



## **BERTA'S BRIEFINGS**

**REPRESENTATIVE BERTA GARDNER**

Serving Geneva Woods, College Village, Green Acres, Tudor, Taku & Campbell Park

**JANUARY 20TH, 2011**

### **Opening of the 2011 Legislative Session**

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Alaska's 27<sup>th</sup> Legislature was sworn in to office this week. I think that audiences in the gallery and across the state could see the hope and enthusiasm of each member as we promised to uphold the constitutions of the United States and of the State of Alaska and to serve our districts and our state to best of our abilities. The new Speaker of the House read 110 pre-filed bills "across the House floor", assigning them to committees, and then our work began! I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve my district and my state once again, and I am looking forward to an intense and productive session.

My focus this year is on seeking and promoting opportunities for all Alaskans. To this end, I requested and received assignments to the Resources, Community & Regional Affairs, and Economic

Development, Trade and Tourism committees. I have also retained my positions on the Ethics Committee and on the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council, and I expect appointment to several budget subcommittees. Over the course of the session I will be talking with you about the work on these committees.

One of my key new responsibilities is serving in the House Minority Whip. As Minority Whip, my chief duty will be to garner support for important legislation and keep members focused on our mission. This essentially means I will be helping legislators to resolve differences and work together to ensure the best solutions for all Alaskans. I am honored to have been chosen for this important leadership position.

Returning to Juneau with me this year is Noah Hanson. He has been my staff since 2007. He holds a degree from the University of Alaska, Anchorage in Political Science. Noah will be staffing me on the Resources



Representative Gardner signs the Oath of Office. Pictured are (left to right) Kevin Harun, Representative Gardner, Lt. Governor Mead Treadwell, Noah Hanson and Randi Spray

committee, handling oil and gas issues and will be the point person on capital budget requests.

To assist me with my Whip responsibilities, I have hired longtime Alaska resident Kevin Harun who has a solid track record of Alaska public service. Kevin previously served as Sustainability Director for former Mayor Mark Begich, Assistant State Ombudsman for Corrections, Special Assistant in the Anchorage Mayor's Office and Lead Program Officer for the Alaska Conservation Foundation. He holds a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University and also served two-terms on the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly, where he was known for his thorough constituent work. I am happy to have Kevin on board to help me serve Alaskans.

Because I also believe in the energy, enthusiasm and talent of our young people, I welcome University of Alaska student intern Randi Spray to my office. She is a junior at the University of Alaska Southeast and is pursuing a degree in International Studies and Language. Originally from Southern California, Randi loves living in Alaska and is fascinated with the political process. My philosophy is that an intern is a full member of the staff with her own areas of responsibility. Randi will be staffing me on Community and Regional Affairs, Ethics and budget subcommittees, and will work on constituent issues.

I'm Berta and I'm still listening,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Berta". The letter "B" is large and stylized, with a loop at the top. The rest of the name "Berta" is written in a cursive, flowing script.

**P.S.** Larry Persily, Federal Coordinator for the Alaska Gas Pipeline Project is holding a public forum on pipeline. The forum will be this Saturday, January 22 from 1 to 3:30 pm at the UAA Fine Arts Building Recital Hall. It will also be streamed on [www.arcticgas.gov](http://www.arcticgas.gov) and available for viewing through Gavel-to-Gavel. Please see attached document for details.

---