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Business and Community Services at Risk During a Government Shutdown

June 8, 2017 JUNEAU – Due to the ongoing budget impasse, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Commissioner Chris Hladick is working with the Department of Law to evaluate the potential effects on business and community services during a government shutdown.

“While I am hopeful the legislature will reach a compromise, I feel obligated to provide Alaskans with as much advance notice as possible about potential disruptions in services that they rely upon,” said Commissioner Hladick. “We encourage Alaskans, if you depend on one of these services—if your professional license is going to lapse soon, if you are seeking a commercial fishing loan, if you need technical assistance regarding a local boundary issue—consider whether it is something we can help you with before the potential shutdown occurs.”

Should a government shutdown occur, Alaskans would likely experience significant disruption in services provided by the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, which would impact local governments and the private sector. The following services are potentially at risk of being shut down, delayed, or interrupted if the legislature fails to pass a budget before July 1:

- Licensing of businesses and professionals that allows them to work in Alaska
- Licensing and regulation of the insurance, banking, and securities industries
- Licensing and inspection of commercial marijuana cultivation, testing, retail and alcoholic beverage sales
- Seafood marketing
- Issuance of commercial fishing loans
- Distribution of revenue sharing and community assistance funding to local governments
- Administration of the loan program that assists communities with the purchase bulk fuel to generate power or supply rural communities with fuel
- Processing of applications and notices of utility rate changes
- Onsite technical assistance of rural water and wastewater utilities
- Technical assistance regarding local government or boundary issues
- Action on ANCSA shareholder complaints about false and misleading proxy statements in pending ANCSA corporate board elections

This year’s preparations for a government shutdown are different than in 2015, when the legislature had passed a partially funded budget. This year, money has not been appropriated for any government services. As a government shutdown in Alaska is unprecedented, Department of Law is examining what money could be spent to continue vital state services if the legislature has not fulfilled its constitutional obligation to pass a budget.

The mission of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development is to promote a healthy economy, support strong communities, and protect consumers in Alaska. For additional information about the department, visit commerce.alaska.gov.

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