote during session. His regular reports helped make sure my staff and I did not miss anything significant in each week's countless legislative hearings and press gatherings.

He has left a big void in fisheries reporting, and I wonder who will fill it in a business that pays far too little for the time and sacrifice the work demands. I also wonder who is going to sit through the hours of Fisheries and Resource Committee meetings to detail events for those beyond the capitol who came to rely on him as their eyes and ears in the daily grind of the Legislature.

Bob was a curmudgeon and he knew it. He also knew he was a bulldog and I'm pretty sure he relished the image. He was always cutting to the chase and never afraid of pinning someone against the ropes to get what he felt his readers deserved.

For those of us in the Legislature, I'm pretty confident in saying that there will be moments in the future when we're watching a press conference in the capitol and someone will pipe up and say, "If Bob Tkacz were here he'd ask the question."

I'd say that's a pretty darn good legacy to leave behind.

## *Keep in Contact*

### Rep. Bryce Edgmon

Capitol Building, Room 410

Juneau, AK

99801

Phone: 907-465-4451

Toll Free: 1-800-898-4451

Fax: 907-465-3445

Email:

[Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Bryce.Edgmon@akleg.gov)

[Adam.Berg@akleg.gov](mailto:Adam.Berg@akleg.gov)

[Tim.Clark@akleg.gov](mailto:Tim.Clark@akleg.gov)

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[www.facebook.com/Rep.BryceEdgmon](http://www.facebook.com/Rep.BryceEdgmon)