

# ALASKA LEGISLATURE

## HONORING

### PATRICK REINHART

The members of the Thirty-Fourth Alaska State Legislature proudly honor Patrick Reinhart for a lifetime of distinguished leadership, advocacy, and public service on behalf of Alaskans with disabilities. Over a four-decade career, Patrick has, with enthusiasm and determination, expanded opportunity, access, equality, and independence for Alaskans with disabilities. He has helped shape policies for independent living services, employment advocacy, disability policy, adaptive recreation, and accessible transportation across Alaska.

Inspired by the poetry of Robert Service, Patrick first came to Alaska in 1980, working on a salmon tender in Kodiak. After two more summers of set netting, and earning a bachelor of science in outdoor education from Northland College, he moved to Alaska permanently in 1983. In 1987, Patrick found his calling as executive director of Challenge Alaska, where he combined his love of the outdoors with his deep commitment to serving others. He expanded opportunities for Alaskans with disabilities through adaptive sports, therapeutic recreation, and education. Among his proudest accomplishments, Patrick was instrumental in developing the Keil Center for Adaptive Sports, a dedicated adaptive recreation facility on the slopes of Alyeska ski resort and impressively participated in the International Disabled Denali Expedition in 1990. After stepping down as executive director of Challenge Alaska in 1995, Patrick continued to serve the organization as a volunteer board member, past president, and treasurer from 1997 to 2014.


Patrick went on to serve as executive director of the Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) from 1995 to 2008, where he championed policies and programs promoting dignity, choice, and independence for people with disabilities. Additionally, he served three years as chair of the National SILC Congress and is a founder of the Alaska Mobility Coalition, established in 2002, to advance coordinated transportation systems that improve quality of life and support economic vitality for all Alaskans.

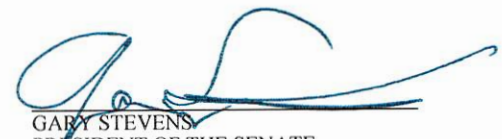
In 2014, he was appointed executive director of the Alaska Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education. Patrick worked under six governors and earned statewide respect for his knowledge, steady leadership, and commitment to improving the lives of Alaskans with disabilities. He guided the Council through transition while strengthening its advocacy, capacity-building, and systems-change roles. He helped protect Alaska's federally designated State Council on Developmental Disabilities status, advance legislative and policy priorities, support major investments including a ten million dollar, five-year federal employment grant, expand self-advocacy and community engagement opportunities statewide, strengthen collaboration across education, health, housing, and employment systems, and implement the Council's Five-Year State Plan to promote self-determination, inclusion, and full participation in community life.

Patrick co-chaired the Alaska Work Matters Task Force in 2021, a statewide effort to increase employment for people with disabilities. Under his leadership, the task force reviewed barriers, policies, and workforce data and produced recommendations for legislation and executive branch action, further establishing Alaska as a national leader in advancing opportunities for people with disabilities. Longtime friends and colleagues appreciate Patrick not only for his effectiveness and leadership, but also for his warmth, humor, and ability to inspire others to build a more inclusive Alaska. Though retired from public service, Patrick has made clear that he will never stop being an advocate for people with disabilities.

The members of the Thirty-Fourth Alaska State Legislature thank Patrick Reinhart for his service, congratulate him on his well-earned retirement, and wish him and his family happiness and fulfillment in the years ahead.



  
BRYCE EDGMON  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

  
GARY STEVENS  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

  
REP. ANDI STORY  
SPONSOR

  
SEN. JESSE KIEHL  
CO-SPONSOR

  
REP. SARAH VANCE  
CO-SPONSOR

Date: April 16, 2026