

Vaska pledges aid to local governments

Democratic State Senate candidate Tony Vaska has pledged to work for legislation that eases the ability of local communities to dissolve municipal governments.

Vaska also has announced he would introduce legislation that would eliminate discrimination against unincorporated communities.

"Both pieces of legislation are priorities because the right to choose a form of government is one of the most basic rights for citizens in a democracy," Vaska said.

"If the laws treat incorporated and unincorporated communities differently, as they do now, the statutes are used as a way to pressure local communities to choose one form of government over another."

When asked if the same result could be achieved through the passage of regulations, as has been suggested by the Department of Community and Regional Affairs, Vaska said that regulations would solve some of the problems, but would not eliminate the discrimination against unincorporated communities.

"In addition, regulations are often changed depending on who happens to be on a commission or who works for the Department of Community and Regional Affairs or who is elected governor," Vaska said.

And he pointed out that regulations do not have the permanence of legislation and are often changed without adequate notice to rural Alaskans.

"To be certain that communities will always have the power to both form and dissolve municipal governments as they see fit, legislation must be adopted to strengthen the powers of local people," Vaska said.

"Regulations alone do not provide enough protection for rights of critical importance to villagers."

Olds endorsed

The Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association has endorsed the candidacy of Dr. Glenn Olds, Alaska's Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate.

"We appreciate Dr. Olds' stand in support of a delay in the Bristol Bay oil lease sale, as well as his strong position to halt high seas salmon interception by foreign fleets," said Norman Stadem, vice president of the Naknek-based organization.

The non-profit Alaska marketing association represents nearly 400 independent fishermen in western Alaska.

2 endorsements

Bob Richards, Republican primary gubernatorial candidate, has announced his full commitment to helping Arliss Sturgulewski in her campaign for governor.

"It is imperative that we have a governor who understands the current challenges facing the Alaskan economy, and Arliss is that person," the economist said.

Also endorsing Sturgulewski is the National Rifle Association. In a mailing to its more than 22,000 Alaskan members, the NRA focused on Sturgulewski's record as chairman of the Senate Resources Committee, saying that she had shown "outstanding leadership on a wide variety of issues important to every Alaskan who cares about the outdoors."

Hopefuls backed

The Anchorage Central Labor Council of the AFL-CIO has endorsed a number of candidates in races throughout the state, including Mike Szymanski, Pat Rodey, Vic Fischer,

Ray Metcalfe and Ron Miner for the State Senate.

Endorsed for the State House were Dana Brockway, Dave Donley, Max Gruenberg, Kay Brown, John Ellis, Pat Pourchot, Donna Estell, Dan Repasky, Sam Cotten, Randy Phillips, Katie Hurley and Ron Larson.

Missed votes

Pegge Begich, Democratic candidate for Alaska's lone seat in the U.S. House, charged Republican Congressman Don Young recently with using negative ads to bolster what she termed his "faltering" campaign.

"It is unfortunate that Don Young has decided to obscure his record by calling me names," Begich said. "Perhaps he has made the decision that it is easier to win re-election by falsehood than it is to win election on his own credentials."

Begich was referring to recent radio advertisements placed by the Young campaign that accuse her of lying about his attendance and then say his attendance record is impeccable.

"In fact, Don Young has missed 1,700 votes in Congress," Begich said. "Those 1,700 missed votes equate to three years of floor sessions — three years where Don Young was some place other than on the floor of the House."

Support by NRA

The National Rifle Association recently endorsed the re-election of Republican U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski, citing his "proven track record of commitment to gun owners and sportsmen."

"In Frank Murkowski's first six years as an Alaska senator, he has been one of the most consistent supporters of sportsmen and law-abiding

gun owners in the nation," said Wayne LaPierre, executive director of the NRA.

'Negative' attack

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Steve Cowper called a press conference recently to decry what he termed the "negative" campaigning of Republican gubernatorial candidate Arliss Sturgulewski.

"It's unfortunate, to say the least, that Sen. Sturgulewski has stooped to misrepresentation and distortion," he said. "I had hoped this campaign would remain on a high plain — addressing issues of the day and our positions on those issues."

Vote yes on 2

The Resource Development Council for Alaska Inc. is urging voters to vote for Ballot Measure 2 to allow the legislature to annul administrative regulations.

"This capability will give your representatives and senators the power to veto bad regulations," according to the RDC. "The Legislature is responsible for making law, not state agencies. It is appropriate for the legislature to determine if regulations are consistent with the intent of those laws," RDC officials said.

Young support

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare has endorsed Congressman Don Young's re-election bid to the U.S. House.

"We have endorsed you because of your strong commitment to Social Security, Medicare and other issues and programs vital to the well being of America's senior citizens," the group's chairman, James Roosevelt, said in a letter to Young.